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**JOINT FORCES STAFF COLLEGE  
JOINT ADVANCED WARFIGHTING SCHOOL**

**D.I.M.E.F.I.L.: A WORDWIDE CAMPAIGN FOR LIFE**

by

**Lisa Grice**

**United States Department of State**

**A paper submitted to the Faculty of the Joint Advanced Warfighting School in partial satisfaction of the requirements of a Master of Science Degree in Joint Campaign Planning and Strategy.**

**The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the Joint Forces Staff College or the Department of Defense.**

**Signature: \_\_\_\_\_**

**May 2007**

**Thesis Adviser: Captain Shannon Hurley, United States Navy**

**D.I.M.E.F.I.L.: A WORLDWIDE CAMPAIGN FOR LIFE**

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## **ABSTRACT**

Countering the trend of suicide bombings requires not only changing the mindset of the potential bomber, but ensuring terrorist organizations which use such methods will incur painful costs. In order to understand what could deter the suicide bomber it was necessary to conduct a study on the profile and the motivating factors of the bomber.

What motivates the bomber to kill him or herself? The research conducted showed the motivating factors of a suicide bomber are the organization which recruits the bomber, religion, societal influences, politics and nationalism. The motivating factors for a female are very similar to the male, but most commonly women want to avenge an injustice such as the death or injury of a family member or friend or a rape or assault inflicted upon them. Whatever the motivating factor, women, more so than men, generate much more media coverage.

Research indicates that some suicide bombers can be deterred through diplomacy, information, military, economic, financial, intelligence and law enforcement (D.I.M.E.F.I.L.) means, but these elements cannot completely stop suicide attacks. If these means of national power are not used as an ongoing method of deterrence, another 9/11 on U.S soil is a strong possibility.

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## **CHAPTER I**

### **INTRODUCTION**

What makes suicide bombers tick? The rest of the world sees them as fanatical terrorists but what exactly is their profile? What motivates them? And, most importantly what deters them? This study will show that Diplomatic, Informational, Military, Economic, Financial, Intelligence and Law Enforcement (D.I.M.E.F.I.L.) means can be used to deter, but not stop, suicide bombing.

Suicide bombing is not an exclusively Islamic phenomenon. Tamil Tigers have also resorted to this powerful tactic of war. However, most suicide attacks of the last twenty years have occurred in predominately Islamic countries and have been fed from the very depths of the Islamic tradition. Ariel Merari, a psychologist at Tel Aviv University, states that of the 23 groups that used suicide terrorism prior to September 11, 2001, 43% were Islamic, whereas of the 17 groups which have used suicide attacks since 9/11, 76% are Islamic.<sup>1</sup>

In the beginning 1980s, “Suicide attacks appeared in their modern form. In the past twenty-five years, they have proven to be one of the most efficient and least expensive tactics ever to be employed by terror and guerrilla groups. It is no wonder, therefore, that in a relatively short time, this method of operation was adopted in 28 countries.”<sup>2</sup> Suicide bombing has become a plague unlikely to recede without aggressive, proactive intervention on the part of the West. No civilized community can tolerate a license to kill and the spreading of uncertainty and fear. Countering this trend will require changing the perspectives of potential suicide bombers who might otherwise “volunteer”

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<sup>1</sup> Christoph Reuter, *My Life As A Weapon* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2004), 117.

<sup>2</sup> Ami Pedahzur, *Root Causes of Suicide Terrorism The globalization of martyrdom* (London and New York: Routledge, Taylor and Francis Group, 2006), 1.

to become another statistic in this on-going epidemic. It will require transforming attitudes in the communities from which these bombers come.<sup>3</sup>

Despite its seemingly fanatical and irrational aura, suicide bombings are the result of rational, strategic decisions taken by insurgents or terrorists seeking to defeat a powerful enemy. For example, Iraqi insurgents use suicide bombers against Iraqi police recruitment centers to derail the efforts of American and coalition forces to establish security under occupation; and Palestinian factions deploy human bombs against “soft targets” in Israel because it is much more difficult to launch hit and run operations against well-trained and better-equipped Israeli Defense Forces. These are examples of how suicide terrorism is purposeful and calculated to produce an intended effect, and where the means chosen are logically connected to organizational objectives.<sup>4</sup>

Why try to deter the actions of the potential suicide bomber? The suicide bomber has found an efficient way to kill the highest number of victims. While the average number of victims in a shooting attack is 3.32 and those from a remote-control explosive is 6.9, the average number of victims harmed by a suicide bomber wearing an explosive belt is 81.48. When the suicide bomber is driving an explosive-laden car, the number of victims rises to an average of 97.81. Thus, it is only natural that guerilla groups or terror organizations which are interested in increasing the effectiveness of their acts of violence will turn to suicide attacks.<sup>5</sup> Few of them call themselves terrorists. Many hope to be seen as “freedom fighters” or heroic defenders of a worthwhile cause. They are frequently admired trailblazers.<sup>6</sup> But in fact the suicide bomber is the ultimate terror

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<sup>3</sup> Sam Grier, *When Suicide Bombing Reaches the Tipping Point* (Nato Defense College October 2005), 6.

<sup>4</sup> Pedahzur, 2.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 56.

<sup>6</sup> David Whittaker, *Terrorism, Understanding the Global Threat* (London: Pearson Education, 2002), 12,4.



weapon. During recent years, attacks have killed thousands of civilians and soldiers. The assassinations of heads of state, political leaders, and high-ranking military officers have made it clear that no politician or public figure is immune to these attacks.<sup>7</sup>

Suicide bombers, it is often said, are “smart bombs,” perhaps the smartest ever invented. Such bombing has inherent tactical advantages over “conventional” terrorism. It is a simple and low cost operation (requiring no escape routes or complicated rescue operation); the 9/11 attack, for example, cost less than \$100,000 whereas the damage it inflicted was in billions of dollars.<sup>8</sup> If successful, it can cause mass casualties and extensive damage since the suicide bomber can choose the exact time, location, and circumstances of the attack. There is no fear that interrogated terrorists will surrender important information because their deaths are certain – the dead can’t speak. A senior British officer in Baghdad stated that the intelligence and operations staff of US Central Command and of the Multinational Coalition likened suicide bombers to insurgent cruise missiles. Suicide attacks are less likely to make mistakes than missiles do because of inaccurate on the ground intelligence.<sup>9</sup> Finally, it has an immense impact on the public and the media due to the resultant overwhelming sense of helplessness.<sup>10</sup>

Terrorism works to undermine the sense of security and to disrupt everyday life so as to harm the target country’s ability to function. When every routine activity (going to work or on an outing, planning activities for children or managing life in the home environment) requires calculating in advance the risk of injury and assessing the

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<sup>7</sup> Micah Halpern, *What You Need to Know About Terror* (New Milford, CT: The Toby Press, 2003), 50.

<sup>8</sup> Arie Kruglanski and Agnieszka Golec, *Individual Motivations, The Group Process and Organizational Strategies in Suicide Terrorism*. E.M. Meyersson Milgrom (Ed) *Suicide Missions and the Market for Martyrs, A Multidisciplinary Approach*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2006), 16.

<sup>9</sup> Diego Gambetta, *Making Sense of Suicide Missions* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 309.

<sup>10</sup> Ehud Sprinzak, “Rational Fanatics,” *Foreign Policy* (September/October 2000): 66.

necessary actions in order to avoid encountering a possible terrorist attack, one's daily routine becomes fraught with anxiety. The goal of this strategy is to drive public opinion to pressure decision makers to surrender to the terrorists' demands, thereby restoring the sense of personal safety the people feel has been lost.<sup>11</sup>

Acts of martyrdom vary not only by culture, but by specific circumstances. Ariel Merari has conducted the most comprehensive study of individuals who commit acts of suicide terrorism. After profiling more than 50 Muslim suicide bombers serving in Hezbollah, Amal, and secular pro-Syrian organizations in Lebanon, as well as Hamas and the Palestinian Jihad in Israel, he concluded that there is no single psychological or demographic profile of suicide terrorists. His findings suggest that intense struggles produce several types of people with the potential willingness to sacrifice themselves for a cause. The task of recruiters is not to produce but rather to identify this predisposition in candidates and reinforce it. Recruiters will often then exploit religious beliefs when indoctrinating would be bombers, using their subjects' faith in a reward in paradise to strengthen and solidify preexisting sacrificial motives.<sup>12</sup>

The key to countering suicide bombers, therefore, is to make terrorist organizations aware that this decision will incur painful costs. While no simple formula for countering suicide terrorism exists, the experiences of the last two decades suggests that using diplomatic, informational, military, economic, financial, intelligence and law

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<sup>11</sup> Boaz Ganor, *The Counter-Terrorism Puzzle: A Guide for Decision Makers* (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 2005), 251.

<sup>12</sup> Sprinzak, 68-69.

enforcement elements may prove effective as a whole in countering the actions of potential suicide bombers.<sup>13</sup>

## **CHAPTER II**

### **SUICIDE BOMBER STATISTICS**

Suicide attacks have shown no sign of abating. On the contrary, the upward trend that began in 1999 has continued to increase at an exponential rate. From January 2004 to December 2005 there were no less than 555 attacks, amounting to 50.1 per cent of the estimated total number of suicide attacks since 1981 in the whole world. The vast majority (84.1%) took place in Iraq. There are signs that attacks are not only on the rise, but extending to new regions and to internecine Muslim religious conflicts.<sup>14</sup>

Fourteen suicide attacks occurred in Pakistan during the period January 2004 to February 2006. In total they killed 228 people, virtually all of them civilians--an average of 17.5 per attack. In Bangladesh, in November and December of 2005, for the first time, two suicide attacks killed 14 civilians and two police officers. According to press reports quoting Bangladesh authorities, these attacks were carried out by the banned Islamic militant group Jamaatul Mujahedin, which is committed to establishing Islamic rule in Bangladesh. Police say that the group can count on a suicide squad of 2,000 members.<sup>15</sup> Worldwide, most suicide attacks in the last two years, in keeping with the large majority of those that took place from 1981 to 2003, were carried out in the context of anti-occupation or separatist insurgencies, in Kashmir, Afghanistan and, above all, Iraq. In

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<sup>13</sup> Dr. Jacquelyn K. Davis, *Radical Islamist Ideologies and the Long War, Implications for U.S. Strategic Planning and U.S. Central Commands Operations* (Washington: The Institute for Foreign Policy Analysis, Inc., 2007), 28, HDTRA1-06-F-0054.

<sup>14</sup> Diego Gambetta, *Making Sense of Suicide Missions* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 303.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 304.

Kashmir, no less than 22 attacks in 2004-2005 caused, excluding the attackers, 126 victims, 69 of whom were civilians. In Afghanistan, the Taliban resistance is escalating. From the time of the U.S. invasion in late 2001 until the end of 2003, there were only five suicide attacks, but from 2004 through January 2006 there were 25--19 in 2005 alone and three in January 2006. These attacks have claimed 110 victims, 78 of whom were civilians.<sup>16</sup>

It is in Iraq where the sheer number of suicide attacks has been staggering, far surpassing that of any other insurgency. From May 2003 until the end of January 2006, according to the Brookings Institution Iraq Index, which largely relies on US military sources, there were 578 multiple fatality bombings--defined as any bombing whether suicidal or otherwise that caused at least three fatalities. Out of these, "at least 273," according to the source, were suicide attacks.<sup>17</sup> According to the Iraq Index, "it does not include attacks with less than three victims, this is by definition an underestimate. If the lethality of all the attacks in Iraq follows the same increasing trend, 273 would represent only 56% of the total. If the remaining 44% is added, the total estimate reaches 487. This would mean that nearly half of all suicide attacks worldwide 1981-2005 have taken place in Iraq alone in just two and a half years."<sup>18</sup> Suicide attacks have more frequently targeted Iraqi security forces (52.6%) and civilians (28.3%) than military coalition forces (17.1%).<sup>19</sup>

Suicide bombers are not militants who decide to make the ultimate sacrifice at some point of their militancy. Abu Qaqa al-Tamini, a former officer of Saddam's

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid., 305.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., 305.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., 305,306.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., 309.

regime, interviewed by Time magazine, specializes in organizing suicide attacks and claims to have coordinated a total of 30 of them. Al-Tamini stated his job was to “get a bomber to the best spot for an attack, where he can inflict the most damage.” Sometimes he videotaped the final moment of the operation on behalf of the bomber’s sponsors. The suicide bombers follow a separate career path and volunteer specifically for martyrdom. “They don’t want to gradually earn their entry to paradise by participating in operations against the Americans. They want martyrdom immediately” said al-Tamini. “A suicide bombing should be the last resort,” he continued, “it should not be a shortcut to paradise.”<sup>20</sup>

One crucial difference could explain the wealth of volunteers in Iraq: in virtually all other insurgencies volunteer for suicide missions are recruited from compatriots, while volunteers in Iraq are predominantly foreigners. According to the Washington-based Center for Strategic and International Studies, foreign fighters generally are only between four and ten percent of the total number of insurgents in Iraq, but according to Major General Rick Lynch, UK Army, non-Iraqis account for over 90% of those who volunteer for suicide attacks. Most of the 30 bombers who passed through al-Tamini’s hands were foreigners. Interestingly, the Iraqi members of the insurgency, according to the senior British officer, do not have the same predilection for suicide missions. The Iraqi insurgents, even the extremists, prefer to live and fight another day.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid., 311.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., 312.

### **CHAPTER III**

#### **THE PROFILE OF A SUICIDE BOMBER**

A thorough understanding of terrorists is imperative in order to be able to limit their actions. By thinking like them, analysts can anticipate their moves and potentially prevent them from striking. Learning how terrorists and leaders of terrorist organizations make their decisions is the first step in understanding their thought process.<sup>22</sup>

There has been a lack of studies on terrorism because researchers have little, if any, direct access to terrorists, even imprisoned ones. Occasionally, a researcher has gained special access to a terrorist group, but usually at the cost of compromising the credibility of her/his research. Even if a researcher obtains permission to interview an incarcerated terrorist, such an interview would be of limited value and reliability for the purpose of making generalizations. Most terrorists, including imprisoned ones, are loath to reveal their group's operational secrets to their interrogators, let alone to journalists or academic researchers, whom the terrorists are likely to view as representatives of the "system" or perhaps even as intelligence agents in disguise. For example, most imprisoned Red Army Faction members reportedly declined to be interviewed by West German social scientists. Few researchers or former terrorists write exposes of terrorist groups. Those who do could face retaliation. For example, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), also known as the Tamil Tigers of Sri Lanka, shot to death an anti-LTTE activist, Sabaratnam Sabalingam, in Paris on May 1, 1994, to prevent him from publishing an anti-LTTE book. The LTTE also murdered Dr. Rajani Thiranagama, a

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<sup>22</sup> Pedahzur, 174.

Tamil, and one of the four Sri Lankan authors of *The Broken Palmyrah*, which sought to examine the “martyr” cult.<sup>23</sup>

People who have joined terrorist groups have come from a wide variety of cultures, nationalities and ideological causes, all strata of society, and diverse populations. Their personalities and characteristics are as diverse as those of people in the general population.<sup>24</sup>

The immediate reaction to suicide bombers is to label them as animals or inherently evil. But, blowing themselves up in a crowd is often the first evil thing these people have done. The most difficult thing to do is to recognize that suicide bombers are all too human.<sup>25</sup>

In a recent study of 32 suicide bombers, Merari found no illuminating socioeconomic or personality factors, such as social dysfunction or suicidal symptoms. But almost all the subjects were young, unattached males, a cohort vulnerable to violent organizations in any society.<sup>26</sup>

The typical suicide attacker is an adolescent, a time during which uncertainty about one’s life course and the proper ways of conducting one’s affairs is likely to reign. Exercising their newly acquired autonomy, yet not accustomed to undertaking their own decisions and responsibilities, doubtful about their own selves and motivated to distance

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<sup>23</sup> Rex A. Hudson, *The Sociology and Psychology of Terrorism: Who becomes a Terrorist and Why?* (Washington, D.C.: Federal Research Division, The Library of Congress, 1999), 24.

<sup>24</sup> Scott Atran, *Understanding Suicide Terrorism: Genesis and Future of Suicide Terrorism* (Interdisciplines, September 2006) (Database on-line), available from [www.interdisciplines.org](http://www.interdisciplines.org).

<sup>25</sup> Michael Bond, *The making of a suicide bomber* (New Scientist, May 2004). (Database on-line), available from InfoTrac OneFile. Thomson Gale. National Defense University Library, A117327207.

<sup>26</sup> Kaja Perina, *Suicide terrorism: seeking motives beyond mental illness* (Psychology Today, September 2002). (Database on-line), available from InfoTrac. Thomson Gale. National Defense University Library. A92136158.

themselves from their childhood social networks, e.g. their family, young men may be particularly susceptible to the social influence of organized groups.<sup>27</sup>

The transition phase from adolescence to adulthood is the age when asserting one's autonomy is critically important. It is the time when young people are given to experimenting with different social roles, trying out new ways of thinking and behaving, and exploring new, far-out ideas. They are given to trying different identities and activities often without comprehending either pertinent reality constraints or the potential gravity of the consequences of their actions. Such quest for individual autonomy often translates into rebellion against all kinds of restrictions including the prohibitions against unhealthy, unsafe, risky and generally self-destructive behaviors such as smoking, drinking, or drugs. Such rebellion occasionally targets the greatest prohibition of all--the instinctual as well as the cultural and societal prohibition against the taking of one's own life.<sup>28</sup>

Generally, a suicide bomber is not someone who is "off the wall"--that kind of individual cannot be an effective killer. Usually suicide bombers are people who show a willingness to give up something, who do not draw attention to themselves, and who are perfectly willing and able to meld into society.<sup>29</sup> While suicide terrorists invariably come from oppressed communities, research by psychologists, anthropologists and others suggest they are no less rational or sane, no worse educated, no poorer and no more religious than anyone else. "They are like you and me," says Rohan Gunaratna, head of terrorism research at the Institute of Defense and Strategic Studies at Nanyang

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<sup>27</sup> Kruglanski and Golec, 2006, 4.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., 4.

<sup>29</sup> Josie Glausiusz, *The Surprises of Suicide Terrorism* (International Security and Counter Terrorism Reference Center October 2003): (Database on-line), available from Ebsco Host. National Defense University Library. 02747529.



Technological University in Singapore. What this means is in many ways more alarming than the ubiquitous misperception of the suicide bomber as fanatical. It means that, in the right circumstances, anyone could be one.<sup>30</sup>

### **Societal and Economic Factors**

In a study of Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad suicide terrorists from the late 1980s to 2003, Claude Berrebi, an economist at Princeton University, found that only 13% came from a poor background compared with 32% of the Palestinian population in general. In addition, more than half the suicide bombers had entered further education, compared with just 15% of the general population. And in a paper published last year in the *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, economist Alan Krueger of Princeton University and the Russell Sage Foundation in New York and Jitka Maleckova of the Institute for Middle Eastern and African Studies at Charles University in Prague, Czech Republic, showed that Hizballah militants who died in action were less likely to be impoverished and more likely to have attended secondary school than others their age.<sup>31</sup>

Those selected for missions are likely to be those thought to be the most committed, but also the most capable of handling the complexities and difficulties that might arise. Therefore, they have higher education and technical skills than most members--“One would hardly expect al-Qaeda to send some of its thousands of semi-literate mercenaries in Afghanistan to flight school in Florida if disaffected students in Europe were available.”<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Bond, 1.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., 2.

<sup>32</sup> David Gold, “Some Economic Considerations in the U.S. War on Terrorism” (*Connections, The Quarterly Journal*, March 2004): 7.

The Palestinian economist Basel Saleh compiled information on 171 militants killed in action (nearly all during the second Intifada, 2000-2003) from Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) news services, including 87 suicide attackers. The majority of militants were unmarried males 20-29 years old from families with both parents living and 6-10 siblings, and who completed secondary school or attended college. Suicide attackers, which included bombers (29 Hamas, 18 PIJ) had more pronounced tendencies in these directions. A majority of Hamas suicide bombers attended college. The majority of bombers had prior histories of arrest or injury by Israel's army.<sup>33</sup>

Religious ideology or political culture can be crucial. Suicide attacks in some contexts inspire a self-perpetuating subculture of martyrdom. Children who grow up in such settings may be subtly indoctrinated into a culture glorifying ultimate sacrifice in the service of the cause against the enemy people or in the service of a cult-like leader. In the West Bank, parents dress their babies and toddlers as suicide bombers and have them photographed in local photography studios. Children march with suicide belts around their chests. University exhibitions included one that recreated an actual suicide bombing carried out in the Sbarro restaurant in Jerusalem, replete with pizza slices and bloody body parts. The Palestinian Authority named popular soccer tournaments after martyrs belonging both to Fatah and the rival Hamas, even so honoring the suicide bomber who blew himself up during an Israeli family's celebration of Passover, killing thirty. On public TV, the Palestinian Broadcasting Corporation airs videos of men being lured away by the beautiful virgins of Paradise promised to martyrs, as if they were commercials or

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<sup>33</sup> Atran, 11.

public service announcements.<sup>34</sup> According to Victor, Palestinian children as young as six (both male and female) report that they want to grow up and become Istishadis, Islamist Suicide Bombers--often not yet understanding the full impact of what that means. By the age of twelve, they are fully committed and appreciate what becoming a martyr entails.<sup>35</sup> Ultimately, profiling suicide bombers may be a fascinating but futile parlor game. Terrorism experts such as Dr. Ehud Sprinzak, an Israeli professor of political science, argue that the best way to halt the attacks is not to study suicide bombers themselves, but rather the terrorists who press these young men and women into their last, ghastly service.<sup>36</sup>

The key, many researchers agree, lies with the organization that recruits them. In the modern history of suicide terrorism it appears that every mission has been authorized and planned by a resistance group. "Suicide terrorism is an organizational phenomenon," confirms Merari, "An organization has to decide to embark on it."<sup>37</sup>

## **CHAPTER IV**

### **WHAT MOTIVATES THE SUICIDE BOMBER?**

#### **A. The Organization**

As Ariel Merari has stated, "The key to creating a terrorist suicide is the group process." Terrorist suicide is an organizational rather than an individual phenomenon; there has not been a single case of suicide terrorism which was done on the suicide's personal whim. He continues, "In all cases, it was an organization that decided to embark

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<sup>34</sup> Anne Marie Oliver, and Paul F. Steinberg, *The Road to Martyrs' Square* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), xxiii.

<sup>35</sup> Pedahzur, 38.

<sup>36</sup> Perina, 1.

<sup>37</sup> Bond, 2.

on this tactic, recruited candidates, chose the target and the time, prepared the candidate for the mission, and made sure that he/she would carry it out.”<sup>38</sup>

The organizational level is of the utmost importance to the understanding of the phenomenon of suicide terrorism. In a certain sense, is the “dog” that wags the tail. Based on considerable intuitive understanding of various psychological principles, some militant organizations have been able to create a veritable assembly line for the production of suicide terrorists. It is the organization too that decides when and where to deploy the suicidal operatives in ways that best serve the organizations’ political agenda. For instance, Hamas refrained from carrying out spectacular suicide attacks early on in the Oslo peace process between the Palestinians and the Israelis for the express reason that they felt that the Palestinian public would not support it. In other words, organizations can turn suicide bombing on and off in accordance with their assessment of what works best in given geopolitical, social and economic contexts.

The sense of duty to the brotherhood of peers, many psychologists agree, is the single most important reason why rational people are persuaded to become suicide bombers. “If you are in a small cell of suicide terrorists and they are all dying one by one, and you have made this commitment on a videotape saying goodbye to your family and everyone else, the psychological investment is such that it would be almost impossibly humiliating to pull back,” says Atran, author of *Understanding Suicide Terrorism: Genesis and Future of Suicide Terrorism*. It is an old trick: armies use it, he says, to get people to fight for each other. Merari has found this “brotherhood mentality”

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<sup>38</sup> Kruglanski and Golec, 2.

in everyone he has studied who has willingly killed themselves for a common cause, including the 9/11 bombers, kamikaze pilots and the IRA hunger strikers.<sup>39</sup>

When combating suicide terrorism, it is more important to focus on those who instruct the terrorists to die rather than on the actual suicide bombers themselves. It is vital to remember that it is the organization--its leaders and supporting players--that make the attack possible. Handlers provide their recruits the plan, the organization and the explosives, and give the execution order for their rendezvous with death--equivalent to a map with appointment times. These people oversee attack after attack and expend enormous energy enticing new recruits to the fray. Ultimate culpability for suicide attacks therefore lies with them, many experts contend, and it is these leaders that must be targeted if suicide bombers are to be stopped. After all, those who piloted the planes in the September 11 attacks are dead, but the organization behind them--al-Qaeda--continues to operate.<sup>40</sup>

Handlers train the terrorists, teaching them how to operate the bomb, where to go, and how to most effectively attack. They are also taught that should they be caught, or if they are surrounded because they look suspicious, they should immediately blow themselves up, even if alone in order to avoid capture. This is so they will not be vulnerable to interrogation and give away vital details about their commanders.

Handlers play on the weaknesses of their recruits. If the recruit is religiously motivated, handlers emphasize the religious obligation to be a martyr. If the recruit is politically orientated, they emphasize the importance of being a soldier for their nation

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<sup>39</sup> Bond, 4.

<sup>40</sup> Kenneth Timmerman, *What Motivates Suicide Bombers?* (Michigan: Greenhaven Press, 2006), 9.

and their people.<sup>41</sup> Recruiters also look for troubled youths, including those of mental immaturity, those pressured to work but without a job, those with no social safety net or a girl friend, those with no means to enjoy life and indeed seeing no meaning in life.<sup>42</sup>

Any death of a terrorist is explained away by the terrorist as something expected and honored. This is very much the feeling of the younger fanatic. Among older, more conservative leaders, for instance in Hamas and Hizbullah, there are signs of doubt about death as an end to violence, but deliberate martyrdom ensures good media coverage. Image and group identity are reinforced at the price, though, of lessening understanding by the West.<sup>43</sup>

It is important to distinguish whether the nature of the organizations engaged in suicide terror is nationalistic or religious. Nationalist groups tend to be vying for the control of territory. Their goal is to recapture the homeland and rid the area of what it perceives as a foreign occupation. Territory is often divisible, although sacred areas are difficult to divide and the extent to which an area is designated as hallowed will complicate a negotiated settlement.<sup>44</sup>

Religious oriented groups are more complicated and dangerous negotiating partners. Their ultimate goal may include the spread of religious holy war, the end of evil as interpreted by them, or the pursuit of some heavenly millenarian reward. Religious purity as an ideological goal is not divisible and it is thus more difficult to create incentives to deter the terrorists by appealing to the public. Additionally, it appears easier for religious groups to mobilize operatives to commit suicidal violence than it is for

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<sup>41</sup> Micah Halpern, *What You Need to Know About Terror* (New Milford, CT: The Toby Press 2003), 53.

<sup>42</sup> David Lester, Bijou Yang and Mark Lindsay, "Suicide Bombers: Are psychological Profiles Possible," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* (2004): 283-295.

<sup>43</sup> Whittaker, 121.

<sup>44</sup> Pedahzur, 16.

secular nationalist groups, and a growing number of groups are adapting their strategies and techniques accordingly. According to a Rand survey, religious groups have been far more successful in killing large numbers of people than nationalistic ones.<sup>45</sup>

The issues of capabilities and resources also come into play. Terrorist groups that can fund suicide bombing and reward their operatives accordingly can generate financial incentives to become martyrs. Organizations that are resource poor might be induced by powerful external actors to jump on the suicide bombing bandwagon if there are financial rewards attached to perpetrating acts of suicide bombing; conventional bombing campaigns do not garner the same degree of external support from Hizballah or al-Qaeda as suicide terrorism.<sup>46</sup>

Almost every day the press reports the latest suicide catastrophe. Suicide fanaticism occurs especially in the Middle East. Perpetrators are from organizations such as Hamas, Hizballah and the Muslim Brotherhood. Widespread fear and anxiety are certain, particularly among Israelis. The Hizballah group has specialized in suicidal terrorism over the last twenty years. It has several aims in mind. The Israeli security service is kept on a costly, time-intensive alert and Jewish settlements are being rendered unsafe by constant, explosive harassment. Palestinian sympathizers, however reluctant to endorse hit and run violence, are likely to revere a martyr, one of their “liberators.”<sup>47</sup>

### **1. Hizballah**

Hizballah (party of God) is a fundamentalist and fanatical organization founded in Lebanon in 1982 as a militant wing of Shi'ite Muslims. Originally, this was a group

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<sup>45</sup> Ibid., 47.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., 48.

<sup>47</sup> Whittaker, 110-115.

feeling alienated and thwarted at home which then looked for a mission to consolidate its ranks. It found one: foreign influences were to be expelled and a free Islamic republic created to replace a weak government. A mission, a jihad, would oblige dedicated followers to use all means to fight an enemy with the promise of Paradise as a reward.<sup>48</sup>

There are, however, differences between Hizbullah and other terrorist groups in the Middle East such as Hamas. In the first place, Hizbullah has the presence of a philosopher, Sheikh Muhammed Fadlallah, whose influence upon the movement has been considerable. A senior Shi'ite cleric, he has tempered the fanaticism of his nearest associates with something approaching modesty and moderation. Frequently, he has suggested that the group should think over-hasty impulses. However, from his perspective, if you cannot persuade your enemies, then warfare is lawful from a religious point of view. Israel and its Western supporters in the United States are so powerful that there is no alternative than to try to match them with intelligence and fierce self-sacrifice.

Fadlallah's opinion of suicide as a last resort appears a little strange. The Koran forbids it, but for this stage the death of a believer is very likely anyway whether it is by one's own hand or the result of enemy action. Either way, suicide or death in battle are not tragedies, nor the consequences of despair. Death, in the right cause, is purposeful. Terror, if it is used, is "Holy Terror." The Hizbullah, for this philosopher, is not in any way a terrorist, they fight a Holy War for their people.

A second difference from a group like Hamas is that Hizbullah not only employs logic, but has social functions. It stands as the champion of better security for the poor and has set up a network of welfare centers and religious education centers.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> Ibid., 110-115.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid., 110-115.



The Guardian reported on 17 November 2001 that the United States had secretly offered to forgive Hizbullah for attacks on Westerners in return for abandoning its struggle against Israel. This initiative from Washington asked Hizbullah to make a statement distinguishing between Islam and terrorism, or what was considered religious and legitimate on one hand and criminality and terrorism on the other. Added to that, Hizbullah was to withdraw from the Arab-Israeli struggle, give up its support for the intifada, and break links with other terrorist groups in Israel and Syria. Hizbullah refused to comply with these requests. The United States then countered with a freeze of Hizbullah assets. Undoubtedly, whatever the resolve and vigilance of Western governments, the terrorist potential of Hizbullah remains formidable.<sup>50</sup>

## 2. Hamas

Hamas (Zeal) was founded in the 1980s by fundamental Islamists in Gaza and the occupied territories of Israel, both places of poverty and seething unrest. Arabs there, without much in the way of weaponry, resorted to suicide missions as a means of demonstrating their anger in dramatic fashion. Iran and Saudi Arabia began to support these Arabs with funds and some crude elementary armament and they found in Egypt radical friends who had been active since 1920. Within Hamas there is an energetic vanguard of young stone-throwers who launched the protest of the intifada in Israeli's streets and reaped a prominence in the world's media. Fanatics, as the world terms them, are often able to articulate their wishes and demands. In the backrooms of the Hamas movement, there are journalists and Islamic scholars, and aspiring politicians hammer out an insistent message of destruction to Israel. There is to be no maneuvering with the

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<sup>50</sup> Ibid., 112-113.

enemy, no peace process such as is the weak defeatist policy of the Palestinian Liberation Organization.<sup>51</sup>

### **3. The Muslim Brotherhood**

The Muslim Brotherhood was founded in Egypt in 1920 and has recently become much more active, spawning small like-minded groups such as Hamas and Al-Gama'a al-Islamiyy'a. The Brotherhood takes its mission very seriously and, although it is the fighting wing which gets most attention in the media, has vigorous cultural and social wings as well as Islamic indoctrination in the Sunni Muslim faith. Saudi Arabia and Iran financially support the Brotherhood. In many ways the Egyptians have to cope with economic and social insecurity, much of which the Brotherhood blames on a government it says is corrupt and religiously heretical. Although the Egyptian government might have some sympathy for the Brotherhood's call for the liberation of the Palestinians and for Pan-Arab unity, its counter-terrorism tactics have been severe.<sup>52</sup>

#### **B. Religion and Islam**

Religion and terrorism go hand in hand – in some places and among some people. Islamic suicide bombers become martyrs in order to gain access to a heavenly paradise that is reportedly the pinnacle of pleasure and enjoyment. In Paradise, the male martyr who has died for Islam supposedly drinks wine and is married to seventy-two virgins. Sex and alcohol, the two foremost taboos in traditional Islamic society, are exalted in literature as accessible and permissible in unlimited quantities, because in the hereafter,

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<sup>51</sup> Ibid., 113-114.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid., 114.

everything is in abundant and limitless supply and the restrictions of the worldly Islamic law do not apply. Martyrs are exalted above all other Muslims in heaven and are entitled to enjoy sex, alcohol, jewels and fine silk for all eternity. After admission in Paradise, the martyrs are blissfully rewarded by acquiring a higher position than all the other dwellers, which enables them to partake of the eternal pleasures and delights that the place has to offer. The Holy Qur'an says they can indulge in drinks from silver cups and dress in expensive silk. Heaven provides a never waning source of happiness and bliss as compared with worldly suffering, uncertainty and deprivation. It is also said that a martyr's actions can assure his or her relatives a space in paradise, which is another large draw for Muslims eager to take care of their families.<sup>53</sup>

If a religion teaches that life after death is better, it can be a motivating factor for potential suicide bombers. Even if an individual is emotionally stable and has support from family and friends, material well-being and a solid career, he/she may feel that something is missing in life. He/she may be seeking something spiritually higher, or for a sense of belonging. While it is often mostly teenagers that show such feelings, later "growing out of" them as they become more settled into their identity, another large group are those facing a "mid-life crisis." Such individuals may turn to religion, and it is often the religions that are more alternative, fundamentalist or non-mainstream that receive them with open arms and offer an alternative to a material way of life.<sup>54</sup>

Being empowered through joining a religious terrorist group has the added benefit of giving the individual a new, and much acclaimed, status, proving his or her worth as a person. This newfound status is often two-fold: first, among his peers and family, and

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<sup>53</sup> Raphael Israeli, *What Motivates Suicide Bombers?* (Michigan: Greenhaven Press, 2006), 38.

<sup>54</sup> J.P. Larsson, *The Making of a Terrorist: Recruitment, Training, and the Root Causes* (Connecticut: Praeger Security International 2006), 206.

second, in society in general, where martyrs may be revered as heroes. This status of being a member of a terrorist group shows the individual as being truly religious, not just in word but also in deed. On a personal note, the individual feels this increased sense of status by being a part of an elite group, much like membership in a secret society or being an alumni of a prestigious university. Religious ideologies also provide a role for individuals whose life otherwise seems to have no meaning or purpose. This role may be to fight the infidel, or to change the state of the oppressive world, or, through violence, to end the cause of suffering.<sup>55</sup>

The feeling of empowerment that can result from membership of a particularly religious group is one of the most commonly cited reasons for marginalized individuals joining religious terrorist groups. No longer is the person an outsider, a nobody, a failure, or unwanted, but, as recruiters point out early on in the process, the individual is now given power to “be” somebody and achieve something. Potential suicide bombers, having been marginalized in society, feel empowered with a new status and a feeling of belonging. They may have suffered tragedy in their lives, such as family death, or grappled with lack of love or worthwhile employment. The religious group offers a solution to this by giving the recruit a new “family” and, fundamentally, a sense of importance and of being valued. Psychologically, this is one of the most potent reasons why individuals join terrorist organizations, and as it often plays an extremely important part in this process, religion may be thought to provide the ultimate form of empowerment.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> Ibid., 206.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid., 207.

Radical extremists are exploiting the Qur'an and leveraging it for their sinister purposes. They have the advantage of using the Qur'an to legitimize their promotion of a culture of violence and even to attract secular terrorist groups to their causes. The glorification of violence, they might suggest, is justified according to the Qur'an's pronouncement that, "The punishment of those who wage war against Allah and his prophet and strive to make mischief in the land, is only this-that they should be murdered or crucified, or their hands and their feet should be cut off on opposite sides, or they should be imprisoned or exiled." The extremists make no distinction between men or women, or between the infidels and Muslims who allegedly collaborate with the United States and/or its coalition partners.<sup>57</sup>

Rhetoric reaffirms this with statements such as, "you are either with us or against us" or that "there is only one way to the goal." It is not possible to be a bystander, or an innocent, in a religious conflict. In order not to be perceived as the enemy, and hence possibly subjected to violence or death, individuals may join religious terrorist groups in order to be on the right side of that exclusivist ideology. That is, the ideology provides the individual with a choice: either join the group or be castigated as an enemy and face the consequences. Of old, this was a common practice (convert or die), but it is still very much the case today around the world, even in the most liberal of societies, as outcast academics, politicians and journalists can vouch for. People may see no choice other than to join the party line. Indeed, the group may provide the only source of information, confirmation and security, which the new recruit desperately needs.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>57</sup> Davis, 26.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid., 207.

## 1. Religious Redemption

To show his or her ultimate belief and gain the favor of God, an individual may choose to sacrifice his or her own life. One school of thought observes that religious terrorism is for God, without any need for a human audience. For individuals who are very pious, the only option may be to make the ultimate sacrifice to show one's faith to God. The very word "martyr" comes from the Greek word meaning "witness." To be a martyr meant to become the ultimate witness to the faith of God.<sup>59</sup> Fundamentalist Islamist scholars continuously contort Islamic scripture to convince their followers that killing themselves in order to kill members of the enemy is not suicide, but martyrdom.<sup>60</sup>

When an individual has led a particularly sinful or nonreligious life, joining a religious terrorist group to fight for the cause and religious ideologies may be seen as the ultimate purification for the sins committed. Research indicates that many terrorists swing like a pendulum from one extreme to another--for example, from sexual overindulgence, alcohol, and drugs to fundamentalist religion. The latter is often violent, and the individual--in the course of seeking penitence, forgiveness, and reconciliation with God--will often pursue a path of violence and terrorism against his or her former life.

Some psychologists have observed that while terrorism may be a phenomenon for itself, meaning that individuals join terrorist groups in order to become terrorists and pursue a path of terrorism, religious ideology may provide the moral justification needed to allow for such violence. It is, in short, a way out of the moral impediments that would otherwise make the transition from individual to terrorist impossible. When mandated by

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<sup>59</sup> Ibid., 209.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid., 28.

God, any amount of violence is allowed. Also, religious ideologies provide justifications for what otherwise would be regarded as crime. Violence becomes easy to accept by those who maybe otherwise would never have chosen it at all.

One of the clearest religious beliefs at work in recruitment into terrorist organizations is that of reward and punishment. The warrior in the cause of God is guaranteed a place in paradise, especially if he or she loses his or her life in the struggle. On the other hand, one that refuses this obligation and duty may be punished by eternal damnation in hell. According to fundamentalist religions, non-belief leads to damnation while belief leads to salvation. Throughout the history of religion this has been a strong enough influence on people to guarantee their allegiance and commitment to the cause whatever the consequences may be.<sup>61</sup>

The potential suicide bomber not only needs to explain why suicide is contrary to Islamic law, but he needs to justify it.

## **2. Islamic Law**

The Qur'an provides no support for taking one's own life to kill and maim innocent children and women--even when in a state of war with the enemy. No evidence from the life of the Prophet Mohammed suggests that such acts were encouraged or permitted by him.<sup>62</sup>

Hamas and Islamic Jihad circumvent the suicidal aspect of human bombings by euphemistic labeling. Instead of calling their operations "suicide bombings," they term them "martyrdom operations" because Islam, as other Abrahamic traditions, prohibit

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<sup>61</sup> Larsson, 209.

<sup>62</sup> Munawar Anees, "Salvation and Suicide: What does Islamic Theology Say?" *A Journal of Theology* (Fall 2006): 275-279.

suicide. Sheikh Ahmed Yassin, the founder and assassinated leader of Hamas, when asked about the permissibility of committing suicide in an operation, replied, “If there are individuals that claim these operations are suicide, there are hundreds that say martyrdom.” Martyrdom is about the noble sacrifice by strong-willed individuals. Suicide is the pathetic end to depression and despair; martyrdom is a new beginning for hope and deliverance. Suicide is shameful and something to be discouraged; martyrdom is honorable and worth emulating. By putting the emphasis on martyrdom as opposed to suicide, it becomes very difficult to criticize the bombers directly. One may question the goals and tactics of their organizations, just as one may question the policies of states at war, but one rarely questions the heroism of individual martyrs, just as societies rarely question the gallantry of their fallen soldiers. Iyad Sarraj, a Palestinian psychiatrist, perhaps put it best: “You can say, ‘I condemn terror, I condemn killing civilians,’ but you can’t say, ‘I condemn martyrs,’ because martyrs are prophets.”<sup>63</sup>

It is important to admit that the Muslim religion has been instrumentalized as the primary framework for recruiting new terrorists. This points to where much of the effort must be directed if suicide terrorism is to be countered effectively. Terrorism is not limited to one group of people, or one religion. There are many terrorist groups in the world. However, virtually all suicide bombers attacking the West since the first suicide bombing attack against the United States in Lebanon in April 1983 have been by Muslims.<sup>64</sup>

All terrorists are not Muslims, but many terrorists are Muslim. The religion of Islam teaches that life is a sacred trust given to human beings by the Creator. It prohibits

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<sup>63</sup> Pedahzur, 63.

<sup>64</sup> Anees, 275-279.



suicide as a grave sin. It is forbidden under all circumstances, including war. So is there something in Islam that turns people into terrorists? Yes and no. Islamic teachings are shaped by teachers and perception. Many moderate Muslims do not feel threatened by the modern world and see its advantages and freedoms positively. However, extremist Muslims such as fundamentalist Islamists see the current world situation as a calamity and urge extreme measures to improve the situation of the Arab world.

A feature of contemporary Islam, and something that worries many mainstream Muslims as well as others, is the rapid growth of fundamentalism in the Middle East. Muslims who belong to this creed are the most intolerant members of any religion. Their narrow-mindedness renders them incapable of any agreement or compromise with those who think differently.<sup>65</sup> Muslim fundamentalists see the failure of the Arab world--its poverty and backwardness--as a result of failure to follow Islam properly. They believe the entire world should be "dar al Islam"--under the rule of Islamic authority--and they believe that this can be accomplished through jihad or a holy war waged on behalf of Islam as a religious duty. They blame Islamic rulers for being spineless and weak and kowtowing to Western powers. They see them as betrayers of the true faith, and advocate a return to fundamentals as the only cure. They regard the Jihad as the way to achieve their goals and suicide attacks as a major and central component of this Jihad.<sup>66</sup>

### **C. Politics/Nationalism**

Robert A. Pape argues, "Contrary to popular perception, suicide bombers are not overwhelmingly motivated by religion, despair or the promise of an after-life, but by

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<sup>65</sup> Whittaker, 95.

<sup>66</sup> Halpern, 46.

nationalism...The use of suicide terrorism is a strategic method aimed toward securing nationalist goals.” Pape’s data showed that all suicide terrorist campaigns have in common a specific secular and strategic goal: to compel democracies to withdraw military forces from territory that the terrorists value.<sup>67</sup>

American imperialism is given as the reason for the suicide bombing of some groups. Osama bin Laden, the founder of al-Qaeda, is the mastermind of many terrorist attacks, including the September 11, 2001, assaults. Bin Laden believes the United States has insulted Islam in three basic ways: through the establishment of military bases in the Holy Land of Saudi Arabia, by seeking to destroy Iraq and other Arab nations in order to gain access to Middle Eastern oil, and through unrelenting support of Israel. He considers the actions of the United States as a declaration of war on God, putting the United States in partnership with the devil. This view justifies holy war and the belief that every Muslim must kill Americans to “restore honor and dignity to the Middle East and to Islam.” In 1998, on the basis of al-Qaeda’s justification, bin Laden issued a fatwah (edict) to all Muslims to kill Americans and their allies, civilian and military.<sup>68</sup>

Hanley J. Harding, Jr. director of operations and programs development for Aurora Protection Specialists, writes that “holy wars” are not merely for religious purposes, they are very much a quest for political expansion. Harding believes the fundamentalist movement is publicly fueled by Islamic fundamentalism, while being privately driven by money and the quest for political power. He explains:

The Holy Qu’ran codifies the justification for the expansion of Islam at any cost but wherever there is terrorism, it is ultimately supported by money. And it is not

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<sup>67</sup> Robert Pape, “Suicide Terrorism and Democracy: What We’ve Learned Since 9/11,” *Policy Analysis* (November 2006): 6.

<sup>68</sup> Rosemarie Skaine, *Female Suicide Bombers* (Jefferson, North Carolina and London: McFarland and Company, Inc., 2006), 16.

money merely sufficient for buying weapons and supplies for the faithful...it is money for paying the faithful to remain faithful to the terrorist political aims and goals, even if it is only money for the families of suicide bombers. The money flows in very large sums so the faithful will keep joining up and keep at their “holy” work...the well paid holy work of terrorism.<sup>69</sup>

#### **D. Societal Influences**

Societies that embrace terror must be re-oriented to realize that there are acceptable and unacceptable ways of achieving goals. The radical, fundamentalist, and violent Wahhabi denomination of Islam is the dominant creed in Saudi Arabia; Wahhabi doctrine is taught in Saudi state schools. As Mohamed Charfi, a former minister of education in Tunisia, wrote in the New York Times, “Osama Bin Laden, like the fifteen Saudis who participated in the criminal operations of September 11, seems to have been the pure product of his schooling.”<sup>70</sup>

Palestinian children become suicide bombers after being carefully indoctrinated into a culture of martyrdom. The Palestinian authority, the operating authority in the occupied territories of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, hires professional filmmakers to produce videos out of suicide bombers. Children are continuously exposed to these videos in order to groom them for martyrdom. This practice is not only abhorrent for its promotion of suicide terrorism, but it is the ultimate form of child abuse; defenseless, impressionable youth are brainwashed by calculating adults with political motives. Suicide bombing will continue as long as these impressionable children continue to be taught to glorify bombing.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>69</sup> Ibid., 16.

<sup>70</sup> Halpern, 28.

<sup>71</sup> Timmerman, 72.

In 2002, reports came out that showed that at summer camps for Palestinian children, some funded by terrorist organizations such as Hamas and Islamic Jihad and others by UNICEF, children were encouraged to learn how to play a role in terrorist attacks, taught how to shoot guns, and given instruction in how to blow up Israeli buses and settlements. Suicide bombers were glorified, and a number of camp groups were named after them. Palestinian children play at being martyr the way Americans play Cowboys and Indians. This play is even encouraged in the kindergartens of Palestinian children.<sup>72</sup>

Many of the terrorist organizations sponsor numerous social services for the masses. They provide soup kitchens and nursery schools and medical care. For example, dental care, a luxury in many parts of the world, will cost as little as \$1.00 after a person agrees to send his children to schools sponsored by the terrorists and makes certain his wife follows strict Islamic law in her dress code. Acts of terror will diminish only after systems of education that condone and even glorify terror are dismantled. As long as terrorists are trained to believe that what they are doing is glorified, people willing to be suicide bombers will be found.<sup>73</sup>

## **CHAPTER V**

### **THE FEMALE SUICIDE BOMBER**

When you want to carry out such an attack, whether you are a man or a woman, you don't think about the explosive belt or about your body being ripped into pieces. We are suffering. We are dying while we are still alive.<sup>74</sup>

- Female Palestinian Suicide Bomber Andaleeb Takafka.

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<sup>72</sup> Ibid., 29.

<sup>73</sup> The History Channel, *Inside the Mind of a Suicide Bomber* (A&E Television Networks 2002).

<sup>74</sup> U.S. Federal Air Marshal Service, *Femme Fatale: Female Suicide Bombers* (Washington, D.C.: The Transportation Security Administration, 2006), 5.

The underlying message conveyed by female suicide bombers is that terrorism has moved beyond a fringe phenomenon and that dangers are all around you. The Palestinian secular militant groups are not composed entirely of religious fanatics who necessarily believe they will be granted entrance to paradise or because God will reward them with 72 virgins. Nor are the organizations' leaders gripped by a burning desire to see all females locked behind black veils. Among Palestinians, this is a political war, not a religious war; suicide bombings are being carefully planned and executed as a part of a precise political strategy.<sup>75</sup>

Over the last few years, women suicide bombers have earned the dubious distinction of appearing more newsworthy than their male counterparts. While investigative reporting on a male suicide bomber is often extensive, coverage of a female suicide bomber seems to result in even more widespread media exposure. This may be the result of the prevailing belief that women, unlike men, must have unique and excessively abnormal reasons for committing what is deemed as a distinctly non-feminine act.

The involvement of women in suicide bombings spawns a host of related questions. Are women's motivations and performances different from those of their male counterparts? Are they more or less determined and dedicated to the cause? Are they more radical or extreme than the men in their perceptions towards the path their struggle has taken? Are they more emotional about it? Are they involved in the operational decision-making process?<sup>76</sup>

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<sup>75</sup> Mia Bloom, *Dying to Kill* (New York: Columbia University Press 2005), 144.

<sup>76</sup> Yoram Schweitzer, *Female Suicide Bombers: Dying for Equality?* (Jaffee Center for Strategic Studies, Tel Aviv University, Kadeem Printing, August 2006), 9.

Examination reveals that despite their high profile, women play a marginal role in terrorist organizations, both numerically and in the corporate structure even though in Turkey they comprised around 40% of all suicide bombers, in Sri Lanka 20-25% and in Chechnya 43%. They are definitely not the leaders in their organizations, but they serve rather as pawns and sacrificial lambs. They are not responsible for the planning of the operations and are actually dispatched to the missions with barely a say as to their targets, the timing of the bombing and the way the operation should be conducted. For the most part they have not otherwise been trained as fighters, since a suicide mission in itself requires little investment in job training, in terms of either time or money. For many of the women, the contribution of a suicide mission to their national or religious struggle is precisely that, a form of employment in the male-dominated domain of suicide bombing.<sup>77</sup>

And finally, the question arises: how much is this gender-related phenomenon in fact a function of gender-related issues? More specifically, to what extent is feminism on the agenda of the women themselves or those who send them? Are these bombers in fact dying for equality? Alternately, is this feminist agenda primarily a Western prism artificially imposed on a non-Western context?

These questions are complicated and multi-dimensional. Female suicide bombers appear almost exclusively in societies that are heavily traditionalist and conservative, where women lack equal rights and their status in society is much lower than that of their male counterparts. Women's participation in suicide bombings has been used as a propaganda tool by their organizations and served the dispatcher's drive to project an image of participation by all segments of their societies. Despite the temporary honor

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<sup>77</sup> Ibid., 9.

these women enjoy in implementing their tasks, dying for equality has neither been achieved nor apparently was it the main purpose of the volunteering participants.<sup>78</sup>

### **A. The Profile**

To establish a profile of the female suicide bomber is extremely difficult because age, gender, education and economic and social status often varies. Statistically, the female bombers tend to be 17-24 years old. They can be single, married, mothers and grandmothers; high school and college students; working professionals such as lawyers, journalists or medical practitioners; devout or non-devout in religious or nationalistic beliefs; intelligent, charming and attractive; and very active in their cause.<sup>79</sup>

The phenomenon of women suicide bombers is hardly a recent development. Women have numbered among their ranks almost since they first appeared in the Middle East in the early 1980s. As of September, 2006, the youngest successful female bomber is thought to be a Syrian national and sent by the Syrian Social Nationalist Party. Sana'a Mouhadly, who was only 16, successfully targeted an Israeli Defense Force convoy in Lebanon killing five soldiers in 1985.<sup>80</sup> As of September 2006, the oldest may be Palestinian Fatma Omar An-Najar age 64, a grandmother who killed herself and wounded two Israeli soldiers in northern Gaza.<sup>81</sup>

Recent examples of women suicide bombers include a member of TIKKO (the Turkish Workers Villagers Independent Army) who detonated her bomb at the entrance to a mosque in April 2006; a Sri Lankan woman who blew herself up near a Columbian

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<sup>78</sup> Ibid., 11.

<sup>79</sup> U.S. Federal Air Marshal Service, 5.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid., 9.

<sup>81</sup> U.S.A. Today, *64 year old female grandmother attacks Israeli troops in northern Gaza* (Database on-line), available from [www.USAtoday.com/news/world/2006-11-23-gaza-bomber\\_x.htm](http://www.USAtoday.com/news/world/2006-11-23-gaza-bomber_x.htm).

army base the same month, wounding the commander of the Sri Lankan armed forces; and Sonja B, a German convert to Islam who was seized in Germany on June 2, 2006 to foil her planned suicide attack in Iraq. Between 1985 and 2006, more than 220 women were suicide bombers, representing nearly 15% of the overall number of actual suicide bombers around the world and those intercepted in the final stages before the attack.<sup>82</sup>

With both males and females, education appears to influence the percentage of those that become suicide bombers. Typically, half have academic backgrounds, with nearly thirty percent having at least a high school education. Therefore, it is assumed that many bombers are rather intelligent and understand their actions. Though some suicide bombers have been recruited from both ends of the spectrum (impoverished and wealthy), most tend to come from the middle class. Female suicide bombers of the Tamil Tigers and Kurdish PKK usually come from the poorer segments of the respective societies whereas female suicide bombers associated with the Palestinian conflict tend to be from the middle class.<sup>83</sup>

## **B. Why Females**

Terrorist organizations use females for several reasons. In some parts of the world, females have low social status and therefore are considered more expendable. Females are seen by some as more emotional and therefore easier to indoctrinate. When the suicide bomber is a woman, the media coverage is extensive. The organization and its particular cause or grievances will almost automatically enjoy greater exposure, which in large measure is an immediate aim of the bombing itself. In turn, morale and

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<sup>82</sup> Schweitzer, 8.

<sup>83</sup> U.S. Federal Air Marshal Service, 9.



enthusiasm among the rank and file are heightened. Terrorists attempt to embarrass a powerful enemy and show the world that things are desperate that women are now fighting.

Most importantly, women have the element of surprise. They are capable of a stealthier attack because they draw less attention to themselves; in fact, on several occasions female bombers spoke English and wore western clothing and makeup during the attack. The typical female is stereotypically perceived as non-violent, feminine and motherly. Due to sensitivities within a culture, women are not as likely to be searched as extensively as a man and therefore can enter security checkpoints more easily and therefore avoid detection.<sup>84</sup>

### **C. The Motivation**

The motivation for women to commit a suicide bombing can vary. The notion that women are motivated to participate in terrorist activities for different reasons than men is largely the result of gender biased expectations of women's role in violent organizations. Like men, women are motivated by nationalism, ideology, political agendas, revenge for personal suffering, and sense of duty. If women are assumed to be motivated by gender-specific reasons, they will fail to be recognized as legitimate rational actors in violent organizations.<sup>85</sup>

And most commonly, women suicide bombers appear to have a desire to avenge a perceived injustice such as death or injury of a friend or relative or mistreatment by an enemy, e.g. rape, assault, harassment or imprisonment. Religion, nationalism and social

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<sup>84</sup> U.S. Federal Air Marshal Service, 8.

<sup>85</sup> Skaine, 171.

liberation are the persuasive factors. Islamic extremist groups like al-Qaeda, Hamas, and the Islamic Jihad use religion as a tool to recruit and manipulate both sexes. Tamil Tigers and the Kurdish Separatists, however, are secular and focus on an individual's sense of nationalism. Many women choose to become a suicide bomber to achieve equality in a male dominated society and cause. There are some indications that other women, particularly the Palestinians, have been brainwashed, raped, drugged or in some other way trapped into becoming martyrs. Monetary and social rewards are another motivator. Just like the man, a family of a female suicide bomber may receive financial support and honor and prestige after the attack. Saudi Arabia provides \$5,000 to the families of all deceased bombers. Former Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein gave \$25,000.<sup>86</sup>

#### **D. Conclusion**

The ruthlessness of recent incidents involving female suicide bombers, combined with their attempts to appear harmless, make using physical appearances or relying on profiles to detect potential suicide bombers risky. Instead, authorities should pay attention to actions and mannerisms which are inconsistent with normal behavior. Authorities must also be wary of the male suicide bomber dressed as a female so as to bypass or not attract the attention of security personnel. It appears that the use of females as suicide bombers may increase in the coming months.<sup>87</sup>

The United States has responded to the attacks of 9/11 with much effort to prevent a recurrence. Part of the continued effort must be increased awareness of the female suicide bomber. By so doing, as a nation, the United States can respond more effectively.

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<sup>86</sup> Ibid., 12.

<sup>87</sup> U.S. Federal Air Marshal Service, 9.

All over the world, women are now part of the tactic of war.<sup>88</sup> While there is no information to indicate that American females have taken part in suicide attacks, it is possible that this could change as the overall terrorist threat evolves.<sup>89</sup>

## **CHAPTER VI**

### **POLITICS AND D.I.M.E.F.I.L CAN BE USED AS DETERRENTS TO THE POTENTIAL SUICIDE BOMBER**

#### **Introduction**

According to the National Strategy for Combating Terrorism, “America is at war with a transnational terrorist movement fueled by a radical ideology of hatred, oppression, and murder. First published in February 2003, the National Security Strategy for Combating Terrorism recognizes that the “US is at war and that protecting and defending the Homeland, the American people, and their livelihoods remains the government’s first and most solemn obligation.”<sup>90</sup>

US strategy also recognizes that the War on Terrorism is a different kind of war. The War on Terrorism should not be seen as a direct battle between the US and the militants. It should be seen as an internal battle within the Middle East between the militants and the moderate elites. US policy should be orientated toward helping the moderates to win their own battle, empowering them, helping them, assisting them to win the battle of ideas.<sup>91</sup> From the beginning, it has been both a battle of arms and a battle of ideas. Not only does the US fight its terrorist enemies on the battlefield, it promotes

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<sup>88</sup> Skaine, 165.

<sup>89</sup> Nicole George and Earl Rose, *Female Suicide Bombers* (Arizona: Counter-Terrorism Information Center, June 2006), 3.

<sup>90</sup> National Strategy for Combating Terrorism (Washington, D.C: The White House, 2006), 1.

<sup>91</sup> Telhami, Shibley, “Understanding the Challenge” (*The Middle East Journal* Winter 2002): 16-17.

freedom and human dignity as alternatives to the terrorists' perverse vision of oppression and totalitarian rule. The paradigm for combating terrorism now involves the application of all elements of American national power and influence. Not only does the US employ military power, it also uses diplomatic, economic, financial, intelligence, and law enforcement means to protect the Homeland and extend its defenses, disrupt terrorist operations, and deprive its enemies of what they need to operate and survive.<sup>92</sup>

### **A. Politics**

The decision to engage in suicide terrorism is political and strategic, says Robert Pape. The aim is always the same: to coerce a government, through force of popular opinion, to withdraw from territory the group considers its homeland. That certainly applies to the 9/11 terrorists who considered the US an occupying presence in the Middle East because of its military bases there and its backing for Israel. It also holds for groups who attack democracies indirectly, by attacking those who support them. The ongoing attacks on police stations in Iraq are an example. This raises the question: Why do some groups resort to suicide terrorism while others do not?<sup>93</sup>

Bruce Hoffman of the research organization Rand Corporation in Washington D.C, who specializes in studying political violence, agrees that culture can play a part in deciding an organization's strategy. But he warns against seeing suicide terrorism as a phenomenon alien to the West. Both he and Merari insist there is no evidence that Westerners are less easily coerced into sacrificing themselves than anyone else.

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<sup>92</sup> Ibid., 17.

<sup>93</sup> Bond, 2.

Yet Gunaratna, who interrogated the “American Taliban” John Walker Lindh captured in Afghanistan in 2001, is not convinced. Lindh told him that he was asked by an al-Qaeda commander if he wanted to become a martyr and that he had declined. Gunaratna believes this was because he was an American. “The western mindset is very materialistic,” he says. “They don’t have the same desire, the same culture, for sacrifice. Maybe it’s because the west has achieved so much materially. If you are materialistic, you will never make a good suicide terrorist.”<sup>94</sup>

Other researchers, however, think using suicide bombers has less to do with culture than with strategy: groups resort to suicide terrorism when conventional terrorist methods are doing little to further their cause, or when their enemy’s military strength becomes overwhelming.

Hoffman has another explanation. The overriding reason for the emergence of suicide terrorism, he says, is almost always rivalry between terrorist groups. He points out that in the Palestinian territories, resistance groups have tended to adopt it only when they are losing political ground to rival groups and feel the need to distinguish themselves. This explains Hamas’s decision to start using it against Israel in 1993, when the peace process engineered by Yasser Arafat’s Palestine Liberation Organization threatened its central ideology of the obliteration of Israel.<sup>95</sup>

The cessation of suicide attacks can be achieved as the result of a political process or of an informal agreement achieved in arenas where a government is dealing with secular organizations (the PKK in Turkey and the LTTE in Sri Lanka). These organizations are characterized by a secular and nationalistic orientation, as well as blind

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<sup>94</sup> Ibid., 2.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid.

obedience to the organization's leadership. They do not regard terror, including suicide attacks, as an ideology or religious ruling, but rather as a means for achieving political goals. Thus, when it is possible to obtain goals through the use of alternative methods, these organizations feel able to give up the suicide terror.<sup>96</sup>

The strategy must be to counter the lies behind the terrorists' ideology in order to deny them future recruits. The very people the terrorists most want to exploit, the faithful followers of Islam, must be empowered. The US must continue to support political reforms that empower peaceful Muslims to practice and interpret their faith. It must work to undermine the ideological underpinnings of violent Islamic extremism and gain the support of non-violent Muslims around the world. The most vital work will be done within the Islamic world itself, and Jordan, Morocco, and Indonesia, among others, have begun to make important strides in this effort. Responsible Islamic leaders need to denounce an ideology that distorts and exploits Islam to justify the murder of innocent people and defiles a proud religion.<sup>97</sup>

Many of the Muslim faith are already making this commitment at great personal risk. They realize they are a target of this ideology of terror. Everywhere the US has joined in the fight against terrorism, Muslim allies have stood beside it, becoming partners in this vital cause. They know the stakes--the survival of their own liberty, the future of their own region, the justice and humanity of their own traditions--and the United States is proud to stand beside them. Not only will the US continue to support the efforts of its Muslim partners overseas to reject violent extremism, it will continue to engage with and strengthen the efforts of Muslims within the United States as well.

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<sup>96</sup> Shaul Shay, *The Shahids: Islam and Suicide Attacks*. (New Brunswick and London: Transaction Publishers 2004), 220.

<sup>97</sup> National Strategy for Combating Terrorism, 5.

Through outreach programs and public diplomacy, the US will reveal the terrorists' violent extremist ideology for what it is--a form of totalitarianism following in the path of fascism and Nazism.<sup>98</sup>

International steps to deter state sponsored terrorism includes warnings and demands to stop their activities, international condemnation and cultural sanctions including exclusion from international events, removal from international, cultural and educational programs, and deportation of its citizens who live, work or study in foreign countries.<sup>99</sup> The next step is diplomatic sanctions against the state supporting terrorism, beginning with expulsion from international institutions, expanding to the revocation of its membership in UN institutions or even removal from the UN general assembly, and then to the severing of the nation's relationship with UN members.<sup>100</sup>

## **B. Diplomatic**

The problem of suicide terror has no easy solutions. To paraphrase Scott Altran, policies aimed at empowering moderates from within, supporting certain values (like respect for life), and similar behavior may produce emotional dissatisfaction with the existing terrorist leaders which could lead to lasting change from within. However, some of the more heavy-handed counter-terrorist tactics of certain states, such as the preemptive attack on the supporters of terrorism, are likely to backfire and mobilize greater support for terror.<sup>101</sup>

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<sup>98</sup> Ibid., 5.

<sup>99</sup> Ganor, 84.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid., 84.

<sup>101</sup> Pedahzur, 49.

Reaching out for foreign help and cooperation must extend not only to governments but also to their citizens. An active program of public diplomacy should explain why terrorism hurts the interests of those citizens and why U.S. counterterrorist efforts do not. Public diplomacy needs to be adroit as well as active to avoid the pitfall of making wanted terrorists appear more like Robin Hoods than like criminals.<sup>102</sup>

The organizational aspect of suicide bombing, or of terrorism in general, remains a major point of vulnerability for the terrorist organizations. This vulnerability can be used as a means for utilizing Diplomacy as a deterrent. Examples include imposing economic sanctions on the state supporting terrorism, limiting its ability to purchase sensitive weapons or advanced technology that may aid in its violent activities, preventing the export of products to this nation, and preventing the purchase of its products with a view towards causing economic damage. As a complimentary step, a secondary embargo may be imposed against nations and commercial companies that defy the economic sanctions imposed against the state supporting terrorism and continue to maintain economic ties with that nation.<sup>103</sup>

Some of the more prominent measures adopted against states involved in terrorism have been imposed against Libya. In light of knowledge regarding Libyan involvement in various terrorist attacks, including acts in which American military personnel had been injured, American fighter planes bombed various targets in the Libyan cities of Tripoli and Benghazi in 1986. In April 1991, at the initiative of the United States, the UN imposed sanctions against Libya due to its continued involvement in terrorism and primarily because of its refusal to extradite Libyan security personnel

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<sup>102</sup> Paul Pillar, *Terrorism and U.S. Foreign Policy* (Washington, D.C.: Brooking Institution Press, 2003), 228.

<sup>103</sup> Ganor, 84.



suspected of involvement in two attacks on passenger planes, the Pan Am flight over Lockerbie and the French UTA flight over the Saharan Desert in Niger, both of which took the lives of hundreds of victims. The sanctions were tightened when the UN decided on an air blockade against Libya because of its continued refusal to hand over the suspects. UN Resolution 748 required Libya to declare its commitment to desist from terrorist activity and to stop aiding terrorist organizations. The Security Council also called upon member states to stop supplying Libya with all forms of weapons, to reduce the number of Libyan diplomats and to restrict their movements within the host countries. For the first time the UN used its power to impose sanctions against a country accused of international terrorism, a resolution that was passed with a majority of ten nations; five nations abstained.<sup>104</sup>

The next stage of activities against a nation involved in terrorism is legal: defining heads of state and heads of security agencies of that nation as war criminals or charging them with crimes against humanity and afterwards conducting international tribunals in order to convict them and determine their sentences, even if they themselves do not attend.<sup>105</sup>

Suicide operatives need to be trained somewhere. That entails the cooperation of states in whose territory the operation take place. Different states vary in the tightness of the control they can exercise over their territory, but no state can afford to allow the armed terrorist organizations to become too powerful, or to set up a state within a state. As an example, King Hussein of Jordan killed thousands of PLO fighters in 1970/71 in an

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<sup>104</sup> Ibid., 88.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid., 84.

operation that came to be known as Black September because he considered the PLO a threat to the Hashemite regime.<sup>106</sup>

It is not quite true that because suicide terrorists are willing to die, the logic of deterrence does not apply to their activities. Suicide bombers are sent by organizations; organizations require state support and states have multiple needs that can be threatened. This may undermine their support for terrorism without which no terrorist organizations can survive for long. True, the application of deterrence requires the state support for terrorism to be proven and the deterrence to be credible. This may require the willingness to go to war--something that may be quite difficult from the standpoint of international relations as attested the Bush administration's difficulties in convincing other nations to join in the 2003 launching of the war against Iraq.<sup>107</sup>

The fact that suicide terrorism is an organizational tool opens up the logical possibility of finding alternative means to the organizations ends. In so many words, this may mean negotiating with terrorists one way or the other, something that many view as abhorrent on moral grounds, and that on pragmatic grounds as well may seem to encourage terrorism. As for long-term countermeasures, integration and inclusion of Muslim immigrants in all segments of Western societies are important means to deal with the social and political grievances that contribute significantly to the making of extremists and militants. Efforts must be made to secure an open dialogue between Muslim immigrants and Western societies to facilitate cooperation on efforts to keep young Muslims away from Jihadist "gatekeepers."<sup>108</sup>

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<sup>106</sup> Kruglanski and Golec, 16.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid., 17.

<sup>108</sup> Laila Bokhari & Thomas Hegghammer, *Paths to Global Jihad: Radicalisation and Recruitment to Terror Networks* (Norwegian Defense Research Establishment 2006), 21.

Nonetheless, some form of negotiations may ultimately dissolve the organizations decision to resort to the tactics of suicide terrorism. For instance, the Tamil Tigers have reached an agreement with a Sri Lankan government and have abandoned their suicidal tactics. Negotiation with terrorists in fact is inevitable despite all the declarations if it is acknowledged that the organizational level is an inseparable part and parcel of suicidal terrorism. Even tough leaders like Ariel Sharon or Benjamin Netanyahu have been known to negotiate with terrorists; the organizational aspect of suicide terrorism offers a ray of hope that this appalling phenomenon is, after all, amenable to rational solutions.<sup>109</sup>

### **C. Information/Education and the Media**

Information is an invaluable tool in the fight against terror. To win the long term war against terror, an entirely new world view must be developed, one where people are taught to resolve their differences by negotiation and meditation, not by threatening, killing and destroying. This can only be accomplished through an education campaign that honors and respects differences across the board.

The first line of defense should be convincing Muslim communities to stop supporting religious schools and charities that feed terrorist networks. For example, just a small percentage of what the United States spends on often ineffective counterinsurgency aid to unpopular governments can help to train teachers and administrators, build schools and dormitories, furnish books and computers. Radical Islamic and other terrorist groups often provide more and better educational, medical, and welfare services than governments do. Support for the terrorists organizations can be subverted by investing in and providing the same goods and services the terrorists

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<sup>109</sup> Kruglanski and Golec, 17.

provide. By creating educational programs, children's facilities, and medical care services, the power, dependence, and monopoly that the terrorists organizations hold over their populations can be broken.<sup>110</sup>

The great strength of the West is its education. Terrorists are afraid of education that teaches co-existence and understanding of others. They know that educated populations will revolt against their rule and their methods of operation. Democracy is the antithesis of terrorist tyranny, which is why the terrorists denounce it and are willing to kill the innocent to stop it. Democracy is based on empowerment, while the terrorists' ideology is based on enslavement. Democracies expand the freedom of their citizens, while the terrorists seek to impose a single set of narrow beliefs. The terrorists see individuals as objects to be exploited, and then to be ruled and oppressed.<sup>111</sup>

### **1. An International Campaign**

An international campaign is needed against the suicide phenomenon in order to encourage the voices that are beginning to be heard in the Palestinian camps that claim the suicide attacks do not serve Palestinian interests. This campaign should endeavor to recruit moderates in the Muslim world who will denounce suicide attacks and participate in the organization of a global consensus prohibiting the perpetration of these attacks, defining them as a "crime of humanity."<sup>112</sup>

If top leaders of churches and mosques in the world were to get together in a powerful, active, and cleverly appealing promotion of the sacredness of human life, and

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<sup>110</sup> Scott Atran, *Mishandling Suicide Terrorism* (Washington Quarterly 2004) (Database on-line), available from Internet Muse. The Center for Strategic and International Studies and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 67-90.

<sup>111</sup> Timmerman, 74.

<sup>112</sup> Shay, 201.

restate the ancient theological principle that killing is forbidden by God, if an international political leadership would link up with them, and if renowned and beloved public heroes in each indigenous culture, including singers, sports heroes, admired leaders of medicine, and other heroes in the national collective memory would join them in pro-life messages, if the media and advertising professions would be enlisted in helping to create newly attractive ways for disseminating a message of the sacredness of life in folk songs, slogans, on computer screens, and in public pageantry of all sorts, many people all over the world would respond.<sup>113</sup>

A Muslim group posted a strong apology on the Web on the occasion of the anniversary of September 11 in 2004:

We will no longer wait for our religious leaders and intellectuals to do the right thing. Instead, we will start by apologizing for 9-11. What will it take for Muslims to realize that those who commit mass murder in the name of Islam are not just a few fringe elements? What will it take for Muslims to realize that there is a large evil movement that is turning what was a peaceful religion into a cult? Not only do Muslims need to join the war against terror, we need to take the lead in this war.<sup>114</sup>

Responsible Islamic leaders need to “denounce an ideology that distorts and exploits Islam for destructive ends and defiles a proud religion.”<sup>115</sup>

## **2. Strict Media Guidelines**

If the media would announce guidelines restricting the use of material produced by terrorists even though such material may better illustrate a story, the incentive for terrorists to produce videotapes could be eliminated. Terrorism is a dynamic process.

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<sup>113</sup> Israel Charny, *Fighting Suicide Bombing: A Worldwide Campaign for Life* (Connecticut, London: Greenwood Publishing Group, 2007), 180.

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid.*, 7.

<sup>115</sup> National Security Strategy, (Washington, D.C: The White House, 2006), 3.

Since the media are integral to the success of terroristic designs, they should regularly appraise the changing techniques employed by terrorist, the increasing threats posted to the society, and their responsibilities when reporting on terrorist attacks.<sup>116</sup>

To help balance the pressures of competition for ratings, the media should also consider establishing independent task forces with members drawn from the general public and stockholders. General shareholders may be more inclined to forfeit a small portion of their dividends due to a fractional drop in ratings if they believe it will prevent an escalation in terrorism. Finally, the media should consider providing ample air time for programming to communicate the threat posed by terrorism and its relationship to the integrity of the media. If the media make public statements on record of their positions and their efforts to control terrorism, it will be far more difficult for them to explode later in an orgy of media coverage following a major terrorist incident.<sup>117</sup>

In 1997, the International Policy Institute for Counter-Terrorism at the Herzliya Interdisciplinary Center held a professional conference called “The Shefayim Conference” which was attended by Israeli media personnel and counter-terrorism experts to discuss the media coverage of terrorist attacks in Israel. Among recommendations made by conference participants were two main proposals: to avoid close-up images of terrorist victims, and to limit as much as possible the repeated broadcasting of images of death and destruction from the scene of the attack. These two recommendations would actually enable journalists to maintain the delicate balance between the journalists’ professional obligation and his civic duty. Without close-up photos of the horrors of the attack, the media will not encourage anxiety and fear and thus

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<sup>116</sup> Neil Livingstone and Terrell Arnold, *Fighting Back: Winning the War Against Terrorism* (Lexington, DC Heath and Company 1986), 225.

<sup>117</sup> *Ibid.*, 226.

will not be used as a pawn by the terrorists. If television cameras begin to focus on particularly harsh images during the course of a live broadcast from the scene of an attack, the live broadcast is sometimes suspended and the newscaster or a studio commentator appears on the screen until the camera is no longer focused on the difficult scene.<sup>118</sup> Avoiding frequent broadcasts from the scene of the attack limits the damage to the people's morale from terrorist attacks, and, at the same time reduces television viewers' tendency to stop watching or switch to another channel.<sup>119</sup>

Limiting coverage also jeopardizes the international goals the terrorist organization hopes to achieve and reduce its legitimacy and international recognition. Even if a small number of those targeted by terrorism is exposed to such broadcasts through cable or satellite networks, the public still has the option of choosing to watch local networks and to prefer the less shocking media coverage of the event--reliable coverage in real time without unnecessarily focusing on the horrors of the scene itself.<sup>120</sup>

The media must adopt rules for media coverage that will neutralize, or at least minimize, misuse by terrorist organizations of the media stage.<sup>121</sup> Unless the media take actions to prevent the evolution of television terrorism, the power terrorists wield will grow and terrorists will seek even more gruesome events for publicity.<sup>122</sup>

#### **D. Military**

Unless guided by moral purpose and accompanied by appropriate political, economic, and social actions, the military alone will not get very far in its attempt to

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<sup>118</sup> Ganor, 239.

<sup>119</sup> Ibid., 239.

<sup>120</sup> Ibid., 249.

<sup>121</sup> Ibid., 248.

<sup>122</sup> Livingston, 236.

prevent suicide terrorism.<sup>123</sup> The DoD and the Intelligence Community must move faster to recruit and train more native language speakers and larger numbers of culturally-attuned soldiers. In practice, this implies the need for more special forces, whose skills, cultural sensitivity, and awareness generally surpass that of regular military forces. However, this means that the Special Operations Forces (SOF) community may have to consider augmenting its end-strength by developing some kind of “reserve capability” that can be tapped into--especially for local language and cultural expertise--as needs arise.<sup>124</sup>

The military is needed to physically attack terrorists or a group of terrorists within an organization who are engaged in initiating, directing, preparing, recruiting, training or aiding in attacks, in order to kill or neutralize the terrorist.<sup>125</sup> Such targeted killing can be disruptive because it eliminates from action a senior terrorist in that organization. Those left behind may then embark on a “power struggle” among those eager to fill his role. The difficulty in finding another leader with professional skills, charisma or other positive characteristics to fill the position left by the dead activist could interfere with the organization’s activities. Disrupting the organization’s routine is liable to have ongoing consequences, rather than merely a short-term effect. The organization might then have to invest considerable resources, in terms of money, financial resources, manpower and time, in defense and ongoing protection for its senior officials, severely disrupting the lives of terrorists and their families.<sup>126</sup>

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<sup>123</sup> Newt Gingrich, “Terror Watch,” *The American Enterprise Magazine*, 11 February 2002, 50.

<sup>124</sup> Davis, 45.

<sup>125</sup> Ganor, 118.

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.*, 128.



A direct correlation seems to exist between U.S. military and counterinsurgency aid and human rights abuses by the governments aided with a rise in terrorism. Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch regularly document “horrific” and “massive” human rights abuses occurring in those countries that receive the most U.S. aid in absolute terms. Thus, the U.S. Department of State 2003 budget for Foreign Military Financing (FMF) is \$4.107 billion. The FMF budget includes \$2.1 billion for Israel, \$1.3 billion for Egypt, \$98 million for Colombia and \$50 million for Pakistan. Special Economic Support Funds were also budgeted as part of emergency supplemental bills: \$600 million for Pakistan; \$40.5 million in economic and law enforcement assistance for Uzbekistan; \$45 million in FMF for Turkey and Uzbekistan; \$42.2 million for training and equipment for border security forces in the Central Asian Republics (Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Turkey, Kyrgyzstan, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan); and additional millions in special Defense Department funds for counterterrorism training and operations in the Central Asian Republics and Georgia.<sup>127</sup> Financial support is needed to ensure training and security cooperation but aid should be tied to a better observance of human rights.

Another highly effective method by security forces and decision makers in Israel is the demolition of the home of the person carrying out the attack, or of buildings used to carry out the attack. Actions of this kind are not arbitrary actions, nor are they indiscriminate punishment, but they certainly cause harm to a wider group of people than just the attacker himself, and of course represent on the face of it, a type of collective punishment.<sup>128</sup>

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<sup>127</sup> Atran, *Understanding Suicide Terrorism*, 13.

<sup>128</sup> Ganor, 206.

Israeli demolition orders are issued by the military commander and are usually carried out swiftly, immediately after arrest of the suspect. These orders are intended to deter family members and acquaintances of the terrorists from helping them and to make it clear to terrorists that their families will be forced to pay the price for their actions. According to the former head of the Israel Security Agency (ISA) Yaakov Perry, “The assessment of the ISA was that harm to the terrorist’s family and their property was a decisive factor to be considered by a terrorist candidate for a suicide attack.”<sup>129</sup>

Binyamin Ben-Eliezer, former Minister of Defense in Israel, concurred with this in his speech at the Israeli Counter Terrorism’s Second International Conference held at the Herliya Interdisciplinary Center:

While suicide bombers don’t worry about their own well being, they do think about that of their family members. For this reason, we have instituted punitive measures aimed at deterring the bombers, by means of disenfranchising or economically damaging their families, along with the people who send them, the dispatchers, and the people who support them. Speaking cautiously, I would like to say that the steps taken to date have built the beginnings of deterrence; we have found that some potential suicide bombers have been deterred, and some have changed their minds about carrying out an attack.<sup>130</sup>

Closure is another deterrent used by the military. Closure is imposed after terrorist attacks in Israel, the West Bank or Gaza Strip or when the security forces have information about the intention to perpetrate an attack. Closure makes it harder for terrorists to enter Israel from the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, which is surrounded by a fence. When closure is declared, the Israeli public is more alert and is likely to be able to better identify terrorists since their presence in the streets is more noticeable. Imposing a

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<sup>129</sup> Ibid., 207.

<sup>130</sup> Ibid., 213.

closure makes it harder for terrorists to enter Israel in the innocent guise of laborers and makes their movements within Israel harder.<sup>131</sup>

#### **E. Economics and Financial Interference through Law Enforcement Means**

When the non-state actor or insurgent group must raise money for operations from within its own ranks, a different dynamic comes into play. When the group suffering from the perpetuation of conflict is also subsidizing the struggle, there is greater likelihood that the larger population will grow war weary and may exert pressures on the terrorists to abandon military operations and negotiate a settlement.<sup>132</sup> In cases where the money to support the organizations comes from outside the conflict zone, almost as a form of rent, the terrorist group is less beholden to the will of the people. If terrorist organizations are severely handicapped by the loss of financial support from abroad, the targeted state has an opportunity to provide the civilian population with the material benefits, infrastructure and autonomy that would erode the insurgents' support base.<sup>133</sup>

War weariness was a crucial element bringing all sides to the negotiating table in Sri Lanka. This is due in part because the LTTE has resorted to domestic taxation, levies, and tolls of the Tamils who reside in Sri Lanka once expatriate financial contributions were precluded by anti-terror laws promulgated after 9/11. According to Charles Tilly, Columbia University Professor, the LTTE's reliance upon taxation increasingly transformed the organization into a "state in the making" responsible to its constituency,

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<sup>131</sup> Ibid., 215.

<sup>132</sup> Pedahzur, 48.

<sup>133</sup> Ibid., 48.

rather than a terrorist organization operating above the population. In response, the LTTE has also become more pragmatic and amenable to negotiation.<sup>134</sup>

From the perspective of the terrorists themselves, taxation plays a role in justifying why civilians are not sacrosanct. According to the Chechens, the people of Russia, by supporting the authorities and their taxes, are sponsoring genocide. The people of Russia say nothing, they know nothing, and they want to know nothing of the truth about Chechnya, their brains having been reliably washed by propaganda. Silent complicity with the genocide, refusal to protest actively, is why the civilians of Moscow are being killed.<sup>135</sup>

A significant part of the American strategy is to cut off financial support to terrorists. Starving terrorists of their access to money, resources, and support is second only to bringing them to justice in US national strategy. Rear Admiral D.M. Williams speaks to the benefits of following the money:

One of the policies that I like the most about what the United States has done of late is there has been a much greater emphasis on trying to follow the money that supports the terrorists. It is easier to encourage countries to cut off funding because it is not subjected to all of the scrutiny that would evoke response from people in their country who support “the cause” that has prompted the terrorist act. These people would object to turning people over for trial but they might never be aware of the efforts to cut off funding.<sup>136</sup>

### **1. Safehavens**

Financial safehavens must be eliminated. Financial systems are used by terrorist organizations as a fiscal sanctuary in which to store and transfer the funds that support their survival and operations. Such organizations use a variety of financial systems,

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<sup>134</sup> Ibid., 48.

<sup>135</sup> Ibid., 48.

<sup>136</sup> Skaine, 162.

including formal banking, wire transfers, debit and other stored value cards, online value storage and value transfer systems, the informal *hawala* system, and cash couriers. They take advantage of such financial systems through the willful complicity of financial institutions or as the result of poor oversight and monitoring practices.

Domestically, the US has hardened its financial systems against terrorist abuse by promulgating effective regulations, requiring financial institutions to report suspicious transactions, and building effective public/private partnerships. Washington will continue to work with foreign partners to ensure they develop and implement similar regulations, requirements, and partnerships with their financial institutions. It also will continue to use the domestic and international designation and targeted sanctions regimes provided by, among other mechanisms, Executive Order (E. O.) 13224, USA PATRIOT Act Section 311, and United Nations Security Council Resolution 1267 and subsequent resolutions. These tools identify and isolate those actors who form part of terrorist networks or facilitate their activities.<sup>137</sup>

## **2. U.S. Asset Freezing**

One of the tools to prevent suicide bombing is to starve its practitioners of financial resources. A key weapon in the effort to disrupt terrorist financing has been E.O. 13224, which was signed on September 23, 2001. That order, issued pursuant to the International Emergency Economic Powers Act and other authorities, provided new authorities that have been fundamental to an unprecedented effort to identify and freeze the assets of individuals and entities associated with terrorism. Under that order, the Administration has frozen the assets of 400 individuals and entities on 65 separate

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<sup>137</sup> National Strategy for Combating Terrorism, 9.

occasions. The agencies cooperating in this effort are in daily contact, examining and evaluating new names and targets for possible designation resulting in asset freezing.

US actions in relation to E.O. 13224 are not taken in isolation. The US considers other actions as well, including developing diplomatic initiatives with other governments, and coordinating law enforcement and intelligence efforts in order to shape new regulatory initiatives. While using E.O. 13224 to designate entities and organizations as "specially designated global terrorists" is the action that is most publicly visible, it is by no means the only action or the most important one that seeks to disrupt the financing of the suicide bomber's terrorist organization.<sup>138</sup>

### **3. Foreign Terrorist Organizations**

Another tool the Secretary of State has in the war on terrorist finance is the designation of Foreign Terrorist Organizations (FTO). The Congress gave the Secretary of State this authority in 1996, and 40 organizations are currently designated as FTOs. In addition to requiring the freezing of FTO assets by U.S. financial institutions that know they control or possess FTO funds, this authority renders FTO members who are aliens inadmissible to the United States, and permits their removal under certain circumstances. Once an organization is designated as an FTO, it becomes a criminal offense to knowingly provide material support or resources to the organization. Offenders are subject to prison terms of up to fifteen years or, if death results from the offense, life

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<sup>138</sup> Anthony Wayne, *Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing in the Middle East and South Asia* (U.S. Department of State, July 2005) (Database on-line), available from U.S. Department of State, Testimony before the Senate Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs, 3.

imprisonment. The designation of groups under this authority is one of the steps most widely recognized by the American public in the war on terrorism and terrorist finance.<sup>139</sup>

#### **4. United Nations Actions**

Even before 9/11, the UN Security Council (UNSC) had taken action to address the threat of terrorism. It had adopted resolutions 1267 and 1333, which together imposed sanctions against the Taliban, Osama bin Laden and al-Qaeda. Following 9/11, the UNSC stepped up its counterterrorism efforts by adopting Resolutions 1373 and 1390. Among other things, Resolution 1373 requires all states to prevent and suppress the financing of terrorist acts and to freeze the assets of terrorists and their supporters. It also imposes travel restrictions on these individuals. Resolution 1390 (strengthened by Resolutions 1455 and 1526) expanded sanctions, including asset freezes, travel restrictions and arms embargos, against Osama bin Laden and members of the Taliban as well as al-Qaeda and those associated with them. The UN 1267 Sanctions Committee maintains and updates a list of individuals and entities subject to these sanctions, which all States are obligated to implement.<sup>140</sup>

Through these actions, the UNSC has sent a clear and strong message underscoring the global commitment against terrorists and their supporters and obligating UN member states to implement asset freezes and other sanctions. This is extremely important, both because most of the assets making their way to terrorists are not under U.S. control and because when the 1267 Sanctions Committee designates individuals or entities associated with al-Qaeda, all 191 UN Member States are obligated to implement

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<sup>139</sup> Ibid., 3.

<sup>140</sup> Ibid., 3.

against those persons the applicable sanctions, which include asset freezes. The 1267 Sanctions Committee has listed over 300 persons and over 100 entities that are subject to the sanctions. With respect to South Asia, the US recently convinced the UN 1267 Sanctions Committee to list Pakistani supporters of al-Qaeda for worldwide asset freeze and travel ban.<sup>141</sup>

The international designations and asset freeze process has helped the US government develop and deepen a set of invaluable long-term relationships with interagency and international partners. Through this collaborative international effort, the U.S. government has built cooperation and the political will necessary to fight organizations that recruit and train suicide bombers, both through designations and asset freezes, as well as through operational law enforcement actions. As described above, US Government agencies meet regularly to identify, track and pursue terrorist financing targets and to determine, on a case-by-case basis, the type of appropriate action.

Designation for asset freezing should not come at the expense of taking appropriate law enforcement action. On the contrary, the two approaches frequently complement each other. There are cases where operational law enforcement action can be initiated quickly to trace, prosecute and shut down terrorists. In other cases, for instance when long-term investigations are under way, the better option may be to designate for asset freezing in order to stop the flow of money that might be used to carry out terrorist activity until law enforcement actions can be taken.<sup>142</sup>

The Holy Qur'an codifies the justification for the expansion of Islam at any cost. Wherever there is terrorism, it is ultimately supported by money. And it is not money

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<sup>141</sup> Ibid., 3.

<sup>142</sup> Ibid., 3.



merely sufficient for buying weapons and supplies for the faithful, it is money for paying the faithful to remain faithful to the terrorist political aims and goals, even if it is only money for the families of suicide bombers. The money flows in very large sums so the faithful will keep joining up and keep at their “holy” work...the well-paid “holy” work of terrorism.<sup>143</sup>

### **F. Intelligence**

The first and primary component of a counter-terrorist policy is intelligence gathering. Accordingly, the nation must invest the resources necessary to gather and process basic intelligence data and tactical intelligence regarding terrorist organizations, even, if necessary, at the expense of resources allocated to other components of the war against terrorism.<sup>144</sup>

The Intelligence Community has been reorganized. As stated in the National Security Strategy, “The Director of National Intelligence (DNI) was created to better integrate the efforts of the Community into a more unified, coordinated, and effective whole. The DNI also launched a new Open Source Center to coordinate open source intelligence and ensure this information is integrated into Intelligence Community products.”<sup>145</sup>

In addition, a National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC) was established to serve as a multi-agency center, analyzing and integrating all intelligence pertaining to terrorism, including threats to U.S. interests at home and abroad. NCTC also is responsible for developing, implementing, and assessing the effectiveness of strategic

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<sup>143</sup> Skaine, 16.

<sup>144</sup> Ganor, 295.

<sup>145</sup> National Strategy for Combating Terrorism, 10.

operational planning efforts to achieve counterterrorism objectives. Similarly, the National Counterproliferation Center was established to manage and coordinate planning and activities in those areas.<sup>146</sup>

The transformation extends to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), which, with the help of legislation such as the USA PATRIOT Act, is now more fully integrated with the Intelligence Community and has refocused its efforts on preventing terrorism. It has also been provided important tools to pursue this mission. It established a National Security Branch that integrates intelligence collection and analysis capabilities addressing the domestic terrorist threat.<sup>147</sup> As examples of other transformational events, “The CIA provides overall direction for and coordination of overseas human intelligence operations of Intelligence Community elements. In addition, the Department of the Treasury created the Office of Terrorism and Financial Intelligence to arm the country for the long term with the intelligence and tools to undercut the financial underpinnings of terrorism around the world.”<sup>148</sup>

## **CHAPTER VII**

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Over the next year, the United States and its allies in Iraq should completely turn over the responsibility for Iraq’s security to Iraq’s new government and should start systematically withdrawing troops. But these soldiers should not simply be reassigned to Iraq’s neighbors, where they will continue to enrage many in the Arab world. Instead,

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<sup>146</sup> Ibid., 10.

<sup>147</sup> Report of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, *al-Qaeda: The Many Faces of an Islamist Extremist Threat* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, June, 2006), 21.

<sup>148</sup> National Strategy for Combating Terrorism, 10.

U.S. policy should focus on keeping the peace from a discrete distance, minimizing the U.S. military footprint, and encouraging the other countries in the region to play a constructive role in stabilizing Iraq and in isolating and defeating Islamic extremists.<sup>149</sup> Doing so will help eliminate a key rationale used by suicide bombers and other terrorists.

A second recommendation is for the US Department of State and the US Agency for International Development (USAID) to develop and maintain databases showing statistics on suicide bombing incidents within countries where assistance has been provided. This information will help determine if the presence of these Agencies has had a positive influence in lessening the amount of suicide bomber attacks in the area.

## **CHAPTER VIII**

### **CONCLUSION AND SUMMARY**

The first line of defense against suicide bombers is to drastically reduce receptivity of potential recruits to recruiting organizations. It is important to know what probably will not work. Ethnic profiling, isolation, and preemptive attack on potential (but not yet actual) supporters of terrorism probably will not help. Raising literacy rates may have no effect and could be counterproductive should greater literacy translate into greater exposure to terrorist propaganda: in Pakistan, literacy and dislike for the United States increased as the number of religious madrasa schools increased from 3000 to 39,000 since 1978. Lessening poverty may have no effect, and could be counterproductive to the anti-terrorism effort if poverty reduction for the entire population amounted to a downward redistribution of wealth that left those initially better

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<sup>149</sup> Pape, 16.

off with fewer opportunities than before. Ending occupation or reducing perceived humiliation may help, but not if the population believes this to be a victory inspired by terror (e.g., Israel's apparently forced withdrawal from Lebanon).<sup>150</sup>

Since suicide-bombing is crucially (though not exclusively) an institution-level phenomenon, it will require finding the right mix of pressure and inducements to get the communities themselves to abandon support for institutions that recruit suicide attackers. One way is to so damage the community's social and political fabric that any support by the local population or authorities for sponsors of suicide attacks collapses. However, the best way to defeat the jihadists is to take away their allure and to empower moderate Muslims to attack the jihadist's messages of hate and destruction.<sup>151</sup>

Other research suggests that most people have more moderate views than what they consider their group norm to be. Inciting and empowering moderates from within to speak up against extremists can lead to lasting change and influence on the part of these individuals. Funding for civic education and debate may help, as can interfaith confidence-building through intercommunity interaction initiatives such as the one Singapore's government proposes. Another strategy is for the United States and its allies to change their behavior to lessen sentiments of grievance and humiliation, especially in Palestine where images of daily violence have made it the global focus of Moslem attention. No evidence, historical or otherwise, indicates that support for suicide terrorism will evaporate without achieving at least some fundamental goals that suicide bombers and supporting communities share.<sup>152</sup>

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<sup>150</sup> Atran, *Understanding Suicide Terrorism: Genesis and Future of Suicide Terrorism*, 9.

<sup>151</sup> *Ibid.*, 9.

<sup>152</sup> *Ibid.*, 9.

Prevention focuses on the goal of “diminishing the underlying conditions that terrorists seek to exploit,” as presented in the President’s National Strategy for Combating Terrorism (NSCT) (released in February 2003 to elaborate the new National Security Strategy of the United States). NSCT is prefaced by “an understanding of the terrorist threat” as outlined in the President’s Address to Congress on September 20, 2001. America was attacked because the 9/11 plotters “hate our freedoms” and democracy, and they incite hatred among their supporters by exploiting “conditions of poverty, deprivation, social disenfranchisement.”<sup>153</sup>

But the Pew Research Center findings indicate that populations supporting terrorist actions are actually disposed favorably to American forms of government, education, economy and personal liberty, despite these people’s trust in Osama Bin Laden and support for suicide actions. Studies by Palestinian political scientist Khalil Shikaki suggest that upwards of 80% of Palestinians consider Israel to have the most admirable form of government, with America next, although numerous polls indicate that 60-70% of Palestinians also express support for suicide attacks.<sup>154</sup>

Radical extremists hope that “Fomenting violence leads to chaos, not just in Iraq and Afghanistan, but in other states in the region as well. By de-stabilizing regional governments, the radicals are better positioned to bring pressure upon friendly, pro-American regimes, to enhance indigenous support for their efforts, and to force the withdrawal of U.S. forces in the region by drawing attention to the high numbers of civilian casualties in places where U.S. forces are conducting operations. This is why the U.S. debate over whether or not Iraq has descended into a civil war is very useful to al-Qaeda and even to the Sunni Ba’athists, who continue to cling to the hope of some day regaining power in Iraq. The very notion of civil war gives a certain legitimacy to these groups, even if they lack the

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<sup>153</sup> Ibid., 11.

<sup>154</sup> Ibid., 11.

popular bases of support that are characteristic of warring parties in a classic civil war conflict.”<sup>155</sup>

Countering terrorism requires facing problems with US appraisals and actions.

What these people dislike is not America’s internal liberties or culture, but its external actions and foreign policy. A 1997 U.S. Department of Defense Science Board report surmised in response to the suicide bombing of U.S. Air Force housing at Khobar Towers in Saudia Arabia, "Historical data show a strong correlation between U.S. involvement in international situations and an increase in terrorist attacks against the United States." <sup>156</sup>

The General Accounting Office report on Combating Terrorism highlights two key objectives to realize the NSCT goal of diminishing support for terrorism: strengthening the “Partnership Initiative” and winning the “War of Ideas.” The NSCT’s Partnership Initiative involves counterterrorism aid, including law enforcement training and military assistance, “intended to promote U.S. national security interests by contributing to global and regional stability, strengthening military support for democratically-elected governments” and fostering “democratic values including respect for internationally recognized civil and human rights.” Winning the “War of Ideas” involves foreign aid programs and media broadcasts to promote democratic values “to kindle the hopes and aspirations of freedom.”<sup>157</sup>

If suicide bombings are an epidemic, little changes in the forces behind them can have big effects, and dramatic changes can happen in a hurry. The following principles are suggested as ways to overcome the forces that have pushed suicide bombing beyond

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<sup>155</sup> Davis, 30.

<sup>156</sup> Ibid., 13.

<sup>157</sup> Ibid., 14.

the tipping point. These measures are intended to discourage potential suicide bombers and to thwart recruiters with the intent of preventing suicide bombings before they occur.

They are not intended as ways to interdict suicide bombers.

As general principles:

- Salesmen of extremist ideas should be silenced, and moderate Muslims should be given wide access that offer opportunities for them to condemn extremism.
- Extremist websites should be disrupted, either electronically or physically, or marginalized.
- Any company in a Western nation that plays host to an extremist should be heavily fined.
- TV stations that permit themselves to be instrumentalized by extremists should be penalized.
- Mosques where extremist views are preached should be closed. Groups that endorse or support extremism should be banned.
- Recruiters and handlers should be treated as accessories to murder. An active campaign to detect recruiters and handlers should be established.
- Storage depots that are identified as sources of explosives used for suicide bombings should be destroyed.
- Commercial sources should alert authorities when large quantities of over the counter ingredients that could be used for making bombs are purchased.
- Foreign policies and defense commitments should not appear to change in response to suicide bombings.

- Those who call for, defend, legitimize, or glorify terrorist acts should be condemned and stigmatized. Governments that permit radical clerics to spread extremism should be urged to stop them.
- Terrorist training camps should be rendered useless.
- Putting blame for terrorist attacks on extremists should be swift and shrill. The loss of life, particularly when it involves civilians, should be widely condemned.
- Media coverage of suicide bombings should be brief, and pictures of suspects should be broadcast only for the purposes of soliciting the public's help to gain information.
- Damage from terrorist attacks should be cleaned up, repaired or rebuilt (if practicable ) as soon as possible.
- The groups that recruit volunteers should be censured as illegitimate representatives of Islam who do not represent all Muslims.
- Commentators should express pity and regret about the deaths of suicide bombers. The perversion of self-sacrifice and the marketing of suicide to the masses should be strongly condemned.
- Potential suicide bombers should be described as being targeted by unconscionable terrorist recruiters.<sup>158</sup>

Success can be measured by answers to the following questions: Are people beginning to feel safe again in their homes, workplaces and daily lives? Are there fewer suicide attacks on innocent people? Has an end been seen to the hijacking of aircraft? Terrorism is the last desperate pitch of the humiliated and the hungry. It is the raw

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<sup>158</sup> Grier, 29.



message of those who are neither heard nor understood.<sup>159</sup> Thus, it is imperative to understand the complexity of motivations, processes, and the inner workings of organizations to suggest alternative policies to combating suicide terrorism.<sup>160</sup>

Will suicide missions continue to spread or will they abate? Once in the repertoire, it is unlikely that a new tactic will disappear altogether. Despite several “rays of light” in the dark terrain of suicide attacks (such as Turkey and Sri Lanka), it would appear that in the foreseeable future suicide attacks will continue to constitute the central threat posed by radical Islam against its adversaries in the Muslim world, the West, and at any other confrontation points of Islam versus other cultures, e.g. India and Russia. The combination of suicide attacks along with the use of non-conventional means (mega terror) may become the gravest threat to public security throughout the Free World.<sup>161</sup>

### **A War On Ideas**

The global war on terrorism is different than any other war in America’s history. However, as in most wars, America has been forced to engage in a “War on Ideas” against the enemy. This war against Islamist extremism can only be partially won through military force; the rest must be accomplished through other means as explained in this paper. The terrorists understand the importance of this tactic and are extremely adept at waging a war of ideas.<sup>162</sup>

The United States is not safe simply because it has not seen an attack on U.S. soil since September 11, 2001. The loss of key personnel, training camps and lines of

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<sup>159</sup> Whittaker, 205.

<sup>160</sup> Pedahzur, 49.

<sup>161</sup> Shay, 221.

<sup>162</sup> Report of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, *al-Qaeda: The Many Faces of an Islamist Extremist Threat* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, June 2006), 21.

communication have had a significant impact on al-Qaeda's near-term operational capabilities, but the group still remains the single, greatest threat to America, its allies and its interests abroad.<sup>163</sup>

A successful U.S. strategy will ultimately depend on American ability to counter the ideological appeal of al-Qaeda and other Islamist extremist groups. Understanding the Islamist extremist ideology will not allow the US to influence the terrorists-these extremists cannot be reasoned with. It cannot expect to win the hearts and minds of those who have already been indoctrinated into the jihadist cause. It can, however, look to influence younger generations that may be vulnerable to recruitment.<sup>164</sup>

Today, the remnants of al-Qaeda and radical Islamist terrorist groups with like-minded goals and ideologies remain the single most important threat to the national security of the United States. Although al-Qaeda has suffered significant setbacks since 9/11, the organization is constantly evolving, and its leaders patiently wait for the right opportunity to direct another attack against the United States. As evidenced by Osama bin Laden's statement from January 2006, al-Qaeda's leadership still possesses the desire to carry out further attacks. Breaking a fourteen-month silence, bin Laden said, "As for similar operations taking place in America, it is only a matter of time. They (the terrorists) [*sic*] are in the final stages, and you will see them in the heart of your land as soon as the planning is complete."<sup>165</sup> Spokesmen of al-Qaeda have taunted the West several times. They say "We are not afraid of Death as you are," and "We love Death more than we love Life, and that is why we will win."<sup>166</sup> The solution to ending suicide

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<sup>163</sup> Ibid., 21.

<sup>164</sup> Ibid., 21.

<sup>165</sup> Ibid., 6.

<sup>166</sup> Charny, 133.

bombing is still as far away as it has ever been.<sup>167</sup> The US needs to prepare itself for the overwhelming likelihood that hell is going to happen if the deterrent methods of D.I.M.E.F.I.L. are not used.<sup>168</sup>

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<sup>167</sup> The History Channel, *Inside the Mind of a Suicide Bomber* (A&E Television Networks, 2002).

<sup>168</sup> Charny, 183.

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## VITA

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