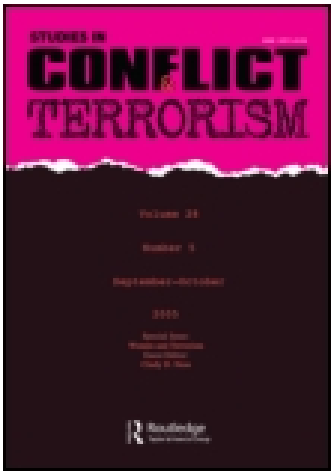

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Terrorism, Signaling, and Suicide Attack

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Terrorism, Signaling, and Suicide Attack

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This article examines the strategic utility of suicide terrorism. Suicide terrorism, we suggest, can be thought of as a form of strategic "signaling." We define terrorism as a signaling game in which terrorist attacks are used to communicate a group's character and objectives to a set of target audiences. This is followed by an examination of the utility of suicide attacks as a signaling tactic. The relative effectiveness of suicide operations is evaluated in relation to other tactical options that are traditionally available to terrorist organizations. We go on to examine the institutional and social context of suicide terrorism, concluding with an examination of the evolutionary use of suicide attacks by Palestinian terrorist organizations and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam.

"Though this be madness, yet there is method in it."
—William Shakespeare, *Hamlet* (1601)

Shortly before 6:20 on Sunday morning 23 October 1983 a yellow Mercedes truck drove slowly into the parking lot in front of the Marine Battalion Landing Team compound located on the edge of Beirut International Airport. Witnesses reported that the truck suddenly sped up, crashed through a concertina wire barrier that surrounded the compound, and accelerated toward the central building of the complex housing the Marine contingent. After passing between two guard posts, it entered an open gateway leading to the building, rapidly maneuvered around three sewer pipes, drove through a sandbagged sentry post, and accelerated at speed into the entry lobby of the Marine barracks. A fraction of a second later it exploded.

The blast lifted the four story reinforced concrete structure off of its foundation. The building then collapsed on itself, crushing those who were sleeping inside. The explosion left a crater 30 feet deep and 120 feet across and shattered windows over a half mile away. The attack had taken less than a minute to execute. A total of 241 Marines and other military personnel were killed in the incident and 100 were injured,

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making it the deadliest terrorist attack against an American target up until that time. Only 40 seconds after the attack, another truck bomb penetrated the perimeter of the French peacekeeping compound two miles north of the airport in the vicinity of central Beirut. The explosive power of this attack was similar to that carried out against the Marines. The blast completely destroyed the eight story building used to billet French forces, killing 58 soldiers and wounding 15 others.

Similar attacks had been carried out almost a year earlier against a compound used by Israeli occupation forces in Tyre in November 1982, and five months later against the U.S. embassy in Beirut in April 1983. Although the resulting casualties in each case were significant, neither incident had the political impact of those conducted in the fall of 1983. The destruction of the Marine and French compounds marked the beginning of the end of the Western military presence in Lebanon. The attacks emboldened the opposition and resulted in a dramatic upswing in violence against Western interests. They also resulted in a significant escalation in antigovernment violence. Within four months, all peacekeeping forces had been withdrawn, leaving Lebanon to its fate. The tactical and strategic success of the attacks demonstrated the value of suicide operations to would-be emulators. Some of these would later cite the attack against the Marine barracks as one of the factors that led to their own decision to resort to suicide terrorism.[1]

The purpose of this article is to examine the strategy that underlies the terrorist use of suicide tactics. Such attacks have a public and private face. At a public level, suicide bombers appear to be unfathomable fanatics, who are prepared to go to any length, including their own self-destruction, to increase the harm and psychological distress they are able to inflict on their opponents. At a deeper level of analysis, however, suicide attacks are employed as an instrumental tactic designed to support the political interests of the group. The choreographed drama of suicide attacks is designed to create a specific set of images in the minds of their target audience. These generated images are, in turn, used by sponsoring groups to advance a range of different operational objectives.

This article begins by examining the decision to employ terrorism as a form of strategic "signaling." This is followed by a discussion of the role of suicide attacks as a signaling tactic, and a brief discussion of the mechanisms that are used by sponsoring groups to recruit individuals for suicide operations. The article concludes by examining the strategic and tactical evolution of suicide operations on the part of Palestinian terrorist groups, notably Hamas, Palestine Islamic Jihad (PIJ), and the Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigade, and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE).

Terrorist Strategy as a Signaling Game[2]

> "There's no business like show business."
>
> —Irving Berlin (1946)

The rational use of terrorism can be thought of as a signaling game in which high profile attacks are carried out to communicate a player's ability and determination to use violence to achieve its political objectives. Such attacks are conducted in an environment of incomplete and often asymmetric information. The terrorist group, in this case, may (or may not) be well informed about the relevant attributes of its target audience. Those it hopes to influence, however, are almost always poorly informed about the objectives, resources, and commitment of the group. This is certainly true during the initial period of the struggle. Terrorist attacks in these circumstances are frequently used as signals to shape target audience perceptions in a way that advances the organization's political position.[3]

Terrorism is a constrained choice. The constraints that shape this choice are typically due to one of two considerations. The first is a lack of significant political support in an otherwise open political environment. Individuals are unwilling to back the opposition in this case not because they cannot but because they will not. The group's operational horizons are limited accordingly. Violence in general and terrorism in particular is an alternative means of achieving a measure of political leverage where the level of popular support for the opposition and its objectives do not otherwise give it an effective political voice. The second is the presence of significant popular support in the absence of alternative means of political expression. Individuals are unwilling to back the opposition, in this case, not because they will not but because they cannot. Violence is a means of achieving a political voice in the face of an otherwise closed political system. In either case, terrorism is a tactic of the weak. It is designed to offset an opposition group's opening disadvantages and place it on a more equal footing with the state.

Although terrorism can prove to be a cost-effective instrument of political action, it is not cost free. The costs of pursuing such a campaign, furthermore, are complicated by the inverse relationship that exists between the security and operational efficiency of all illicit organizations, both criminal and political. Security in each of these sets of cases is a hard constraint. For obvious reasons, underground organizations cannot operate openly and expect to operate at all for very long. To maintain the minimum level of anonymity needed to stay in the game, they must build in a wide range of fire walls, procedural constraints, and organizational redundancies into their day-to-day operations to keep their opponents guessing. Each layer of security increases their inefficiency and reduces their ability to act. How much security is enough depends on the nature of their operating environment. In a permissive environment, a group may be able to safely strip away many of its more onerous security procedures and reduce its "per unit" cost of operations. As its environment becomes increasingly restricted, however, the necessary minimum level of security will increase. The cost of doing business will rise accordingly.[4]

A similar relationship exists between security and influence. Terrorist groups must maintain a minimum "violent presence" to remain effective. They begin to disappear as a political force as they fall off the headlines. This will not only undermine their ability to achieve their long run objectives, it can also quickly begin to interfere with their ability to sustain themselves as an organized force. To hold their audience (and hold themselves together) they must continue to act. The immediate challenge this poses is that the process of planning, preparing, and carrying out a terrorist campaign raises a group's operational signature. This, in turn, will increase its risk of detection and increase its operating costs.[5] Terrorists organizations, from this perspective, operate on the horns of a dilemma. They face two inversely related ways in which they can be destroyed or otherwise suppressed. In an effort to avoid one type of error they increase the likelihood of committing the other. To stay in the game, they must continue to do enough damage to hold the attention of their target audience, without exposing their core organization and becoming an easy mark for those who are trying to put them out of business.

Terrorism can be used to support two different types of strategies. The first is a strategy of coercion or "dirty bargaining."[6] The group's primary target audience, in this case, is the state. Violence is employed as a means of modifying the behavior of the incumbent regime through the threat of continued terrorist attacks if the organization's demands are not satisfied. Like any such strategy, the intermediate function of coercive terrorism is to convince the target of extortion that the net expected costs of defiance exceed the net expected gains. This can be achieved by either manipulating the price the

target must pay for noncompliance, or by increasing the probability that he will have to actually pay a given price if he chooses not to comply. The outcome of the contest will depend on the amount of coercive pressure the organization is able to impose on the (subjective) calculations of enemy decision makers. This will clearly vary across targets and over time.

Signaling attacks can also support a strategy of political mobilization. In this case, the primary target audience is the group's political base or "identification group."[7] In contrast to a strategy of dirty bargaining, the objective of this strategy is not to negotiate a partial settlement with the state but to eliminate it altogether. Terrorist actions can help achieve this goal by defining the nature of the stakes involved in the struggle, attracting attention to the cause, provoking the state into retaliatory actions that radicalize public opinion—pushing individuals into the arms of the opposition—and reshaping popular attitudes concerning the direction and outcome of the fight. This, in turn, it is hoped, will stimulate popular activism, bolster the group's base of support, jump-start the mobilization process, and help achieve a self-sustaining rate of organizational growth. The same actions can have a corresponding demobilization effect on the state, separating the regime from its own political base and further improving the relative position of the opposition.

Each of these strategies is defined by a very different long run objective. The first is based on negotiating a better division of a contested political "pie." Terrorist organizations, in this case, are prepared to reach a compromise solution that leaves something for each player if a division can be found that is acceptable to both sides. The second is based on seizing the pie altogether. Terrorist objectives, in this case, are absolute. They would rather fight than talk. Distinguishing between the two is often complicated by the fact that, in the short run at least, terrorists typically carry out *mixed* strategies. Groups engaged in a program of violent bargaining often actively attempt to expand their base of popular support (and undermine support for their opponent) in a long run effort to enhance their position at the negotiating table. Similarly, groups pursuing a mobilization strategy will often attempt to negotiate short run concessions from the state in a long run effort to attract attention, enhance their *bona fides*, and expand their base of political support.

Both strategies are designed to manipulate target audience expectations. Those pursuing a coercive strategy must be able to pose a credible threat in the minds of their negotiating "partners." A group's credibility will turn on target expectations concerning the nature of the threat and the group's ability and willingness to carry through on its promise to strike if a bargain is not struck.[8] This will be based on the answers to a number of questions. How much is the group and its following willing to sacrifice to achieve its goals? How much will it cost the group to make good on its threats? Does it have the means to do so? Will it be able to sustain its campaign over time? What are the relative expected costs and benefits of fighting and folding in the face of terrorist demands? The answer to these and similar questions can only begin to be answered once the group has begun to operate. With this in mind, coercive terrorist attacks carried out in one time period are designed to enhance the group's perceived ability to pose a *future* challenge.[9]

The manipulation of target audience expectations is also central to a strategy of political mobilization. The principal target of influence, in this case, is not the state but the group's own constituents. Violent opposition groups are typically built around a "hard core" minority of unconditional supporters. Majority support, however, is clearly much softer. Most individuals—regardless of their opening preferences—are willing to

support either side depending on the expected costs and benefits of backing the state, backing the opposition, and remaining on the sidelines. This poses an early mobilization problem for the challenger, who begins the game from a position of relative obscurity and objective material disadvantage. The expected returns from joining the group are low and the expected costs are high. Why would anyone want to join in the first place? Terrorist organizations attempt to overcome this mobilization challenge through the use of symbolic violence. In the absence of further information, violence is used as a surrogate measure by the group's target audience to estimate the size of the opposition, its relative capabilities, and its corresponding political prospects. Terrorist actions, under these circumstances, are designed to create a self-fulfilling prophecy in which popular beliefs in the group's ability to challenge the state permit it to overcome its opening disadvantages and mobilize the level of support it requires to go on to win.[10]

Terrorist organizations face a paradox. Their success depends on an appearance of strength that is sufficiently great to intimidate their enemies or mobilize their supporters, depending on their objectives. The problem, of course, is that they are seldom as strong as they must appear. As noted earlier, terrorists are defined not by their strength but their weakness, which is why they are forced to adopt a signaling strategy in the first place. If an opposition group were strong enough to impose its will on the enemy directly—at the negotiating table or on the battlefield—it would do so. Its success would no longer depend on the negotiated cooperation of its opponents or the conditional support of its friends. Resolving this paradox requires terrorist groups to appear to be better than they are. The signals they send, through their choice of *targets*, *tactics*, and the *timing* of their attacks, are designed to create and sustain this illusion.[11] For behavioral purposes, this is good enough. To the degree the illusion is accepted, their target audiences will act as if it is true. In doing so, they can help make it true, providing terrorist organizations with the support they require to transform themselves into the political force that those who originally bought into the illusion assumed they were all along.

Terrorist signaling strategies, in this respect, have a deceptive quality. Like every deception, they are based on hiding the truth and showing the false.[12] Terrorist attacks are designed to simulate (show) an image of strength and determination, and dissimulate (hide) the group's real state of play, to include its membership, location, resource base, and often its larger political purpose. The target audience is intended to know only what it sees. It is not in terrorist interests to allow their audience to see through the image they are attempting to project to the constrained reality that almost certainly lies behind the curtain. As J. Bowyer Bell and Barton Whaley have noted of deception in general, this requirement arises out of the nature of the power relationship between the terrorist and the state. The weak, they observe, have only four options. They can submit, they can run away, they can gamble everything on one role of the dice and openly revolt—"or they may cheat." In cheating, they choose to adopt a deception strategy designed to offset the "brute strength" of their opponents and "enhance their freedom of action."[13]

The target of influence in this contest is seldom a passive observer. This is certainly not the case with the target government, which will not only be actively attempting to find, fix, and destroy the opposition, but will be working to develop an accurate picture of the threat the group is likely to pose down the road. In a situation like this, as Erving Goffman has noted, a contest over assessment occurs.[14] Illusion and reality become strategic and, therefore, contested commodities. The state and the terrorists' constituents do not want to be taken in by a false image. The group, for its part, wants to sustain its generated image in the face of efforts (on the part of both sides) to determine whether and to what degree it is true. The terrorists' job is to manage the illusion. It is the job of

their audience to try and determine whether there is more or less to what it sees than meets the eye. It may be harder, in these circumstances, for terrorists to fool their enemies than their friends. The latter have a motivated bias to believe what they see; the former to discount it. To the degree this is true, however, their enemies will be surprised later on if the group ever manages to become what it pretended to be all along.

The challenge terrorists face, in this respect, is not dissimilar to that of the professional magician, who "tricks" the audience by turning a false image into a perceived reality. As the magician Henry Hay once noted, conjurers "live in a half world, divided into out front (which is magical) and back stage (where the wires are)." "The first is what is portrayed; it is the 'effect' that the audience perceives. The latter is what is concealed; it is the hidden method or routine by which the effect is obtained."[15] The same is true of terrorist organizations. Like the efforts of Henry Hay and his colleagues, their work must be visible and invisible at the same time. Their actions, which are chosen for their theatrical value, are played out on a public stage. The organizational architecture that underlies a group's signaling attacks, however, must remain hidden from view. This is not only necessary for reasons of security, but for the group's long run success, which depends on generating and maintaining a false image long enough to achieve its operational objectives. Their ability to hide themselves and manage their signal can provide terrorist organizations with a significantly higher level of political leverage than they would be able to achieve if their target audiences took a look back stage.

Suicide Attack as a Signaling Tactic

> "The important thing to know about an assassination or an attempted assassination is not who fired the shot, but who paid for the bullet."
>
> —Eric Ambler, *A Coffin for Demetrios* (1939)

As the late Ehud Sprinzak noted, the employment of suicide attacks is one step in a multistage organizational process involving a range of different bit players.[16] Having made the decision to carry out an attack, the sponsoring group must find a suitable recruit, provide that individual with the mental and tactical training he or she needs to complete the operation, select and surveil an appropriate target, and then carry out the attack. In the case of a suicide bombing, an improvised explosive device must also be fabricated that will be either worn, carried, or driven to the target. Depending on the circumstances of the planned attack, this can sometimes require a high level of customization and a corresponding level of expertise. Those involved behind the scenes are the supporting cast in a "street theater" that is designed to end with the self-destruction of the terrorist and the death of his victims. The final stage is to exploit the effects of the operation and any counteraction it invokes on the part of the state and the target population.

At the group level, suicide tactics are an instrumental choice, designed to achieve a range of possible short run and long run strategic objectives. As James March has argued, such choices are shaped by a "logic of consequence." This logic assumes that decision makers have an established and stable set of preferences, look forward in time to evaluate the probable consequences of their actions, and select the operational alternative that offers the highest expected return. The decision to act (or not act) depends on the answers to four questions. What kinds of actions are possible? What are the likely consequences associated with each alternative? What is the relative value of each possible outcome in relation to the objectives of the group? What decision rule will be

applied to choose from among the alternatives?[17] Reduced to its essentials, this approach to decision making can be considered to be a problem of constrained optimization. Based on their constraints and a set of prior beliefs about their operating environment, group decision makers are looking for a strategy that either maximizes the expected return to the organization for a given level of effort, or minimizes the expected costs of achieving a given set of goals.[18]

The systematic use of suicide attacks is one way of attempting to resolve the dilemma that faces all terrorist groups at the beginning of the game: the need to appear to be better than they are if they are ever going to be as good as they need to become to beat the odds. For the group pursuing a strategy of dirty bargaining, suicide operations are a creative way of raising the expected costs of resisting its demands. The signal they are intended to send is that the state would be better off striking the necessary bargain today than holding out the hope that it will be able to deter, contain, or eliminate the threat of even greater violence in the future. Similarly, for the group pursuing a mobilization strategy, suicide attacks are a means of increasing the expected benefits of supporting the opposition. The objective, in this case, is to capture the headlines, convince potential members that it has what it takes to win, and extend its base of active support. Suicide operations, in both instances, are a means of achieving more with less. If terrorism in general, as noted earlier, can be considered to be a cost-effective instrument of political action, suicide attacks can be thought of as a cost-effective instrument of terror.

First, suicide attacks, on average, offer a more reliable means of inflicting higher casualties than any other conventional terrorist operation of comparable size. As a number of commentators have noted, the individuals carrying out the attacks can be thought of as low tech "smart bombs" with a "human guidance system."[19] Like their high tech counterparts, they offer a greater probability of engaging and destroying their targets with a reduced risk of unwanted collateral destruction.[20] Although these operations are typically launched against predesignated targets, the bombers themselves are able to provide real time course corrections on the way to their objective, varying the timing, the circumstances, and sometimes the specific target of attack to improve their chances of success.[21] The results have been significant. Since September 2000 and the onset of the second Intifada, for example, 114 (successful and attempted) suicide attacks have been launched against Israel targets. Almost 50 percent of these have resulted in at least one Israeli death. Even more significant is the total casualty count of 374 dead and 2,755 wounded, a figure that is significantly greater than Palestinian terrorist operations prior to this time. Many who survive are horribly maimed and disfigured.

Second, the "echo effect" of suicide bombings is generally greater than that of most conventional terrorist attacks.[22] This is due not only to their average number of casualties, but the tactic itself, which is newsworthy in its own right. A terrorist action is ultimately a publicity stunt, designed to gain the highest possible exposure. Terrorists hope to put together an operational "package that is so spectacular, so violent, so compelling, that the [media], acting as executives, supplying the cameras and the audience, cannot refuse the offer."[23] Suicide attacks support this objective nicely. The violence of the average suicide attack is impossible to ignore. Equally significant is the inherent drama of the attack itself, which not only ends in the self-destruction of the attacker, but the death and injury of a specifically selected group of victims. Those killed do not die by chance; they are chosen for their innocence. The bomber selects his targets, walks among them, looks into their faces, and detonates his bomb. The choreographed brutality of the act commands attention.

Third, it is sometimes rational to employ irrational agents.[24] Rational players weigh

the costs and benefits of their alternatives before making a choice, choosing the course of action that offers the highest expected return. Irrational actors make no such calculations. They appear to be impervious to reason, acting on impulse and emotion, in ways that are often inconsistent with what reasonable people would assume is in their best interests. For most rational observers, suicide attackers fall squarely within this category. Such individuals are not only prepared to take "suicidal" risks to achieve their goals, they are prepared to kill himself to prove it. The result is a threat that, to most observers, appears to be impossible to deter or defend against. This, of course, is precisely the image that the sponsoring group wishes to project. Suicide attacks, among other things, are designed to signal that a group's following is disciplined, dedicated, and a little "crazy for the cause." This, in turn, is used to cultivate an image of (controlled) strength and determination on the part of the sponsoring group as a whole, enhancing its leverage at the bargaining table and increasing its reputation as an effective counterweight to the state.

Fourth, suicide attacks can also serve as a means of building solidarity with a group's political base. As will be seen shortly, the systematic employment of such tactics cannot take place in the absence of enabling social norms. They do not occur in a vacuum, but in the context of a larger social and cultural environment that can promote or retard a group's efforts to carry out these attacks and exploit their effects. The lines of influence in such cases, however, work both ways. Popular acceptance of suicide tactics is clearly an essential prerequisite if a group expects to advance its position by killing off its membership and still find the follow-on volunteers needed to sustain its campaign over time. Once accepted, however, suicide attacks can prove to be a source of unity between the terrorist group and its political constituents. The death of a martyr is presented as a collective loss, not only for the organization with which he was affiliated, but the community from which he volunteered. Honoring his memory requires honoring the cause he chose to die for, a psychological response that further binds his survivors to the group.

Fifth, in a similar vein, suicide attacks can serve as an instrument of "auto-propaganda," designed to focus and motivate the group's own internal membership.[25] It has been suggested that extremist elements within any radical organization tend to reflect the underlying (but often untapped) emotions of the larger collective. They also reflect the group's ideological identity in its purest form, which plays an important role in shaping the behavior of its membership (and political constituency).[26] The actions of such individuals bring these emotions and identities to the fore. In so doing, they reinforce the group's sense of who they are, what they are about, why they are fighting, and where they are headed, all of which are essential for the long run survival and effectiveness of any underground political organization. Suicide attacks—and the cultivated legacies that follow them—serve these purposes well as internal symbols of group cohesion and commitment. Although those who volunteer are typically marginal players within their own organizations, their sacrifice takes on an importance that transcends their objective insignificance. Group unity is reinforced by evoking a common solidarity with the dead hero.

Sixth, in the case of organizations like Hamas and Palestine Islamic Jihad, which specialize in suicide attacks against civilian targets, the self-sacrifice of the suicide bomber may also be a subtle way of deflecting a moral backlash on the part of their own constituencies—in whose name these operations are carried out. The results of such attacks are graphically depicted on Israeli television and in the press. Justifying the brutal death and crippling injury of a group of elderly men and women on a public bus, a group of

young mothers walking together with their newborn infants, or a party of teenage girls celebrating a birthday at a local pizzeria, is impossible to do unless a significant sacrifice has been made in atonement. The fact that the attacker, in these and other cases, was willing to trade his own life for those of his victims helped permit a sympathetic audience to balance out the crime.[27] The use of such tactics allows the sponsoring group to have it both ways. On the one hand, the destructive drama of suicide attacks against soft civilian targets makes them a highly effective instrument of terror. At the same time, the self-sacrificial quality of these actions permits the group to mobilize popular support behind a class of action that might otherwise seem extreme to all but its most hardened followers.

Seventh, carrying out a suicide attack is cheap. This is certainly the case when these operations are compared to their relative returns. Although the ability to carry out such attacks systematically depends on a preexisting organizational infrastructure that is able to recruit and prepare suicide attackers and direct them to their targets, the variable costs of these operations are insignificant. The improvised explosive devices worn or carried by a suicide bomber, for example, can cost less than $150 to produce. The bombers themselves are expendable assets.[28] They are worth more dead than alive. Even the sunk organizational costs can be comparatively modest. In the case of such poorly institutionalized groups as the PIJ, many of those who volunteer are not true affiliates in the first place. Many, it seems, are outsiders, who are isolated and processed as they come, given rudimentary training in how to detonate their bomb, and delivered to their target within days or, at most, a few weeks of their first contact with the group. The handling costs and infrastructure requirements in such cases are quite limited.

The routinization of suicide operations varies widely. All other things being equal, a group's ability to carry out such attacks will reflect its general level of organizational development. This is not always apparent to outside observers, who are able to witness the publicized effects of these actions but are not able to look behind the scenes at the staged preparations that led up to the operation in the first place. At one end of the spectrum are organizations such as the LTTE and Hamas, which appear to be able to order up, prepare, and carry out suicide attacks on demand. Suicide operations, in these cases, have become a standardized tactic, carried out as necessary according to the organization's own political timetable. At the other end of the spectrum are groups such as Kuwati Dawa, the Algerian Armed Islamic Group, Lashkar-e-taiba, and Ansar al-Islam, which have all shown an interest in suicide attacks, but in an unsystematic and periodic manner. In between are well institutionalized groups like Al Qaeda, which have the means to employ suicide attacks more frequently than they have, and Islamic Jihad, which employs suicide attacks regularly but from a comparatively weak base of institutional support.

The Institutional Politics of Martyrdom

> "Martyrdom . . . [is] the only way a man can become famous without ability"
> —George Bernard Shaw, *The Devil's Disciple* (1897)

Suicide attacks, as previously noted, can be evaluated at two different levels of analysis. At the level of the group, these attacks are a rational choice. Given a set of tactical alternatives, terrorist groups can be expected to choose the option with the best expected outcome given their objectives and operating assumptions. Rationality, in such cases, does not depend on the nature of a group's decisions, but on the nature of the decision

process that was used to select a "best" course of action. Decision making, in these cases, is forward looking in the sense that it is made with an eye toward the downstream consequences of current actions. It is also utility-based in the sense that the options available to the group are evaluated with respect to an ordered set of preferences. Terrorist organizations, as stated earlier, like other rational actors, are looking for the highest return on their investment. As long as the net return on one-way missions is believed to be higher than the net expected benefits of an organization's tactical alternatives, they will continue. Should this ever begin to change, the incidence of such attacks will begin to decline in turn.

The same logic, arguably, does not apply at the level of the individual. As Krueger and Malečková have noted, the instrumental explanation for why individuals sign up for suicide attacks is basically the same as rational choice explanations for why people decide to assume a life of crime.[29] This line of reasoning is well developed in the work of Gary Becker, who argues that criminals, like everyone else, decide to allocate their time and resources between legal and illegal activities in a way that maximizes their utility.[30] "After accounting for the risks of being caught and penalized, the size of the penalty, and any stigma or moral distress" associated with breaking the law, those who receive a higher return from engaging in criminal activity will elect to do so.[31] In principle, there are clearly rewards in most cultural settings conferred on those who are willing to sacrifice themselves for the common good. The obvious problem with using these and similar utility-based incentives to explain why individuals elect to become suicide attackers is that, having killed themselves, they are no longer around to collect their return.

Proponents of rational choice counter this point by suggesting that those who carry out such attacks are not motivated by an earthly payoff but the rewards of the hereafter. They are essentially cutting a deal with God. Much of the rhetoric surrounding the religious use of suicide attacks on the part of groups like Hezbollah and Hamas might appear, at first, to support this line of reasoning. Killing oneself for the cause is not only said to be the right thing to do, it can be highly rewarding. There are two problems with this argument. First, it assumes that would-be volunteers can be both self-serving enough to think they can bargain with God, and still have sufficient conviction to believe that killing themselves in the name of the almighty is a reasonable economic risk. True believers, by definition, are not motivated by material gains. One has to be a true believer, however, to assume that God will actually be there when the time comes to fulfill his end of the bargain. The second problem is less philosophical. Only about 60 percent of the suicide attacks that have been carried out since 1983 have been conducted by religious organizations.[32] The rest were conducted by groups with no heavenly claims. Even if it could be concluded that religiously motivated individuals are involved in nothing more than an economic transaction, this cannot explain why those affiliated with secular groups are also willing to kill themselves in the absence of a transcendental payoff.

The decision to become a suicide bomber, we suggest, is better evaluated as a case of "rule following" than a case of utility maximization in the traditional sense of the term. Where the latter, as noted earlier, is based on a "logic of consequence," the former is based on a "logic of appropriateness."[33] The choices individuals make, in this view, are not based on calculations of future returns, but on what they consider to be the correct course of action under the circumstances. Following March, rule-based decision making depends on the answers to three questions: What kind of situation am I confronted with? What kind of person am I? How should someone like myself respond to a

situation like this? The answers to these questions, he goes on to argue, are tied to the concept of identity. Individual identities provide a template for framing and interpreting the world, defining one's place in the world, and shaping one's responses to external events. Making a choice, in such cases, is not a matter of identifying and selecting the course of action that offers the highest expected return, but a process of "matching rules to recognized situations."[34]

Identities, March argues, shape individual behavior in several ways. First, they define a person's "essential nature." In so doing, they provide a role model or set of behavioral protocols that help people translate who they think they are into how they should behave. Second, they provide a set of "prepackaged contracts." Individuals assume the roles they do with the understanding that they will be treated in certain ways in return. In a social setting, behavior that is consistent with the larger identity of the group is rewarded, whereas actions that deviate from the common identity are penalized. Third, identities—and the behavioral rules they embody—frequently become "assertions of morality." This is certainly true in relation to the life and death issues of interest here. Where this is the case, the behavioral guidelines embodied in a person's social identity assume a perceptual quality that is valued in its own right, in the absence of any exogenous incentives or sanctions. Individuals can violate a logic of consequence, as March suggests, and be thought of as stupid or naïve, but if they violate the moral imperative of their shared social identity they can expect to be condemned for their lack of virtue.[35]

The identities of suicide bombers are shaped by their larger social context and by the organizations that sponsor them. The first lays the groundwork for the second. The systematic use of suicide attacks occurs in environments that emphasis the importance of communal bonds and possess a tradition of self-sacrifice. Individuals, in such settings, define themselves through their connections with and responsibilities to others rather than through individuated identities that set them apart. Sponsoring organizations, for their part, look for individuals who manifest these traits and who have been radicalized by their political circumstances. They must also, of course, be expendable, which explains why suicide bombers are almost always either recruited for the task, signed on as "walk ins," or drawn from the organization's rank and file. Having found their man (or woman), the group takes over the final task of preparing the recruit to carry out their mission. This, at least in part, is also a socialization process, designed to reinforce the qualities for which the individual was selected in the first place and ensure that their sense of identity and obligation are aligned with the group's operational requirements.

The language of "martyrdom" has replaced the language of "suicide." The difference is more than semantic. Where the latter is considered to be a self-destructive and irrational act of desperation or mental pathology, the former is almost universally perceived to be a deliberate and ennobling act of self-sacrifice. "He who commits suicide," as one Muslim cleric observed, "kills himself for his own benefit; he who commits martyrdom sacrifices himself for the sake of his religion and his nation . . . the Mujahid is full of hope."[36] The framework that distinguishes between the two is socially constructed. Martyrs do not exist independently but in the minds of those who confer their status. They are known by the nature of their actions, which end in their deaths, but the larger purpose and nobility of their sacrifice is defined by the societal and cultural context within which their deeds are carried out and interpreted. The social basis of this interpretation has given sponsoring groups the opportunity to reframe suicide attacks as acts of *self*-martyrdom. In so doing, they have helped popularize these attacks in the eyes of their political constituents and ensured themselves a steady stream of recruits.

The concept of martyrdom has both sacred and secular foundations. Those Islamic

groups that employ suicide tactics, for example, draw explicitly on a well-developed tradition of *Shahada*, or martyrdom, in Islamic thought. Martyrdom is believed to place an individual on par with the prophets. The death of a martyr is not believed to be an ending but a new beginning. In the words of one cleric, "From the moment his first drop of blood spills, [the martyr] feels no pain and he is absolved of all his sins; he sees his seat in heaven; he is spared the tortures of the grave; he is spared the horrors of the Day of Judgment; . . . he can vouch for 70 of his family members to enter paradise; he earns the crown of glory whose precious stone is worth all of this world."[37] As suggested earlier, such statements should not be thought of merely as a suicide incentive package, but as a metaphor or indicator of the spiritual significance of sacrificing oneself in the eyes of the almighty. The purpose, however, is no less manipulative—to recruit volunteers to kill themselves in the name of God but in the interests of the sponsoring group. Religious terrorists are not recruiting from a pool of profit maximizers but a pool of true believers.

The roots of secular martyrdom are found in the cross-cultural tradition of the hero.[38] The stories that make up this tradition almost always involve a confrontation with evil and the hero's self-sacrifice to save the lives and the honor of his people. With death, he becomes a martyr. The hero "who laughs aloud while his foes cut his heart out of his living flesh shows himself to be superior to his conquerors. He says to them, in effect, 'You can do nothing to me because I do not care what you do.' They kill him, but he dies undefeated."[39] As Bourdieu has said of culture in general, such traditions are passed on and absorbed unconsciously—they become part of a shared social and cultural identity.[40] Once in place, however, they are subject to organizational manipulation. The LTTE, for example, justifies and promotes the use of martyrdom attacks by drawing implicitly on Hindu traditions of heroic self-sacrifice, asceticism, and obligation, all of which are embedded in the cognitive fabric of Tamil society. The same is true of such secular groups as the Al-Aqsa Brigades and the PKK, which are able to draw on cultural traditions that celebrate and elevate those who deliberately sacrifice themselves for the common good. Secular martyrs are offered symbolic immortality in the memories of their identity group.

At the organizational level, the deaths of martyrs are celebrated rather than mourned. In the case of the Tamil Tigers and Palestinian groups, in particular, this has become a standardized (and subsidized) cultural ritual. The Tigers herald their martyrs as "great heroes" (*maha veerer*).[41] Those who have died in the service of *Eelam* are venerated by the group and its supporters as ascetics (*sannyasis*), "who have renounced their personal desires and transcended their egoistic existence for a common cause of higher virtue."[42] The Jaffna peninsula in northern Sri Lanka, the center of the resistance, is dotted with hundreds of shrines of those who have sacrificed themselves for Tamil independence. The rituals and absolutions performed at these sites are similar to those reserved for deities and saints. "People bedeck these 'shrines of martyrs' with offerings of flowers and oil as they normally do in their temples or holy shrines."[43] July 5th of each year is celebrated throughout areas of LTTE control as "Black Tigers Day," to celebrate the death of the first self-martyr, "Captain Millar," who drove a truck filled with explosives into a Sinhalese army camp on that day in 1987. A "national" monument was unveiled on 5 July 1999 in Puthkuthirippu in the Wanni to commemorate Millar and his followers.[44]

Similar rituals have been instituted by Palestinian terrorists. Martyrs and the details of their missions are glorified and "immortalized" in various forms of propaganda—much of it generated by the initiating group itself—including film, audio cassettes, street posters, graffiti, popular literature, and websites. In recent years, calendars cropping up in Palestinian neighborhoods are reported to feature a "martyr of the month."[45] Each

organization has its own particular "hall of heroes." Streets on the West Bank and Gaza have been renamed after those who have sacrificed themselves for the cause and memorials have been erected to commemorate their passing. The deaths of self-martyrs are regularly proclaimed in the Palestinian press. Their funerals are described as weddings, in which the heroic *shahid* is married to "the black eyed" who joined him in heaven. Those in attendance come to celebrate the wedding, not mourn the victim. Candies and sweet coffee are customarily offered to the guests rather than the unsweetened coffee that is traditionally served at funerals. The family and friends of the attacker are congratulated for their loss. Their own status is elevated by his death.

The operational cycle of suicide attacks, in such cases, can be self-reinforcing. This process was first evident within Hezbollah during the mid 1980s and is currently in evidence within the Tamil Tigers, Hamas, Palestine Islamic Jihad, and the Al-Aqsa Brigades which, by now, have all become quite good at exploiting the perceptual effects of their attacks to generate a crop of follow-on volunteers. Palestinian groups, for example, now regularly videotape the last testaments of those who are about to die to distribute after their deaths. These tapes are specifically designed to evoke a sense of pride and reciprocal obligation on the part of their viewing audience. The tapes typically show the then "living martyr" standing tall, wearing his suicide vest, holding a copy of the Koran and a Kalashnikov, calling on those he leaves behind to join him in paradise. Hanging in the background, as a brand identifier for those who wish to sign on next, is the flag or banner of the group that sent him on his way. The heroic and selfless character of the martyr's sacrifice is the subject of sermons and discussions in mosques and madrasas. The details of their attacks are reenacted in school playgrounds and on the streets to both honor their memory and encourage others to carry on in their footsteps.

One effect of these efforts is to validate the political ideals for which the martyr sacrificed his life and bring further attention to his cause. Those who respond in this manner come to define his struggle in dichotomous terms, between an "in-group" comprised of those for whom he died and who now honor his memory, and an "out-group" comprised of the political targets of his sacrifice. Honoring his memory requires picking up his fight and following his example. This sentiment is frequently reinforced by the retaliatory actions of the other side who, for obvious reasons of their own, often feel it is necessary to respond to such attacks. Retaliation, as always, is interpreted through the eyes of the beholder. It is seldom viewed as a legitimate deterrent or defense against future attacks, but as further evidence that such sacrifices must continue to be made in the future. The effect can be explosive, contributing significantly to the radicalization of the martyr's identity group. This, of course, is one of the purposes of the game. To the degree it is achieved, it will increase both the demand for and supply of suicide attacks. The sponsoring organization, as always, will be standing by to manage this market.

In summary, sponsoring groups play an essential mediating role in the selection and preparation of suicide bombers. Although suicide attacks often appear to be the actions of deranged individuals, with rare exceptions they are seldom the product of an individualized choice. They are almost always the product of a organizational process designed to transform otherwise normal individuals into agents of self-destruction. This is not to suggest that such individuals can simply be manufactured. Getting people to sign on is also socially and circumstantially dependent. Of importance, in the first case, is a cultural frame that recognizes and values the principle of self-sacrifice in the defense of one's community. Important, in the second case, is a conflict environment that suggests that, for defensive purposes, such sacrifices may now be necessary and that one's own sacrifice will play a significant role in protecting the community from harm. In such

circumstances, individuals are both "pulled" into carrying out suicide attacks by an attracting organization, and "pushed" into doing so by a social and cultural environment that honors those who sacrifice themselves in the name of their larger collective.

The Tamil and Palestinian Cases

> "Things are not always what they seem."
>
> —Phaedrus, *Fables* (1st century A.D.)

Among the terrorist organizations that have deliberately emulated Hezbollah's use of suicide terrorism are the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (known also as the Tamil Tigers or more commonly by its acronym, LTTE)[46] and Hamas[47] (the Arabic acronym for *Harakat al-Muqawama al-Islamiya*, or "Islamic Resistance Movement").[48] Hamas's employment of this tactic has in turn inspired other Palestinian groups, most notably the Palestine Islamic Jihad (PIJ),[49] the Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigade,[50] and some of the Palestinian Popular Front organizations[51] to adopt suicide tactics as well. At this writing, the Tamil and Palestinian terrorist organizations have emerged as the foremost exponents of suicide terrorism in the world today, far eclipsing the earlier record established by Hezbollah. Each group has perpetrated more suicide attacks than all other terrorist groups combined—including Al Qaeda. Since the LTTE adopted this tactic in 1987, its suicide cadre are reported to be responsible for as many as 200 attacks.[52] Its elite suicide units now comprise women[53] as well as men,[54] operate on both land and sea[55] and, according to some reports, have also aspired to develop an airborne suicide attack capability.[56] This record has now been surpassed by Palestinian terrorists, which have been credited with carrying out over 200 attacks since they first adopted this tactic in 1993.[57] Even more dramatically, fully 70 percent of these attacks have occurred since the start of the *al-Aqsa* (or, Second) *intifada* (uprising)[58] in September 2000.

These developments are often portrayed in both terrorist propaganda and world press accounts as two sides of the same coin—intense outbursts of violence born of frustration, desperation, and humiliation, caused by the intransigence and brutality of the Sri Lankan and Israeli governments. As suggested earlier, such explanations give a distorted view of the rationale that underlies suicide terrorism. Although such grievances are real and help ensure a steady stream of recruits, the organizational employment of suicide operations is an instrumental decision. In the earlier discussion, terrorist strategy was described as a signaling game, in which high-profile attacks are conducted for the purpose of communicating a player's ability and determination to use violence to achieve its political objectives. This is precisely the objective the LTTE and Palestinian terrorist groups have pursued through their use of suicide operations. This motivation was particularly strong in the case of the LTTE and Hamas, which, as upstart organizations, challenged by older and well-entrenched political rivals, were forced to distinguish themselves—in the eyes of both their state opponents and would-be supporters—in an already crowded political field. Suicide terrorism became the chosen instrument for achieving this objective; designed to impress their friends, strike fear into the hearts of their enemies, and catapult them to the forefront of their respective national struggles.

The "Tamil Tigers" and Suicide Terrorism

From its founding, the LTTE has sought to develop the image of an elite, professional, and ruthlessly dedicated fighting force. This image was designed initially as much to

distinguish the LTTE from other, better established Tamil separatist groups as to intimidate its principal set of opponents—the government of Sri Lanka and the country's predominantly Buddhist, ethnic Sinhalese majority. During its opening period of operations, the organization's tactic of choice was assassination. The LTTE's targeting efforts were directed principally against rival Tamils and Tamil and Sinhala government officials and security forces. Later, as an almost logical extension of these calculated political killings, suicide bombing became the LTTE's signature mode of attack, further reinforcing its image as a distinctive and elite strike force. In this, as in every other aspect of the group's existence, the overriding influence and vision of its founder and leader, Velupillai Prabhakaran, reigns supreme. The histories of Prabhakaran and the LTTE are inextricably linked. It is necessary to know the one to understand the other.

The LTTE emerged in the mid-1970s in the midst of a period of renewed intercommunal tensions that was rapidly descending in violence. Twenty years earlier, the recently formed Ceylonese government had enacted highly discriminatory legislation that gave preference to Sinhalese over Tamils in government hiring, university admissions, and the attainment of key professional qualifications.[59] Although these laws were deeply resented, Tamil opposition was largely kept in check until 1972, when this legislation was reinforced and further institutionalized in the Republican Constitution of the newly re-named state of Sri Lanka.[60] The Sinhala ascendancy over the Tamils was now complete. Long-standing sectarian tensions resurfaced as Tamil anger mounted over this latest act of discrimination and disenfranchisement. Among the comparatively well-educated Tamil youth living in and around Jaffna, the historical center of the community's cultural heritage, the passage of the Standardization of Education Act two years before had already triggered intense resentment and acts of civil disobedience. In the face of growing discrimination in university admissions quotas, a group of activists formed the Tamil Students Front in 1970, one of the first groups to specifically advocate violence in order to regain Tamil civil rights. In a relatively short span of time, this single movement initiated a militant ethno-nationalist awakening that eventually resulted in the creation of 36 different extremist Tamil separatist groups.[61]

One of these groups was a new Tamil political party called the Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF). The TULF quickly emerged as the leading political force within the Tamil community. Its hard-line nationalist platform, which called for the establishment of an independent, ethnically separate Tamil state in the northern and adjacent northeastern and eastern regions of Sri Lanka, helped distinguish it from its more conciliatory parent organization, the Tamil United Front (TUF). A more important distinction, however, was the fact that in addition to engaging in legal, overt political activities like the TUF, the TULF was also preparing for war. Unwilling to put its trust in a political system that had long demonstrated its bias against basic Tamil civil rights, the TULF sought to hedge its bet by establishing a parallel, clandestine organization to recruit radical young Tamils who believed that the only solution to their political problems would be found at the point of a gun. Prabhakaran, who joined the TULF in 1972, was among these recruits.[62]

Little is known conclusively about Prabhakaran's background. Most commentators agree, however, that he was born in 1954 and was the son of a tax commissioner—not the progeny of a smuggler, as is sometimes reported.[63] His grandfather is believed to have been a postman. Unlike many rural Tamils at the time, in this case, his family would have had both an interest in learning and the means to acquire at least some formal, if rudimentary education. Prabhakaran has claimed that his own political and ethnic consciousness was awakened when he was nine or ten years old, after hearing

stories told to him by his relatives about the bloody history of Tamil-Sinhalese relations over the course of the previous decade.[64] The increasing militancy of Tamil nationalism unfolding during the mid-1970s closely mirrored the development of Prabhakaran's own strident views. Given his developing radicalism, it is not surprising, perhaps, that he was gradually drawn toward one of the more extreme offshoots of the TULF, the Tamil New Tigers (TNT).[65] The TNT at that time was led by its founder, Chetti Thanabalsingham, who had established the organization in 1974 for the purpose of silencing pro-government Tamils,[66] eliminating Tamil police informants and their Sinhala police handlers, and staging armed demonstration against the Sinhalese government. Prabhakaran was quickly promoted to be Thanabalsingham's deputy.[67]

The TNT gained particular notoriety in 1975, when its gunmen murdered the Tamil mayor of Jaffna, Alfred Duraiyappah.[68] The group suffered a mortal blow the following year, however, when Thanabalsingham was arrested. Never one to repine, Prabhakaran immediately stepped in and assumed command on 5 May 1976. He re-named the group the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam and set about to reshape it in his own image. Prabhakaran's immediate challenge was to distinguish the LTTE from its 30+ rivals.[69] His solution was to re-fashion the old TNT/new LTTE into an elite, ruthlessly efficient, and highly professional fighting force. According to Rohan Gunaratna, "Prabhakaran insisted on keeping [his] numbers small, maintaining a high standard of training, [and] enforcing discipline at all levels."[70] The end result was a cadre that was unswervingly dedicated to winning a Tamil homeland, Tamil Eelam. The groundwork was thus laid early in LTTE's history for the culture of individual self-sacrifice that eventually manifest itself in the employment of suicide tactics. At the time, this culture proved especially successful not only as a means of attracting popular support, but as a means of intimidating the group's Tamil and Sinhala opponents. As the LTTE's reputation—and its leader's appetite for power—grew, so did its strength. In the best Stalinist tradition of self-preservation and consolidation of power, Prabhakaran directed the systematic elimination of actual and potential rivals, both within the organization and elsewhere.[71] By the end of the decade Prabhakaran had completed his ascent to power and the LTTE had become the preeminent political and military force within the Tamil community.[72]

The next watershed in the development of the LTTE were the widespread ethnic riots that convulsed Sri Lanka in July 1983.[73] The riots were sparked by an LTTE land mine ambush that killed 13 SLAF (Sri Lanka Armed Forces) soldiers in Jaffna. The disorders escalated rapidly throughout the country into the bloodiest attacks perpetrated by Sinhalese mobs against Tamils since Sri Lanka (then Ceylon) had achieved its independence from Britain in 1948. Hundreds of Tamils were killed and thousands injured. Destruction of homes, businesses, and other property was especially widespread. The riots proved to be a boon to the LTTE and other militant groups. Thousands of young Tamils who previously had abjured violence now flocked to the various guerrilla movements. LTTE propaganda hammered home the point that the Tamil community would only ever feel truly secure in a land of their own. In the wake of the devastation, many who had previously resisted the group's entreaties now found themselves draw to Prabhakaran's uncompromising message. Attempts by moderates from both communities to restore ethnic amity were rebuffed. This was reinforced by unthinking government policies that were seen in the riots' aftermath as unresponsive, non-conciliatory, and even hostile.[74]

The LTTE meanwhile worked actively to continue to sow discord in an effort to complete the isolation of the Tamil population from the central government. This effort

included deliberately provoking the government into carrying out misdirected retaliatory attacks against Tamil targets, to reinforce the growing ethnic divide. One way in which the LTTE sought to capitalize on these developments was to draw recruits from the families of those who had suffered at the hands of the security forces or Sinhala mobs, offering them a venue through which to strike back. Later on, the LTTE's efforts to recruit individuals into its suicide units would also focus specifically on the families of those who had been victimized by the authorities.[75]

According to Father Harry Miller, a Jesuit priest who directs a private NGO that is engaged in peace and reconciliation work in Sri Lanka, "The abuse that ordinary people suffer at the hands of the army [is] the primary motivating factor to join the Tigers." One such candidate quoted in the same article, was a 22-year-old man named Mahendran. "I am thinking of joining [the LTTE]," he explained. "The harassment that I and my parents have suffered at the hands of the army makes me want to take revenge."[76] The Tamil Tigers are only too happy to oblige.

In an effort to capitalize on the momentum generated by these events as well as further distinguish the group from its nationalist rivals, in 1983 Prabhakaran decreed that, henceforth, every LTTE fighter—male and female alike—would be required to wear a glass capsule containing potassium cyanide around their necks. Prabhakaran's order was unambiguous: any LTTE cadre who found themselves in danger of being arrested was obligated to bite down on the glass vial, which would lacerate their gums and send the deadly poison into their system, for a quick death. Prabakaharan had commanded his fighters to kill themselves rather than risk capture and provide the authorities with the opportunity to interrogate them.[77] The LTTE's rank-and-file responded with alacrity. The cyanide capsule, which is suspended on a leather thong around each fighter's neck, has become a badge of honor[78] and source of pride among LTTE cadre who receive their capsule amid great ceremony at passing-out exercises. Prabhakaran and other senior LTTE commanders also adopted the practice. Photographs of the Tigers' supreme leader have often revealed the capsule worn prominently around his own neck.

The most significant turning point in the LTTE's history, however, was still to come. Sometime around the mid-1980s, Prabhakaran decided to steer the group down an even more violent path that would greatly increase its international notoriety. Hezbollah's 1983 suicide attack against the U.S. Marine compound in Lebanon, it is clear, made a deep impression on Prabhakaran. A small and little-known terrorist group, in this case, in a single attack, was able to offset its relative weakness and strike decisively against the world's leading superpower. The same tactic, Prabhakaran concluded, could be employed by the LTTE to offset their own numerical and material disadvantages against the state. Indeed, it has been suggested that Prabhakaran became convinced that if the LTTE did not significantly step up its campaign by resorting to suicide attacks it would never achieve its goal of winning a Tamil homeland in his lifetime. "With perseverance and sacrifice," Prabhakaran argued, "Tamil Eelam can be achieved in 100 years. But if we conduct Black Tiger [suicide] operations, we can shorten the suffering of the people and achieve Tamil Eelam in a shorter period of time."[79]

Prabhakaran's real genius, however, was in fabricating a historical narrative for the LTTE and the Tamil people that was tailored to support suicide terrorism. Two themes, in particular, were actively incorporated into Tiger lore. The first, as illustrated by Prabhakaran's own words quoted earlier, was the belief that extreme sacrifices would have to be made to secure an independent future for the Tamil nation. The cornerstone of the LTTE's self-identity became the principle of self-sacrifice and, ultimately, self-

martyrdom, for the greater good of the Tamil race. This principle is today reflected in the Tamil word, *thatkodai* (to give yourself), which is used in lieu of the word *thatkolai* (suicide) to describe the group's suicide operations. In the words of S. Thamilchelvam, the political head of the LTTE, these operations are regarded by the movement's suicide cadre as a "gift of the self," a "self-gift," an "oath to the nation," that is offered in the name of Tamil Eelam.[80]

The second theme that Prabhakaran incorporated into the movement's constructed mythology was that of "determination and invincibility."[81] This theme both supported and was, in turn, supported by his decision to turn to suicide operations in 1987. As noted earlier, the first of these attacks was carried out on May 5, by "Captain Millar," who subsequently became one of the movement's most important martyrs. The target, in this case, was a former Tamil university that had been taken over by elements of the Sri Lankan army.[82] It was a textbook vehicular assault, closely resembling the attack on the Marine barracks four years before. Seventy-five people were killed in the attack—the news of which radiated throughout Sri Lanka, generating widespread shock and horror. The incident not only represented a significant military and political setback for the Sri Lankan government, it also proved to be a significant psychological blow to the Sinhala population, endowing the LTTE with an aura of unstoppable fanaticism. The group has worked to reinforce and capitalize on its fanatical image ever since.

For an organization intent on cultivating an image of invincibility it was natural that the LTTE confer a special status on its "Black Tiger" suicide units. Those who volunteer to join the Black Tigers are required to demonstrate an even higher level of skill, dedication, and motivation than traditional LTTE cadres. While everyone must be willing to fight, in Prabhakaran's view, only a very few have what it takes to intentionally sacrifice themselves to close with and destroy the enemy.[83] "Our strength is our willingness to make the supreme sacrifice," declared Gena, the 30-year-old leader of the female "Black Tigresses" (also known as the "Birds of Freedom") in a 1998 interview.[84] "This is the most supreme sacrifice I can make," said a young, 17-year-old Tamil recruit named Vasantha. "The only way we can achieve our eelam [homeland] is through arms. That is the only way anybody will listen to us. Even if we die."[85] Proof of this commitment may be found in the laminated identification cards carried by suicide cadre on missions in Colombo. The cards carry a photograph of the suicide bomber and their name. Written in both English and Sinhala and emblazoned with the symbolic warning of a skull and crossed bones, the cards state: "I am filled with a huge explosive. If my journey is blocked I will explode it. Let me go."[86] Although decades of fighting and combat losses have forced the group to adopt a much more liberal—even coercive—recruitment policy, the elite units within the LTTE (e.g., reconnaissance and intelligence cadre as well as the group's various suicide squads) continue to be carefully selected and trained to a high mental and physical standard.[87]

From its inception, as previously suggested, the development and strategic evolution of the LTTE has been inexorably guided by Prabhakaran's domineering leadership and omnipresent influence. Prabhakaran exercises direct control over virtually every aspect of organizational life, imposing a strict, ascetic regimen on LTTE cadre that is based on unquestioned loyalty to their leader and the goal of Tamil Eelam.[88]

This subjugation of individual will is evidenced by the degree of control that the LTTE exerts over the personal affairs of its rank and file. Sexual contact or relationships among unmarried cadre, for example, are strictly forbidden and harshly punished. LTTE cadre may only marry once they have reached a specific age determined by Prabhakaran and then only with their commanders' approval.[89] Prabhakaran's pivotal role and un-

challenged influence over the organization is reinforced in a daily ceremony in which cadre pledge allegiance to Prabhakaran the man, rather than to the organization or to the Tamil people or their homeland.[90] These and similar internal policies have further contributed to the group's carefully cultivated "brand" image as an elite fighting force.

Although Prabhakaran is not believed to have ever received any formal military training, he is thought by many of his followers to be a military genius. His knowledge of strategy, tactics, weapons, logistics, and military administration is reportedly derived from his voracious reading in history and military affairs. His idea to create a maritime guerrilla commando unit, for example, is reported to have come from reading a history of the famed Special Boat Squadron (SBS), an elite unit of the Royal Marines that is Britain's counterpart to the U.S. Navy SEALs.[91] It was his own idea to turn the unit into a suicide force, which he named the "Sea Tigers."[92] Prabhakaran is also described as a film buff, with a strong preference for war movies and other action thrillers. Once again, he is prepared to borrow a good idea when he sees one. His idea to design a suicide vest that would allow an attacker to approach his or her target without being detected is said to have come from viewing a Chuck Norris movie, released in South Asia under the title, "Death Wish II." In the movie, a beautiful girl apparently presents a bouquet of flowers to the President of the United States. As she offers the bouquet, she kills herself and the president with a bomb concealed beneath her clothing.[93] The 1991 assassination of former Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi, was carried out in a similar manner.

Whatever the source of Prabhakaran's strategic insights, it is clear that the LTTE has waged a determined and, at times, quite successful military campaign. The group's estimated 8,000 to 10,000 fighters (based on an "active duty" cadre of 3,000 to 6000[94] men and women) comprise one of the best trained and equipped non-state military forces in the world today—complete with armored and artillery units, its own blue- and brown-water navy, a reportedly embryonic air capability, comprised of micro-light aircraft, a commando and special reconnaissance force, man portable surface-to-air missiles, and last but not least, their aforementioned suicide attack units. At this writing, the LTTE has fought the Sri Lankan government to a standstill in a conflict that has cost more than 60,000 lives since its inception in 1983. In the face of this battlefield deadlock, Colombo decided to enter negotiations with the LTTE in 2001. In the view of many knowledgeable observers, however, it was the threat posed by LTTE's suicide campaign that finally drove the regime to the bargaining table. Such attacks, one former Sri Lankan official has argued, have had their intended effect. "We have been cowed. We have been intimidated by suicide terrorism. It is that simple. The fear caused by this tactic has made us cave in to them."[95]

Over the years, LTTE suicide attacks have been carried out to support two distinctly different campaigns: a rural campaign and an urban campaign. In the case of the group's rural operations, suicide tactics have been employed primarily against the Sri Lankan armed forces, often as part of a larger operational plan involving guerrilla and semi-conventional forces. In the case of the group's urban campaign, numerous and often highly dramatic suicide attacks have been carried out against critical national infrastructure and what the Tigers refer to expansively as VIPs, such as senior elected government leaders, prominent political figures, other high-level government officials, senior military and police commanders and even lower-ranking military and police intelligence officers whose competence attracts the attention of the Tigers.[96] Since many of these latter actions take place in and around Colombo and at times have caused significant numbers of collateral casualties, LTTE attacks against non-military targets are never claimed.

The Tigers continue to insist that "it is not the policy of the LTTE to attack civilian targets."[97] "By adopting such a position," Gunaratna explains, the group "seeks to project to the international community that it is a liberation movement that targets only military personnel, and not a terrorist group."[98] The LTTE, for example, has never taken credit for the suicide truck bombing of the Central Bank of Sri Lanka in January 1996, which killed 90 persons and wounded 1,400 others or the November 1994 assassination of presidential candidate Gamini Dissanayake, which claimed the lives of 54 persons and injured 72. In 1991, as previously noted, the group also used a suicide bomber to assassinate the former Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi. Two years later, a deep penetration mole wearing a suicide body suit similar to that worn by the female cadre who killed Gandhi, succeeded in killing Sri Lankan President Ranasinghe Premadasa. Neither assassination was ever claimed. Government efforts to ascribe such attacks to the LTTE result in denials and the counter claim that the regime is trying to whip up anti-Tamil sentiment.

In summary, suicide terrorism has become a central tactic in LTTE planning. The purpose of adopting this tactic, as already argued, was twofold. The first purpose was to distinguish the group from its many better-established political challengers within the Tamil resistance and attract a solid base of popular support. The second purpose was to achieve a perceptual force multiplier that would allow the LTTE to level the playing field with the Sri Lankan government. To achieve these objectives, the LTTE has worked very deliberately to cultivate an image of elitism, professionalism, invincibility, and fanatical single-mindedness. The use of suicide tactics to "signal" these qualities has been an important part of this policy. Prabhakaran, as previously discussed, was inspired to experiment with this tactic in the wake of Hezbollah's stunning attack against the U.S. Marine barracks in Lebanon in 1983. Since then, the use of suicide operations has been institutionalized to the point where they have become a "signature" tactic of the Liberation Tigers, symbolizing the determination of the organization, its membership, and its supreme leader. An uneasy truce reigns today in Sri Lanka. Whether this latest round of negotiations will lead to a lasting peace is unclear. Should these negotiations fail, as is widely predicted, it can be expected that the LTTE will once again resume the use of suicide operations as a means of impressing its friends and intimidating its enemies.

The Palestinian Use of Suicide Terrorism

From its inception in 1987, Hamas faced the same problem that had confronted the LTTE: devising a means of carving out a distinctive niche in an already crowded field of competing militant groups. Hamas's challenge, however, was considerably more formidable. As a late-comer to an already well-established Palestinian liberation movement with deep popular roots, Hamas not only had to distinguish itself from competing terrorist organizations, some of which had been fighting for decades,[99] it also had to differentiate itself from a long-standing and powerful representative body—the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO)—which had become the preeminent force in Palestinian politics. That today Hamas reportedly can claim the support of upwards of 70 percent of Palestinians on the West Bank and Gaza[100] is a testament to the group's success in overcoming its opening disadvantages. As in the case of the LTTE, Hamas's eventual adoption of suicide terrorism as a "signature" mode of attack was pivotal to this process.

Although Hamas can trace its ideological lineage to the Muslim Brotherhood,[101] the group itself arguably owes its existence to a fatal traffic accident that took place on the Gaza Strip on 8 December 1987. That day, an otherwise unremarkable collision involving an Israeli truck and some other vehicles resulted in the deaths of several Palestinian

workers. Without warning, the mishap triggered an explosion of Palestinian rioting. The disorders were initially dismissed by Palestinians and Israelis alike as an ephemeral outburst of frustration. Within days, however, it was clear that events had taken on a dynamic of their own and that the riots were spreading throughout the occupied areas. Palestinians began to describe this outpouring of popular anger as an *intifada*—the Arabic word for uprising, which literally means a "shaking off."[102] The intifada was not even a week old when, on 14 December the Muslim Brotherhood distributed a leaflet calling for sustained resistance.[103] This leaflet is credited as marking the birth of Hamas.

From the beginning Hamas's young, predominantly university-educated leadership[104] consciously sought to distance themselves and their new organization from the mainstream, secular PLO and its affiliated terrorist and nationalist groups. Most had attended Palestinian universities where the Muslim Brotherhood had been particularly active and were greatly influenced by the movement's doctrine combining religion with politics.[105] Accordingly, Hamas's fundamental *raison d'être* became the liberation of Palestine *and* the establishment of an Islamic state in *all* Palestine (that is, Israel as well as the West Bank and Gaza Strip). Such a liberation could only be achieved, they argued, by means of a popular jihad. Jihad, in this context, did not only refer to "individual struggle," as it is commonly understood, but also the belief that the use of organized violence was the "sole legitimate way to retrieve Palestine in its entirety." Once this territorial imperative was achieved, Islamic social and moral norms would then be rigorously enforced in the new state.[106] Hamas's religious ideology and "maximalist" political aims were thus resolutely opposed to the "minimalist" aims pursued by the PLO.

To more clearly define its agenda and delineate itself from its mainstream Palestinian competitors, Hamas also adopted the motto of "not [ceding] one inch" of land: thus further emphasizing its uncompromising opposition to dialogue, much less a negotiated settlement, with Israel. One leaflet, distributed during the intifada's first year, neatly encapsulated the group's doctrinal platform. Entitled, "Islamic Palestine from the [Mediterranean] Sea to the [Jordan] River," it declared that "Muslims have had a full—not a partial right to Palestine for generations, in the past, present and future. . . . No Palestinian generation has the right to concede the land, steeped in martyr's blood. . . . You must continue the uprising and stand up against the usurpers wherever they may be, until the complete liberation of every grain of the soil of . . . Palestine, all Palestine, with God's help."[107] In both word and deed, from its inception, Hamas disdained in equal measure the PLO and the traditional, local Palestinian ruling elite in Gaza and the West Bank along with its declared enemy, Israel. The group, moreover, was neither impressed nor intimidated by the strength of the much vaunted IDF (Israel Defense Forces).[108]

Nonetheless, the intifada's early years were characterized more by Palestinian youths throwing stones and general rioting and popular unrest than by any sustained campaign of outright terrorism.[109] The use of *bayanat*, the Arabic word for leaflets, was one of the principal ways in which Hamas publicized itself and sought to differentiate itself and its fundamentalist religious orientation from the secular groups involved in the intifada.[110] In addition to declaring its own strike days—apart from those proclaimed by the United National Command of the Intifada-UNC (the umbrella organization directing the uprising)—Hamas also endeavored to set itself up as a social-welfare organization. Accordingly, Hamas leaflets during this period talked as much about the range of issues affecting Palestinian daily life—such as work, health, transport, education, and religious instruction—as they did about the need for resistance and rebellion.[111]

By 1989, however, the intifada was losing momentum.[112] Hamas, moreover, was losing ground to its rivals, which now included not only the secular nationalist Palestinian groups, but a religious group—Palestine Islamic Jihad (PIJ). In the face of this situation, as Mishal and Sela have noted, "Hamas's turn to violence was a matter of necessity." Its opening actions, however, were unimpressive. Lacking a bona fide military wing with the attendant organizational ability to recruit and train fighters, obtain arms, and plan and control serious operations, Hamas activists were able to carry out just 10 attacks during its first year of dedicated operations. Although the movement managed to increase this number to 32 attacks in year two, it still had little effect on its targeted constituents, who continued to favor the group's better established and secular rivals.[113] The only significant attention Hamas seems to have attracted during this opening period was from Israeli security forces, which came down hard on the organization in a series of operations between late 1990 and early 1991, effectively stripping it of its emerging military potential.[114]

This all changed, however, with the establishment of a proper military wing in 1991, the "battalions of Izz al-Din al-Qassam."[115] The new unit began modestly enough with the systematic execution of Palestinian collaborators in the Gaza Strip. By the following year it had graduated to the assassination of Israeli settlers and the use of car bombs and was well on its way to becoming a force in Palestinian politics. Hamas's increasingly violent successes spawned both imitation and competition from other Palestinian militants, especially those who shared the group's religious orientation. PIJ in particular was driven to strike out in new directions itself, forging ties with Hezbollah and participating in attacks on IDF forces in south Lebanon.[116] The climax to this phase of the intifada came between October and December 1992, when a series of terrorist attacks claimed the lives of five Israeli soldiers and a member of the Border Police. The latter incident proved to be the last straw for Israeli Prime Minister Itzhak Rabin who ordered the deportation of 415 Islamic Palestinian activists to Lebanon (the vast majority of whom belonged to Hamas).[117] The deportations proved to be a serious miscalculation. Deposited in the middle of rough country in south Lebanon, in the middle of winter, the deportees quickly became a cause célèbre: attracting international media attention and sympathy.[118] Hamas bore the fruits of its leaders' suffering: attaining a level of support among both Palestinians and foreigners that it might not otherwise have achieved. Included among the exiles were Palestinian doctors, clerics, teachers, engineers, judges, and professors, thus supporting Hamas claims that it was a true community and social welfare organization and not a terrorist group.[119]

More significantly, during the nearly 10 months they were in Lebanon, the Hamas exiles were able to establish the organization's first ties to Hezbollah. The PIJ, for its part, benefited doubly, forging tighter relations with Iran, while significantly enhancing its military capabilities under Hezbollah's tutelage.[120] The impact of this exile on Hamas, however, was ultimately more profound. Mishal and Sela are unequivocal in stating that the "deportation of 415 Islamic activists by Israel to Lebanon in December 1992 was a milestone in Hamas's decision to use car bombs and suicide attacks as a major modus operandi against Israel." A direct cause and effect, they argue, is clearly evident in the exiles' return to Gaza and the West Bank the following year and Hamas's decision to adopt suicide tactics. "Thus it was no coincidence," they write, "that Hamas's first suicide operation was carried out shortly after the deportees had returned to the occupied territories."

The deportations also had a third major unintended consequence: with almost the entire, established Hamas political leadership in exile the movement did not collapse, as

Israel hoped it would. Instead, the leadership vacuum was filled by the exiles' more violently minded, younger followers. This new generation was concerned less with the Islamization of Palestinian society, which had been the focus of much of the organization's initial efforts, than with the active promotion of the military dimension of Hamas's struggle. Emulating the militarism of historical Palestinian guerrilla groups like al-Fatah, they pushed an even harder line of no compromise/no surrender with Israel and focused their efforts on increased attacks in the hope of pressuring Israel to withdraw from the Occupied Territories.[121] The net result was that the influence of the al-Qassam wing grew within Hamas while the group's overall prestige among Palestinians similarly increased.[122]

Hamas was now well-positioned to escalate its military campaign against Israel and consolidate the political gains it was beginning to achieve over the PLO and other rivals. These imperatives acquired new urgency in the fall of 1993 with the conclusion of the Oslo Accords and the commencement of formal negotiations between the PLO and Israel. The entire process was anathema to Hamas. Not only did negotiations entail de facto recognition of Israel and the cessation of the Palestinian military struggle, but the parameters of the Israeli–Palestinian Declaration of Principles (DOP) guiding the discussions called for the eventual implementation of UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, leading to *formal* Palestinian recognition of Israel's right to exist. [123] According to Mishal and Sela, the implications of this unprecedented breakthrough in Palestinian–Israeli relations

> dramatically changed Hamas's strategic situation. Indeed, as a movement whose military activity against Israel now outweighed that of Fatah and the other Palestinian national organizations, the PLO-Israel agreement confronted Hamas with nothing less than an existential problem. To begin with, the agreement put an end to the Intifada, which had provided Hamas with ideal conditions to become a genuine political alternative to the PLO. In addition, the PLO's agreement to desist from hostile actions against Israel, a commitment to be imposed by the future self-governing Palestinian Authority (PA) in the occupied territories, clearly threatened to curtail Hamas's freedom of military action. . . .[124]

In response, Hamas decided to challenge simultaneously the entire DOP framework, Arafat's leadership, and the PLO's authority within the occupied territories.[125] As Hamas's greatest concern was the deleterious effect that any peace process would have on the continuation of a popular jihad against Israel,[126] the movement arguably had no option but to further step up its armed operations. The Israeli decision to allow the Hamas and PIJ deportees to return to the West Bank and Gaza Strip in late 1993 greatly strengthened Hamas just as it was poised to strike.[127]

Hamas initiated a new round of bombings within a month of the signing of the Oslo accords. Three major attacks killed 26 Israelis and wounded scores of others. The message Hamas was communicating to Israel and the PLO alike was clear: there would be no peace and security[128] "unless and until Hamas [was] recognized and its demands [were] met."[129] While these incidents were impressive in their own right, they did little to change the basic correlation of forces between either Hamas and the PLO or between Hamas and Israel. Indeed, in the context of this decades-old conflict, the newest round of attacks were neither particularly significant nor extraordinary. Both sides in the struggle had become conditioned to worse. Hamas was still nothing more than a nuisance—an

increasingly violent nuisance, to be sure, but a nuisance nevertheless. At this critical juncture, Hamas's challenge—much as it had been only a few years earlier for Prabhakaran and the LTTE—was to find an operational profile that was sufficiently dramatic and extraordinary to alter the strategic balance in Palestine and Israel, once and for all. Like the LTTE, the solution that Hamas embraced was the use of suicide tactics.[130]

Hamas carried out its first suicide attack on 6 April 1994. The incident, which killed 8 persons and wounded 34 others, occurred in the northern Israeli city of Afula. It was timed to coincide with the end of the Islamic period of mourning that had begun on 25 February when Dr. Baruch Goldstein, an American-born, ultra-nationalist, orthodox Jew, had killed 29 Palestinian worshippers at the Hebron religious shrine known to Jews as the Cave of the Patriarchs and to Muslims as the Ibrahim mosque. The attack was also meant to derail the talks then in progress between Israel and the PLO on implementing the Oslo accords.[131] Thereafter a series of suicide bombings followed, including attacks in Hadera on April 13 (which killed 5 persons); at the Dizengoff Shopping Center in Tel Aviv in October (in which 22 persons died); and at Nezarim Junction less than a month later (where 3 people were killed).[132] According to Sprinzak, who was one of Israel's leading experts on suicide terrorism, these incidents were decisive in "erod[ing] Israel's collective confidence in the peace process." This, in turn, "played right into the hands of extremist Hamas clerics who opposed negotiations with Israel."[133]

Hamas's inauguration of suicide tactics sharpened its rivalry with the numerically inferior and less consequential PIJ. Fearing its own complete eclipse, PIJ got into the act: killing twenty Israeli soldiers in a suicide attack near Netanya on 22 January 1995. In all these incidents—for Hamas and PIJ alike—Hezbollah's influence, example, and training is evident.[134] Khaled Meshal, Hamas's political leader, was quite candid about this during an interview he gave in July 2000. "We always have the Lebanese experiment before our eyes," he explained. "It was a great model of which we are proud."[135] Indeed, according to Mishal and Sela, this early string of suicide operations were textbook Hezbollah attacks—both groups, they point out, adopted the "same procedure [for] finding a candidate for a suicide operation, training and preparing him psychologically, writing a farewell letter, and making a videotape before his mission."[136]

At least seven years before, Dr. Fathi Shiqaqi, PIJ's founder and leader, had developed a plan for what he termed, "exceptional" martyrdom operations involving human bombs that was based on Hezbollah's theological justification.[137] Within the context of suicide terrorism as deception, Hamas also appears to have borrowed a leaf from LTTE's book on the subject: similarly insisting publicly that, despite its attacks against buses and shopping malls, the group "opposed any action that hurt civilians."

The suicide attacks and the carnage that they wrought elicited an aggressive response from Israel. One element of this response was the Israeli decision to target Palestinian leaders that were believed to be directly engaged in planning suicide operations. In October of that year Israeli agents are thought to have killed Fathi Shiqaqi in Malta. Three months later they achieved an even more important success when they managed to kill Hamas's master bombmaker, Yahya Ayyash. Ayyash, whose expertise had earned him the sobriquet, "The Engineer" (bestowed by no less a personage than Israeli Prime Minister Itzhak Rabin) is credited with having first proposed that Hamas engage in suicide bombing.[138] He also reputedly built the bombs that were used in the 1994 Afula and Hadera attacks. Altogether, he was believed to have been responsible for the deaths of 130 Israelis and injuries to nearly 500 others.[139] Rather than ending the suicide attacks, however, Ayyash's assassination triggered the most dramatic escalation in this campaign to date. After 6 months of relative quiet, Hamas bombers struck 5 times in 2

weeks, killing a total of 59 Israelis. Their targets included public buses, populated bus stops, and Tel Aviv's Dizengoff Shopping Center—for the second time in 17 months.

The death toll from these attacks was nearly half the total amassed by suicide bombers over the preceding two years.[140] The bombings are also widely credited with affecting the outcome of Israel's national elections in May 1996. The right-wing Likud coalition's Benjamin Netanyahu was elected prime minister over the Labour Party candidate and sitting premier, Shimon Peres. In the wake of this new wave of attacks, Netanyahu's hard-line stance on negotiations and promise of security proved to be more attractive to Israeli voters than Peres's pledge to continue the peace process begun by his assassinated predecessor, Itzhak Rabin. Even at the time it was clear that this was precisely what Hamas intended: to use suicide attacks to polarize the Israeli polity and scuttle the peace process. The election of Netanyahu, it was calculated, would not only serve to undermine the Oslo accords, it would have the secondary advantage of undermining the political ascendancy of the PLO.[141] For the IDF, Hamas's violent retribution, despite the loss of one of its key operatives, provided unwelcome and disquieting evidence of the group's new-found strategic depth and organizational resiliency. The IDF now judged Hamas to be "militarily the strongest Palestinian organization."[142] The then head of military intelligence, Brigadier General Ya'acov Amidor, was forced to concede at the time that Hamas had become a serious challenge to Israeli security. "You can trim its branches," he suggested, but it was going to be difficult to "pull out its roots."[143]

Thereafter, however, the pace of Palestinian terrorist attacks did begin to wane. Two suicide attacks were conducted in August and September 1996 and three attacks were carried out between March and September 1997. Hamas's relative quiescence during this period, until the collapse of the Oslo accords that followed the abortive Camp David meetings in the summer of 2000, was a reflection of several factors. The first appears to have been the establishment of a tenuous *modus vivendi* with the governing Palestine Authority (PA). Hamas attacks on Israeli targets were deliberately restricted in return for the Palestinian Authority's refusal to cave in to Israeli pressure to proscribe Hamas's political activities. The second reason was a function of the times. This was a period of unbridled optimism (in Israel and Palestine) over the possibilities for a stable peace. The newly elected Labor Government's energetic efforts to reach a comprehensive settlement contrasted sharply with the hard-line stance of its predecessors in the Likud party and had an overwhelming calming effect on the conflict. It was also a time of close cooperation between PA security forces and their Israeli counterparts.[144] Not only were Hamas and PIJ terrorists apprehended and imprisoned by the PA, but even leading Hamas commanders such as Muhammad Daif were swept up in the dragnet (brokered and overseen by U.S. government representatives) and jailed.

Finally, and most relevant for current purposes, was Hamas's own policy of "controlled violence."[145] The rational basis of this policy was clearly articulated in late 1995 by one of the group's senior leaders based in Gaza, Mahmud al-Zahar. In an interview given to the East Jerusalem daily, *al-Quds*, al-Zahar made a point of explaining how Hamas's use of violence was a carefully calculated means to an end. It was not, as its critics suggested, an end in itself. In every case, he argued, the group's decision to use force was subordinated to its larger political objectives. If the prevailing political climate made it necessary for Hamas to put its military option on the shelf, it was prepared to do so, at least for a period of time. "We must calculate the benefit and cost of continued armed operations," al-Zahar said. "If we can fulfill our goals without violence, we will do so. Violence is a means, not a goal. Hamas's decision to adopt self-restraint does not contradict our aims, including the establishment of an Islamic state instead of Israel. . . .

We will never recognize Israel, but it is possible that a truce could prevail between us for days, months, or years."[146]

That self-restraint ended on 30 October 2000 when a Hamas suicide bomber killed 15 persons in Jerusalem. Less than a month before, the visit of then candidate for prime minister, Ariel Sharon, to Jerusalem's *al-Haram al-Sharif*, the Temple Mount, Islam's third holiest shrine, triggered what has come to be known as the *al-Aqsa intifada* and the escalation of violence that has followed since. The appreciably greater number of suicide attacks during the most recent phase of this long-standing conflict attest to the growing importance of this tactic. According to the database maintained by Haifa University's National Security Studies Center, there were a total of 23 suicide attacks between 31 December 1993 and 30 September 2000 (e.g., the start of the *al Aqsa intifada*)—an average of 0.24 per month. During the first fifteen months of the *al Aqsa intifada*, that is from 1 October 2000 to 31 December 2001, there were 39 attacks—an average of 2.6 per month. And, during the entirety of 2002, during which the Second Intifada entered a far more violent and dangerous phase in January of that year when the Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigade began its own campaign of suicide bombings, a total of 59 incidents were recorded—an average of 4.9 per month for that year. Viewed from another perspective, there were nearly as many suicide attacks carried out against Israeli targets during 2003 as during the entire previous eight years combined (62).[147]

Three explanations account for this dramatic upsurge of suicide attacks: First, the terrorist belief that the sustained and unrelenting use of suicide attacks will achieve results that cannot be matched with other tactics; second, the inverted sense of normality that the Palestinian terrorist organizations have created within the Palestinian community and the resulting approval that has been bestowed on suicide operations; and, third, entrenched rivalries between Palestinian terrorists that have resulted in a deadly competition to determine which group is able to mobilize and deploy the largest number of suicide terrorists in an effort to win the support of the Palestinian population and undermine its rivals. Each are now considered, in turn.

Suicide terrorism as an instrument of war. It is clear that the leadership of Hamas and the PIJ entered the *al-Aqsa intifada* with the belief that a sustained suicide bombing campaign would have a political effect, on both the Israeli government and their own political base, that would be significantly greater than what they could expect to achieve through "conventional" terrorist attacks. The Hezbollah model again loomed large. Only four months earlier, the IDF had completed its withdrawal from south Lebanon. The primary reason for this policy reversal, in the views of both Hezbollah[148] and Palestinian[149] observers, was Israel's inability to deal effectively with the new threat posed by suicide tactics. As the leader of the PIJ, Ramadan Shalah, explained in late 2001, "The shameful defeat that Israel suffered in southern Lebanon and which caused its army to flee in terror was not made on the negotiations table but on the battlefield and through jihad and martyrdom." The prospects for victory, in Shalah's view, were even greater in Palestine than they had been in Lebanon. "If the enemy could not bear the losses of the war on the border strip with Lebanon, will it be able to withstand a long war of attrition in the heart of its security dimension and major cities?"[150]

The decision to rely on suicide bombings during the new intifada, in this regard, was neither irrational or desperate,[151] but rational and calculated. As the terrorists themselves have pointed out, suicide bombings are both inexpensive and effective. "It is easy and costs us only our lives," Shallah told one interviewer. "Human bombs," he averred further, "cannot be defeated, not even by nuclear bombs."[152] Using almost identical terminology, a member of Hamas's al-Qassam brigades explained to Nasra Hassan, an

international relief worker posted to Gaza who had been studying the phenomenon of suicide terrorism there since 1996 how, "We do not have tanks or rockets, but we have something superior—our exploding Islamic human bombs. In place of a nuclear arsenal, we are proud of our arsenal of believers."[153] The cost-effectiveness of suicide is indeed impressive. As indicated earlier, the total cost of a typical Palestinian suicide operation is about $150.[154] This modest sum yields an attractive return: on average, suicide operations worldwide kill about four times as many individuals as other kinds of terrorist attacks. In Israel the average is even higher: inflicting 6 times the number of deaths and roughly 26 times more casualties than other acts of terrorism.[155]

As the earlier quotes also attest, suicide attacks are considered to be a means of offsetting a numerically superior and better armed and equipped opponent. Indeed, the material and technological inferiority of the Palestinian resistance is often used as a justification for employing suicide tactics. The Palestinians, as Meshal has claimed, "are fighting with the only tools they possess."[156] Shalah offered an identical justification for PIJ suicide operations: "Our enemy possesses the most sophisticated weapons in the world and its army is trained to a very high standard. We have nothing with which to repel killing and thuggery against us except the weapon of martyrdom."[157] Another PIJ official has argued that suicide terrorism is necessary to achieve a "balance of terror"[158]—a logic expressed by a fellow militant who declared that, "If our wives and children are not safe from Israeli tanks and rockets, theirs will not be safe from our human bombs."[159]

Part and parcel of these justifications are two ancillary, but critical, beliefs. The first is related to the "effectiveness" argument cited earlier. According to this line of reasoning, suicide terrorism is the only way to convince Israeli decision makers that the Palestinian people will never yield to coercion. The second, derivative belief is that, in adopting suicide tactics, the Palestinian resistance has finally discovered Israel's Achilles Heel. Drawing again on the Hezbollah model, Meshal, for instance, claims that, "The Zionist enemy . . . only understands the language of Jihad, resistance and martyrdom; that was the language that led to its blatant defeat in South Lebanon and it will be the language that will defeat it on the land of Palestine."[160] Similarly, more than a decade earlier, Shiqaqi had argued that suicide tactics would prove to be the most efficacious means of wearing down Israel's will. This will be achieved, he explained, "through the explosion, which forces the *mujahid* not to waver, not to escape; to execute a successful operation for religion and jihad; and to destroy the morale of the enemy and plant terror in the people."[161]

Suicide terrorism is thus embraced by the Palestinians as a psychological weapon that is capable of paralyzing their hated opponent. "The Israelis . . . will fall to their knees," the one time spiritual leader of Hamas, Sheikh Ahmad Yassin, has said. "You can sense the fear in Israel already; they are worried about where and when the next attacks will come. Ultimately, Hamas will win."[162] The reason, according to another Hamas leader, Ismail Haniya, who was famously quoted in both a *Washington Post* article and a Thomas Friedman *New York Times* column in March 2002, is that, in suicide attacks, the Palestinian people—after years of struggle —have finally discovered Israel's point of greatest vulnerability. Jews, Haniya said, "love life more than any other people, and they prefer not to die."[163] Lest such claims be dismissed as terrorist hyperbole or braggadocio, no higher authority than the preeminent Muslim religious figure in Palestine, the Mufti of Jerusalem, Ikrama Sabri, has explicitly endorsed this view. "Look at the society of the Israelis," he told Jeff Goldberg, a *New Yorker* magazine correspondent. "It is a selfish society that loves life. These are not people who are eager to die for

their country and their God. The Jews will leave this land rather than die, but the Muslim is happy to die."[164]

This is what is known in the Middle East as the "spider-web" theory. As previously noted, it is the conclusion drawn by Hezbollah about Israel's withdrawal from south Lebanon. It is today embraced by the Palestinians as well. The phrase itself was reportedly coined by Hezbollah's spiritual leader, Sheikh Hassan Nasrallah, who described Israel as a formidable military power, but one that is rooted in a civil society that has become materialistic and lazy; its citizens self-satisfied, comfortable, and pampered to the point where they have gone soft. This view was echoed by IDF Chief of Staff, Lieutenant General Moshe "Boogie" Ya'alon, who explained in an interview published in *Ha'Aretz* in August 2002 that "The Israeli army is strong . . . but its citizens are unwilling any longer to sacrifice lives in order to defend their national interests and national goals." Israeli society, in this respect, he argued, is a "spider-web"; it may look "strong from the outside, but touch it and it will fall apart.[165] The IDF high command, for its part, does not dispute Hezbollah's explanation for why the IDF withdrew from Lebanon or the influence of the "spider-web" theory on Palestinian thinking. "If you ask why this crisis [the *al-Aqsa intifada*] erupted four months after IDF withdrew from Lebanon," one senior IDF strategist explains, "the answer is yes. There was clear encouragement. . . . Lebanon is not the West Bank, but the Palestinians were influenced."[166]

Inverted sense of normality and societal imprimatur. The introduction to this section briefly discussed how Palestinian terrorists have worked to endow suicide operations with a positive social imprimatur. In the process, they have fostered an inverted sense of normality throughout much of Palestinian society. These efforts have involved the deliberate recalibration of societal attitudes regarding the act of taking one's own life: an act which under normal circumstances would be considered abnormal, if not abhorrent, has been transformed into something that is not only acceptable, but even encouraged. This article has already outlined the material benefits that accrue to the families of Palestinian martyrs, for example. What remains to be examined are the ways in which these groups have managed to build support for this tactic among their political constituents.

Muslim clerics, in particular, have played an important role in framing popular attitudes toward suicide operations and encouraging their followers to carry out acts of self-sacrifice on behalf of their community. Characteristic of this role was a sermon given by Sheikh Ibrahim Madhi on 12 April 2001 at the Gaza City mosque, which was also broadcast live on Palestinian television. "Anyone who does not attain martyrdom in these days," the Sheikh declared, "should wake in the middle of the night and say: 'My God, why have you deprived me of martyrdom for your sake? For the martyr lives next to Allah'." He then apparently called on Allah to "accept our martyrs in the highest heavens . . . show the Jews a black day . . . annihilate the Jews and their supporters . . . [and] raise the flag of Jihad across the land. . . ."[167]

Such messages are reinforced by Palestinian TV which regularly airs promotional spots extolling the virtues of martyrdom operations, actively encouraging Palestinian youth to volunteer. One recently broadcast segment[168] depicted the image of a young Palestinian couple out for a walk when suddenly IDF troops open fire, shooting the woman in the back and killing her. While visiting her grave, her boyfriend is also shot dead by the IDF. He then is shown ascending to heaven where he is welcomed by his girlfriend, who is seen dancing with dozens of other female martyrs, portraying the 72 virgins—the promised "Maidens of Paradise"—reputedly awaiting the male martyr in heaven. The clip is thus cleverly designed to appeal to would-be male and female

martyrs alike.[169] The wedding announcements cited previously are further evidence of the fundamental recalibration of Palestinian values that have been engineered by the terrorist organizations.[170] When news of a successful suicide strike is broadcast, according to one report, candy is typically distributed in the streets and women respond with traditional cries of joy. "Martyrdom has become an ambition for our children," Sadl Abu Hein, a psychology lecturer from Gaza observed.[171] It is not surprising, therefore, to find that opinion polls taken in 2002 reported that more than 70 percent of the Palestinian population support suicide attacks against Israel.[172]

Rivalry and competition between terrorist groups. Finally, just as in the case of the Tamil nationalist movement, the rivalries that exist between the various Palestinian terrorist groups have spawned a violent competition for popular attention. The political struggle that has long characterized Hamas–PLO/PA relations[173] has already been discussed. A new element was introduced into this equation in November 2001 with the formation of the Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigade—a specially dedicated suicide unit under the command of Fatah and its irregular militias, the Tanzim. The PLO/PA, it seems, had concluded that it could ill-afford *not* to have a suicide capability of its own if it was going to reclaim the political authority it was losing to its increasingly high-profile rivals.[174] In November 2001 Fatah signaled that it had entered the game by launching a joint operation with PIJ. Two terrorists from each group—one of whom was a member of the Palestinian Authority's police force—blew themselves up on a bus near Hadera.[175]

Israel's seizure two months later of the *Karine-A*, a cargo ship transporting some 50 tons of arms and explosives to the PLO,[176] appears to have contributed to Fatah's decision to step up the incidence of Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigade attacks. Deprived of the means to wage a more conventionally styled guerrilla campaign, the PLO decided to accelerate its suicide campaign in an effort to stay in the spotlight. Indeed, it may not be entirely coincidental that within weeks of the loss of the *Karine-A* shipment, the first female suicide bomber appeared. Her name was Wafa Idris, a 28-year-old divorcee, who worked as a medical secretary for the Palestinian Red Crescent. She was recruited by the newly formed Al-Aqsa Martyrs and deployed on a suicide bombing mission to Jerusalem that claimed the life of one person (an 81 year-old man) and injured 114 others.[177] Since then, according to retired IDF colonel Gal Luft, "al-Aqsa has capitalized on the Islamists' opposition to the participation of women and [have] established squads of willing female suicide bombers named after Wafa Idris, the Palestinian woman who blew up herself."[178]

The formation of the Al-Aqsa Martyrs was a clear challenge to Hamas and the PIJ and set in motion an almost macabre competition among them to see which group could execute the largest number of martyrdom operations, generate the largest number of casualties, and carry out the single bloodiest attacks. The succession of terrorist incidents that convulsed Israel during early 2002 was fuelled by this competition. Indeed, by any metric, 2002 was an astonishing year for Israel in terms of suicide bombings. There were on average 5 successful suicide attacks per month in 2002: nearly double the number of successful attacks that were conducted during the first 15 months of the *al-Aqsa intifada*—which itself was a figure that was more than 10 times higher than the monthly average since 1993. The distribution of groups claiming credit for suicide attacks during 2002 is also revealing. Of the 59 incidents recorded that year, the Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigade leads with 25 (42 percent), followed by Hamas with 16 (27 percent), and PIJ with 12 (20 percent). Significantly, this inter-group competition was so febrile that in just one year the Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigade staged nearly two-thirds the number of suicide attacks that Hamas had perpetrated during the previous three years combined.[179]

In summary, as this brief narrative of Tamil and Palestinian "martyrdom" operations demonstrates, suicide terrorism is an instrumental tactic. The resort to suicide operations has significantly less to do with the presumed anger, desperation, or frustration of those who actually carry out these attacks, than the strategic requirements of the organizations that send the bombers on their way.[180] In a widely read account of Palestinian martyrs, for example, published shortly after 9/11 in *The New Yorker*, Nasra Hassan observed that none of the 250 or so suicide bombers and their handlers that she interviewed conformed to the typical suicidal personality. "None of them were uneducated, desperately poor, simple-minded, or depressed. Many were middle class and, unless they were fugitives, held paying jobs." Among them, in fact, were the sons of two millionaires.[181] Suicide tactics have been adopted by a growing number of terrorist organizations around the world because they are shocking, deadly, cost effective, secure, and very difficult to stop. There are only two basic operational requirements that an organization must be able to satisfy to get into the game: a willingness to kill and a willingness to die.

Notes

1. For details, see the *Report of the DOD Commission on the Beirut International Terrorist Act, October 23, 1983*, mimeo, December 1983.

2. The first three sections of this chapter dealing with the subject of suicide terrorism as a signaling game were previously published as, Gordon H. McCormick, "Signaling and the Logic of Suicide Terrorism," *Occasional Paper*, Department of Defense Analysis, Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, CA (May 2003).

3. For a short but concise overview of signaling games, see Jeffrey S. Banks, *Signaling Games in Political Science* (New York: Harwood Academic Publishers, 1991). For an application to terrorism, see Harvey E. Lapan and Todd Sandler, "Terrorism and Signaling," *European Journal of Political Economy*, 9 (August 1993), pp. 383-397, and Per Baltzer Overgaard, "The Scale of Terrorist Attacks as a Signal of Resources," *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 38 (September 1994), pp. 452–478.

4. Gordon H. McCormick and Guillermo Owen, "Security and Coordination in a Clandestine Organization," *Mathematical and Computer Modeling*, 31 (2000), pp. 175–192, and J. Bowyer Bell, "Revolutionary Dynamics: The Inherent Inefficiency of the Underground," *Terrorism and Political Violence*, (1990), pp. 193–211.

5. For a discussion of these relationships, see Gordon H. McCormick, "Terrorist Decision Making," *Annual Review of Political Science*, 6 (2003), pp. 473–507.

6. The term is that of Thomas Schelling, *Arms and Influence* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1966), p. 9.

7. Thomas Perry Thornton, "Terror as a Weapon of Political Agitation," in *Internal War: Problems and Approaches*, ed. Harry Eckstein (Westport: Greenwood Press), p. 86.

8. For a formal discussion, see Kai A. Konrad and Stergios Skaperdas, "Credible Threats in Extortion," *Journal of Economic Behavior and Organization*, 33 (1997), pp. 23–39.

9. Lapan and Sandler, "Terrorism and Signaling," p. 385.

10. These dynamics are discussed in detail in, Gordon H. McCormick and Guillermo Owen, "Revolutionary Origins and Conditional Mobilization," *European Journal of Political Economy*, 12 (1996), pp. 377–402.

11. These choices define a terrorist group's "three degrees of freedom." See McCormick, "Terrorist Decision Making," p. 496.

12. For a nice (and concise) overview of the principles of deception, see J. Bowyer Bell, "A Theory of Deception," mimeo (September 2002), p. 3. For an application to underground organizations, see Bell's "Conditions for Success and Failure of Denial and Deception: Nonstate

and Illicit Actors," in *Strategic Denial and Deception*, eds. Roy Godson and James J. Wirtz (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 2002), pp. 129–162.

13. J. Bowyer Bell and Barton Whaley, *Cheating and Deception* (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 1991), pp. 3–4.

14. Erving Goffman, *Strategic Interaction* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1969), p. 10. The active ingredient in this contest is what Goffman refers to as the image maker's *control moves*. He identifies three types of control moves: (a) "concealment or cover," (b) "accentuated revealment," and (c) "misrepresentation." Together, these moves can be reinterpreted in Bell and Whaley's terminology (Note 13) as hiding the "truth and showing the false."

15. Cited in Bell and Whaley, *Cheating and Deception*, p. 131.

16. Ehud Sprinzak, "Rational Fanatics," *Foreign Policy* (September–October 2000), pp. 66–73.

17. James March, *A Primer on Decision Making* (New York: The Free Press, 1994), pp. 2–3.

18. McCormick, "Terrorist Decision Making," p. 481.

19. See for example, Suzanne Goldenberg, "The Men Behind the Suicide Bombers," *The Guardian*, 12 June 2002.

20. Potential terrorist constituencies are seldom caught in these attacks. This is clearly evident, for example, in the case of Palestinian suicide terrorism. Only rarely have Palestinians been killed in suicide bombings, with the obvious exception of the individuals who blow themselves up. This is due, in part, to the neighborhoods in which these attacks are typically carried out and partly because of the terminal decisions made by the bombers themselves, who hope to kill or injure as many the enemy as possible without catching their friends in the "frag pattern."

21. The sponsoring groups are clearly aware of this. As a senior Hamas leader observed, "the main thing is to guarantee that a large number of enemy will be affected. With an explosive belt or bag, the bomber has control over vision, location, and timing." Quoted in Hassan, "Letter From Gaza: An Arsenal of Believers," *The New Yorker* (19 November 2002), p. 39.

22. Walter Laqueur, *The Age of Terrorism* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1987), p. 56.

23. J. Bowyer Bell, quoted in Brigitte Nacos, *Terrorism and the Media* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), p. 51.

24. See, for example, the discussion by Daniel Ellsberg, "The Theory and Practice of Blackmail," P–3883 (Santa Monica: RAND, July 1968).

25. The term was coined by Bonnie Cordes, "When Terrorists Do the Talking: Reflections on Terrorist Literature," *Journal of Strategic Studies*, 10 (December 1987), p. 164.

26. Rona M. Fields, Saman Elbedour, and Fadel Abu Hein, "The Palestinian Suicide Bomber," in *The Psychology of Terrorism, Vol. II: Clinical Aspects and Responses*, ed. Chris E. Stout (Westport: Praeger, 2002), pp. 193–223.

27. The shock effects of terrorist actions have often clouded the fact that terrorists need to justify their actions, to reassure themselves and their constituents that they are acting in a righteous way for a moral cause. This can be traced to the earliest days of terrorism. Speaking of the People's Will, for example, Camus noted that, "for them, as for all rebels before them, murder is identified with suicide. A life is paid for another life, and from these two sacrifices springs the promise of a value." Albert Camus, *The Rebel: An Essay on Man in Revolt* (New York: Vintage Books, 1956), p. 169.

28. As one commentator notes, suicide attacks on average produce more than they cost "by expanding public support and pools of potential recruits." See Scott Atran, "Genesis of Suicide Terrorism," *Science*, 299 (March 7, 2003), pp. 1537–1538. As suggested earlier, the suicide attack, like terrorism in general, is an investment, designed to generate a return that is higher than the cost of carrying out the operation in the first place. Where employed systematically, the return on investment is generally higher than conventional operations of similar cost.

29. Alan B. Krueger and Jitka Malečková, "Does Poverty Cause Terrorism?," *The New Republic*, 24 June 2002, pp. 27–33.

30. See for example, Gary S. Becker, "Crime and Punishment: An Economic Approach," *Journal of Political Economy*, 76 (March–April 1968), pp. 169–217.

31. Krueger and Malečková, "Does Poverty Cause Terrorism," p. 28.

32. Statistics are from the *Suicide Terrorism Data Base, 1983–2003*, Center on Terrorism and Irregular Warfare, Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, CA.

33. March, *A Primer on Decision Making*, pp. 57–102.

34. Ibid., p. 58

35. Ibid., pp. 64–65.

36. Sheikh Yussuf al Qaradhawi (of the Muslim Brotherhood), quoted in Scott Atran, "Genesis of Suicide Terrorism," p. 6.

37. Quoted in Hassan, "Letter From Gaza: An Arsenal of Believers," p. 39.

38. Efforts to explain the cross-cultural fascination with the hero as martyr and the common thread among heroic traditions have been associated most closely with the work of Johann Georg von Hahn, Vladimir Propp, Otto Rank, Lord Raglan, and Joseph Campbell. For a brief overview of this literature, see, Otto Rank et al., *In Quest of the Hero* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990).

39. Edith Hamilton, *Mythology* (Boston: Little: Brown and Company, 1942), p. 444.

40. P. Bourdieu, *La Distinction* (Paris: Editions de Minuit, 1979), pp. 381–382.

41. Yamuna Sangarasivam, *The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam and the Cultural Production of Nationalism and Violence*, Ph.D. dissertation, Department of Anthropology, Syracuse University, May 200, p. 325.

42. Quoted in, A. Jeyaratnam Wilson, *Sri Lankan Tamil Nationalism* (Vancouver: UBC Press), p. 132.

43. Ibid., p. 133.

44. Rohan Gunaratna, "The LTTE and Suicide Terrorism," *Frontline* (Chennai, India) 5–8 February 2000, available at (http://www.flonnet.com/fl1703/17031.htm).

45. Hassan, "Letter From Gaza: An Arsenal of Believers," p. 39.

46. In discussions with his followers, the LTTE's founder and leader, Velupillai Prabhakaran, has reportedly often cited Hezbollah's 1983 attack on the Marine barracks as the main inspiration for the group's use of suicide attack. Interview with former senior LTTE cadre, Colombo, Sri Lanka, December 1997 and February 2003.

47. See Shaul Mishal and Avraham Sela, *The Palestinian Hamas: Vision, Violence, and Coexistence* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000), p. 66; and, Hala Jaber, *Hezbollah: Born with a Vengeance* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), p. 175.

48. The word *hamas* in Arabic also means zeal.

49. Although the idea to use suicide terrorist tactics originated with the PIJ in 1988 (see later discussion), Hamas was the first to carry out such an attack.

50. The suicide attack unit controlled by both al-Fatah, the Palestinian terrorist group founded by PLO leader and Palestine Authority (PA) head Yasir Arafat in 1957 and still closely linked to him and its popular militia, the Tanzim. See Dani Naveh, et al., Minister of Parliamentary Affairs, *The Involvement of Arafat, PA Senior Officials and Apparatuses in Terrorism against Israel, Corruption and Crime* (Jerusalem: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2002), passim.

51. Principally, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine–General Command (PFLP–GC), both of whose headquarters are located in Damascus.

52. No precise, widely accepted total is easily accessible. Dr. Rohan Gunaratna claims that the total was 168 as of the year 2000. (See Rohan Gunaratna, "Suicide Terrorism: A Global Threat," *Jane's Intelligence Review*, 20 October 2000, available at (http:///www.janes.com/security/international_security/news/usscole/ jir001020_1_ n.shtml). A recent *New York Times* article, however, put the total at 220 attacks (see Amy Waldman, "Suicide Bombing Masters: Sri Lankan Rebels," *New York Times*, 14 January 2003). The Tigers themselves claim that, as of 1999, the LTTE had conducted 147 suicide attacks. However, this figure does not include operations involving non-military targets—including politicians and other prominent persons, ordinary civilians, and infra-

structure and economic targets (see Rohan Gunaratna, "The LTTE and Suicide Terrorism," *Frontline* (February 2000), pp. 5–8. Interestingly, although a private study undertaken by a serving Sri Lankan Armed Forces officer does not list attack numbers, this researcher has tallied the number of Tamil suicide cadre deaths. As LTTE suicide attacks are mainly (but not exclusively) executed by one perpetrator only, the total of 239 LTTE Black Tigers (special suicide cadre) killed in action that this researcher claims (including 60 male Black Tigers and 18 female Tigers who died in land attacks and 115 and 46, respectively in maritime operations) dovetail with the Gunaratna and Waldman figures. See "LTTE Declared Total Numbers of Killed During the Last 20 Years," unpublished paper, no date.

53. See, for example, Radika Coomaraswamy, "Women of the LTTE: The Tiger's and Women's Emancipation," *Frontline* (Chennai, India), 10 January 1997, pp. 61–64; Dexter Filkins, "Sri Lanka Women at War: Tamil Rebel Group Is Now One-Third Female," *International Herald Tribune* (Paris), 13 March 2000; Rohan Gunaratna, "Suicide Terrorism: A Global Threat," p. 53; and Jenny Kay, "Dying For Their Cause," *Eva* (London), June 1998, pp. 18–19.

54. The LTTE also maintains so-called Baby Brigade and Tiger Cub units composed of children reputedly aged as young as 13–15. See, for example, Barbara Crossette, "Sri Lanka's Army is Hitting Last Guerrilla Group," *New York Times*, 2 May 1991; idem., "Tamil Rebels Said to Recruit Child Soldiers," *New York Times*, 17 July 2000; Celia W. Dugger, "Rebels Without a Childhood in Sri Lanka War, *New York Times*, 10 September 2000; Guy Goodwin-Gill and Ilene Cohn, *Child Soldiers: The Role of Children in Armed Conflict* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1994), pp. 29, 31, & 40; Rohan Gunaratna, "Tiger Cubs and Childhood Fall as Casualties in Sri Lanka," *Jane's Intelligence Review* (July 1998), pp. 32–37; Lindsay Murdoch, "Reign of Terror by Sir Lanka's Pol Pot," *Sydney Morning Herald* (Australia), 15 June 1995.

55. See, for example, Anthony Foster, "An Emerging Threat Shapes up as Terrorists Take to the High Seas," *Jane's Intelligence Review* (July 1998), p. 44; and, Rohan Gunaratna, "Sea Tiger Success Threatens the Spread of Copycat Tactics," *Jane's Intelligence Review* (March 2001), pp. 12–16.

56. Using so-called ultra-lights (small, single piloted aircraft also known as micro-lights) a special LTTE unit reportedly planned to attack the Sri Lankan Prime Minister's official residence at Temple Trees on the Galle Road in Colombo. This airborne option was pursued after attempts to target the residence by ground attack were deterred by heavy security surrounding the compound. Interview with retired Sri Lankan Air Force officer, subsequently confirmed by Sri Lankan authorities, December 1997. See also Chris Kamalendran, "LTTE's aircraft: yes, no," *Sunday Times* (Colombo), 6 December 1998; and, Rohan Gunaratna, "Case Study; The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam," *Jane's Intelligence Review* (October 2001), p. 8.

57. The *Sherut Ha-Bitachon Ha-Klali*, also known as the Shabak or Shin Bet. According to their figures, 61 suicide bombings occurred between 1993 and September 2000 and 145 between October 2000 and September 2002. See Amos Harel, "Shin Bet: 145 Suicide Bombers Since the Start of the Intifada," *Ha'aretz* (Tel Aviv), 29 September 2002, available at (www.haartezdaily.com).

58. The first (and less violent) Palestinian Intifada is most commonly said to have erupted in 1987 and ended in 1993 with the signing of the Oslo Accords. The Al-Aqsa Intifada takes its name from the mosque on the *al-Haram al-Sharif* ("Holy Precinct" or "Noble Sanctuary"), the 35-acre plaza built atop the site of the destroyed Jewish Second Temple where both the mosque and the Dome of the Rock are located. The name for the uprising is derived from the riots there that followed Ariel Sharon's well-publicized visit to the Temple Mount (the Jewish name for the "Holy Precinct") in September 2000. See James Bennet, "Jerusalem Holy Site a Tense Crossroads Again," *New York Times*, 29 August 2003; and, David Eshel, "The Al-Aqsa Intifada: Tactics and Strategies," *Jane's Intelligence Review*, May 2001, p. 36.

59. See Rohan Gunaratna, *War and Peace in Sri Lanka* (Sri Lanka: Institute of Fundamental Studies, 1987), pp. 16–18 and idem. "The Conflict in Sri Lanka, 1982-Present," unpublished paper prepared as part of a project on how terrorism escalates conducted at the Centre for the Study of Terrorism and Political Violence, the University of St Andrews (Scotland), March 1997, pp. 1–2. See also, Patrick Brogan, *The Fighting Never Stopped* (New York: Vintage, 1990), pp.

228–229; and Mackenzie Briefing Notes, "Funding Terror: The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam and their Criminal Activities in Canada and the Western World" (Toronto: Mackenzie Centre, December 1995), p. 2.

60. The renaming added insult to injury to the country's Tamil population as "Lanka" refers to the island's ancient *Sinhalese* name, ignoring the Tamil minority; with the word "sri" meaning "auspicious" or resplendent" in the Sinhalese language. See Christine Niven et al., *Sri Lanka: a Lonely Planet Travel Survival Kit* (Victoria, Australia: Lonely Planet, 1996), pp. 9–10.

61. Gunaratna, *War and Peace in Sri Lanka,* p. 27.

62. Interview with LTTE suicide cadre, Colombo, Sri Lanka, December 1997 and February 2003.

63. Brogan, *The Fighting Never Stopped*, p. 228.

64. Interview with LTTE suicide cadre, Colombo, Sri Lanka, December 1997.

65. The adoption of the tiger as the TNT—and subsequently the LTTE's—identifying symbol was meant to evoke the powerful Cholas dynasty of ancient times, that had once conquered Sri Lanka and other parts of Asia and was used as their symbol as well. See Rohan Gunaratna, "The Rebellion in Sri Lanka: Sparrow Tactics to Guerrilla Warfare (1971–1996)," unpublished manuscript (no date), p. 10.

66. Significantly, attention was drawn precisely to this LTTE policy in a 1988 analysis by the U.S. Department of Defense. Included in a synopsis of the LTTE's "political objectives" was "Eliminate moderate Tamils and other Tamil militant groups that compete with the LTTE for influence and power within the Sri Lankan Tamil community." See U.S. Department of Defense, *Terrorist Group Profiles* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, November 1988), p. 120.

67. Gunaratna, "The Rebellion in Sri Lanka: Sparrow Tactics to Guerrilla Warfare (1971–1996)," p. 11; and, idem., *Implications of the Sri Lankan Tamil Insurgency* (Colombo: Alumni Association of the Bandaranaike Centre for International Studies and London: International Foundation of Sri Lankans United Kingdom, 1997), pp. 8–9.

68. "Masked Gunmen Kill Jaffna Mayor," *Daily News* (Colombo), 28 July 1975.

69. For a list of these groups see Gunaratna, *War & Peace in Sri Lanka*, p. 27.

70. Gunaratna, "The Rebellion in Sri Lanka," p. 13.

71. Interview with LTTE suicide cadre, Colombo, Sri Lanka, December 1997. See also, for example, "Three Former TULF MPs Shot Dead in Jaffna," *The Hindu* (Chennai), 9 April 1985, K. P. Sunil, "The Midnight Massacre," *Illustrated Weekly of India*, 8 June 1986; "Amir, Yoheswaran Shot Dead, Siva Serious," *Daily News* (Colombo), 14 July 1989; "Yogasangari—MP Killed in Madras," *Daily News* (Colombo), 21 June 1990.

72. Interview with former senior LTTE cadre, Colombo, Sri Lanka, December 1997.

73. Manoj Joshi, "On the Razor's Edge: The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, 19(1) (January–March 1996), p. 21.

74. See Gunaratna, *Implications of the Sri Lankan Tamil Insurgency*, pp. 10–12; and, idem., *War & Peace in Sri Lanka*, pp. 32–33.

75. Interview with LTTE suicide cadre, Colombo and Batticloa, Sri Lanka, December 1997. See also, Sri Lankan Armed Forces briefing, "Suicide Terrorism In Sri Lanka," no date, slide 5.

76. Quoted in Charu Lata Joshi, "Ultimate Sacrifice—Sri Lanka: Suicide Bombers," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 1 June 2000, available at (www.feer.com/006 01/p64current.html).

77. Interviews conducted with former LTTE cadre in Colombo, Jaffna, and Batticoloa, Sri Lanka, December 1997. See also, Rohan Gunaratna, "Suicide Terrorism in Sri Lanka and India: LTTE Suicide Capability, Likely Trends and Response," unpublished paper which is an expanded version of a paper presented at the First International Conference on Countering Suicide Terrorism, Herzilya, Israel, 20–23 February 2000, p. 1.

78. Gunaratna, *War & Peace in Sri Lanka*, p. 20.

79. Gunaratna, "The LTTE and Suicide Terrorism," 5–8 February 2000.

80. Quoted in Waldman, "Suicide Bombing Masters," 14 January 2003.

81. The LTTE's reputation and prowess was greatly enhanced by its success in compelling

the 1990 withdrawal of the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) sent to restore order in the predominantly Tamil northern and north-eastern parts of the island. After three years of persistent LTTE attack and harassment, the Indians left Sri Lanka—a singularly dramatic achievement for any terrorist group or insurgent movement given that country's military power and prowess.

82. See "The Black Tiger Unit of the LTTE," (no date) unpublished report written by a Sri Lankan Army intelligence officer known to one of the authors, p. 1; and, Waldman, "Suicide Bombing Masters," 14 January 2003.

83. Gunaratna, "Suicide Terrorism in Sri Lanka and India," p. 9.

84. Quoted in Kay, "Dying For Their Cause," p. 19.

85. Quoted in Charu Lata Joshi, "Ultimate Sacrifice—Sri Lanka: Suicide Bombers."

86. A photocopy of such a card is in the authors' possession. It dates from the 1998–1999 time period. See also interviews with senior Sri Lankan intelligence officials, Colombo, Sri Lanka, February 2003.

87. Interviews conducted with former LTTE cadre in Colombo, Jaffna, and Batticoloa, Sri Lanka December 1997. See also, Gunaratna, "Suicide Terrorism in Sri Lanka and India," p. 9.

88. Waldman, "Suicide Bombing Masters," 14 January 2003.

89. Interviews conducted with former LTTE cadre in Colombo, Jaffna, and Batticoloa, Sri Lanka December 1997. See also, Dexter Filkins, "Sri Lanka Women at War: Tamil Rebel Group Is Now One-Third Female," *International Herald Tribune* (Paris), 13 March 2000.

90. Interviews conducted with former LTTE cadre in Colombo, Jaffna, and Batticoloa, Sri Lanka, December 1997. See also, Gunaratna, "Suicide Terrorism in Sri Lanka and India," p. 9.

91. Ibid.

92. Sea-borne operations have included surface attacks involving jet-skis, high-speed rubber rafts, and specially designed radar evading vessels constructed of fiber-glass, as well as mini-submarines and other under-water propulsion devices along with underwater demolitions missions carried out by well-trained frogmen. See Rohan Gunaratna, "Maritime Terrorism: Future Threats and Responses," briefing presented to the International Research Group on Political Violence and Terrorism, Washington, D.C., May 2001; and idem., "Suicide Terrorism in Sri Lanka and India," p. 1. According to one account, Sea Tiger attacks have destroyed a third of the Sri Lankan Navy. Al Qaeda's sea-borne attack on the U.S.S. *Cole* in Aden harbor in October 2000 is believed to have been copied from Sea Tiger assaults. See Waldman, "Suicide Bombing Masters," 14 January 2003.

93. Ibid.

94. Office of the Coordinator for Counterterrorism, *Patterns of Global Terrorism 2001* (Washington, D.C., U.S. Department of State Publication 10940, April 2002), p. 100.

95. Interview, Colombo, Sri Lanka, 13 February 2003.

96. The U.S. Department of State classifies the LTTE as a terrorist organization, explaining that the group "has an integrated battlefield insurgent strategy with a terrorist program that targets not only key personnel in the countryside but also senior Sri Lankan political and military leaders in Colombo." See *Patterns of Global Terrorism 1996*, p. 54. The LTTE was also classified as a terrorist group by the U.S. Department of Defense in its *Terrorist Group Profiles*, published in 1988. See U.S. Department of Defense in its *Terrorist Group Profiles* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1988), pp. 120–121.

97. Christopher Thomas, "Appeal for Calm as Tamils Deny Train Bombing," *The Times* (London), 26 July 1996.

98. Gunaratna, "The LTTE and Suicide terrorism," 5–8 February 2000.

99. Among the best known, if not most significant of these groups are: al-Fatah, the Palestinian guerrilla group founded by Yasir Arafat in 1957; the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), established in 1967; the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine—General Command (PFLP—GC), established in 1967; along with at least ten other secular organizations. See Directorate of Intelligence, Central Intelligence Agency, *Palestinian Organizations: A Reference Aid* (Washington, D.C. : Central Intelligence Agency, LDA 90-11155, March 1990), passim.

100. The Gaza percentage is likely to be even higher given the militancy and more entrenched religious orientation of its Palestinian population.

101. The Muslim Brotherhood was founded in Egypt by Hassan al Banna in 1929. Its goal is to "impose the laws of Islam upon the social, political and constitutional life of the Muslim nations." See Evyatar Levine and Yaacov Shimoni (eds.), *Political Dictionary of the Middle East in the Twentieth Century* (London and Jerusalem: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1972), pp. 262–263.

102. Shaul Mishall and Reuben Aharoni, *Speaking Stones: Communiqués From the Intifada Underground* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1994), p. xiii.

103. See Ziad Abu-Amr, "Hamas: A Historical and Political Background," *Journal of Palestinian Studies*, 23(4) (Summer 1993), p. 10; Phyllis Bennis, *From Stones to Statehood: The Palestinian Uprising* (New York: Olive Branch Press, 1990), p. 27; Michael Theodoulu, "New Attacks Feared After Defiant Vow by Hamas," *The Times* (London), 22 August 1995.

104. Interview with Roni Shaked, *Yedioth Ahronoth* (Tel Aviv) reporter and an expert on Hamas. See also, Joe Stork, *Erased in a Moment: Suicide Bombing Attacks Against Israeli Civilians* (New York: Human Rights Watch, October 2002), p. 64.

105. Rex Brynen and Neil Caplan in Rex Brynen (ed.), *Echoes of the Intifada: Regional Repercussions of the Palestinian-Israeli Conflict* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1992), p. 7.

106. Mishal and Sela, *The Palestinian Hamas*, p. 50.

107. Quoted in Mishal and Aharoni, *Speaking Stones*, p. 31.

108. Brynen and Caplan, *Echoes of the Intifada*, p. 7.

109. Mishal and Sela, *The Palestinian Hamas*, pp. 56–57.

110. Mishal and Aharoni, *Speaking Stones*, p. 26.

111. Hisham H. Ahmad, *Hamas from Religious Salvation to Political Transformation: The Rise of Hamas in Palestinian Society* (Jerusalem: Passia, 1994), p. 51.

112. Ali Jarbawi and Roger Heacock. "The Deportations and the Palestinian–Israeli Negotiations," *Journal of Palestinian Studies*, 22(3) (Spring 1993), p. 32.

113. Mishal and Sela, *The Palestinian Hamas*, p. 57.

114. Ibid., p. 64.

115. The unit is named after a Syrian-born sheikh who became an iconic figure in the history of the Palestinian nationalist resistance movement. Sheikh al-Qassam was the spiritual head of a collection of villages in the area around Haifa during the 1920s and 1930s, populated mostly by landless peasants who had been displaced by the Zionists. A militant nationalist and devout Muslim, al-Qassam organized a Palestinian guerrilla unit that in 1931 began to raid Jewish settlements in the Jezreel Valley. In a clash with British police in November 1935 al-Qassam was killed. The loss of their leader did not deter al-Qassam's followers, who continued fighting, setting the stage for the countrywide revolt against British rule, known as the Arab Rebellion, which erupted the following year and continued until 1939. See Y. Porath, *The Palestinian Arab National Movement 1929–1939: From Riots to Rebellion* (London: Frank Cass, 1977), pp. 132–139. See also Abu-Amr, "Hamas: A Historical and Political Background," p. 6; and, Stork, *Erased in a Moment*, fn 158, p. 65.

116. Mishal and Sela, *The Palestinian Hamas*, p. 65.

117. Stork, *Erased in a Moment*, p. 73.

118. Jarbawi and Heacock. "The Deportations and the Palestinian-Israeli Negotiations," p. 32. See also, Mishal and Sela, *The Palestinian Hamas*, pp. 96–97.

119. The deportees included, for example. Dr. Ab al-Azziz al-Rantisi, Husayn Abu Kuwik (a West bank union official), Fadil Salih (an imam), and Hasan Yusuf (a school teacher). See Abu-Amr, "Hamas: A Historical and Political Background," p. 26 and Ahmad, *Hamas from Religious Salvation to Political Transformation*, p. 77.

120. Scott Atran, "Genesis of Suicide Terrorism," p. 1535. See also Stork, *Erased in a Moment*, p. 73.

121. Jarbawi and Heacock. "The Deportations and the Palestinian-Israeli Negotiations," p. 40.

122. Ehud Ya'ari, "The Metamorphosis of Hamas," *Jerusalem Report*, 14 January 1993, p. 25.

123. The two Security Council resolutions in essence call for Israel to return to the boundaries that existed before the 1967 Six Day War and therefore for Israeli withdrawal from the West Bank and Gaza Strip in return for the unqualified recognition by both Israel and Palestinians of one another's legitimate right to statehood. Jeffrey Michels, "National Vision and the Negotiation of Narratives: The Oslo Agreement," *Journal of Palestinian Studies,* XXIV (Autumn 1994), p. 37.

124. Mishal and Sela, *The Palestinian Hamas*, pp. 66–67.

125. Abu-Amr, "Hamas: A Historical and Political Background," p. 13.

126. Mishal and Sela, *The Palestinian Hamas*, p. 67.

127. Boaz Ganor, "Suicide Attacks in Israel," in International Policy Institute for Counter-Terrorism, *Countering Suicide Terrorism: An International Conference* (Jerusalem and New York: Gefen, 2001), p. 136.

128. Mark Juergensmeyer, "The Worldwide Rise of Religious Nationalism," *Journal of International Affairs*, 50 (Summer 1996), p. 7.

129. Abu-Amr, "Hamas: A Historical and Political Background," p. 13.

130. See Walter Laqueur, *The New Terrorism: Fanaticism and the Arms of Mass Destruction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), p. 139; and, idem., *No End To War: Terrorism in the Twenty-First Century* (New York: Continuum, 2003), p. 107.

131. Stork, *Erased in a Moment*, fn 158, p. 66.

132. "Record of Suicide Attacks," *The Times* (London), 5 March 1996.

133. Ehud Sprinzak, "Rational Fanatics," p. 71.

134. Ganor, "Suicide Attacks in Israel," p. 136; and Theodoulu, "New Attacks Feared After Defiant Vow by Hamas," 22 August 1995.

135. BBC Summary of World Broadcasts, 23 July 2000, quoted in Robert A. Pape, "The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism," *American Political Science Review*, 97 (August 2003), p. 355.

136. Mishal and Sela, *The Palestinian Hamas*, p. 66.

137. Shiqaqi reportedly borrowed the distinction used by Hezbollah between suicide and martyrdom. While Islam disdains suicide, it extols martyrdom: thus Shiqaqi's formulation that: "Allah may cause to be known those who believe and may make some of you martyrs, and Allah may purify those who believe and may utterly destroy the disbelievers . . . [however] no one can die except by Allah's leave." Quoted in Atran, "Genesis of Suicide Terrorism," p. 1535.

138. According to a Hamas activist, in the early 1990s Ayyash sent a letter to the Hamas leadership that reportedly argued, "We paid a high price when we used only slingshots and stones. We need to exert more pressure, make the cost of the occupation that much more expensive in human lives, that much more unbearable." Quoted in Hassan, "Letter from Gaza: An Arsenal of Believers," p. 38.

139. Ayyash was assassinated with a small bomb concealed in a mobile telephone. For the most complete account of Ayyash and Israel's hunt for him, see Samuel M. Katz, *The Hunt for the Engineer: How Israeli Agents Tracked the Hamas Master Bomber* (New York: Fromm, 1999), *passim*. See also Marie Colvin and Andy Goldberg, "Israel on Alert for Wave of 'Sleeper' Bombers," *The Sunday Times* (London), 10 March 1996.

140. "Record of Suicide Attacks," *The Times* (London), 5 March 1996.

141. See Serge Schmemann, "Bus Bombing Kills Five in Jerusalem, 100 Are Wounded," *New York Times*, 22 August 1995.

142. Quoted in Israel Shahak, "Hamas and Arafat; The Balance of Power," *Middle East International*, 468 (4 February 1996), p. 17.

143. Quoted in Serge Schemann, "Terror Isn't Alone as a Threat to Middle East Peace," *Jerusalem Post*, 4 March 1996.

144. Sprinzak, "Rational Fanatics," p. 71.

145. Mishal and Sela, *The Palestinian Hamas*, p. 50.

146. From *al-Quds* (East Jerusalem), 12 October 1995, quoted in Mishal and Sela, *The Palestinian Hamas*, p. 71.

147. "Database of Terrorism Attacks Against Israel, 1948–present," maintained by the National Security Studies Center (NSSC), Haifa University, Mt. Carmel, Haifa, Israel. Information courtesy of Dr. Ami Pedahzur and Mr. Arie Perliger of the NSSC staff.

148. See Yariv Tsfati and Gabriel Weimann, "www.terrorism.com: Terror on the Internet," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, 25 (September–October 2001), pp. 315–316. See also, Edward Lucas, "Deadly Image Which Could Give Hezbollah the Edge," *The Scotsman* (Edinburgh), 14 April 2000; Bill Maxwell, "Good Women Help Bring War's End," *Albany Times Union*, 5 June 2000; and, Tanya Willmer, "Soldiers' Mothers Pray Their Own Battle Over After Israel Ends its Vietnam," *Agence France Presse*, 24 May 2000.

149. Pape, "The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism," p. 355.

150. BBC Summary of World Broadcasts, 3 November 2001 quoted in Pape, "The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism," p. 355.

151. See General (ret.) Amnon Lipkin-Shahak, "Introduction," in Institute for Counter-Terrorism, *Countering Suicide Terrorism*, p. 5, where he writes that, "I believe that these [suicide] attacks were motivated by desperation."

152. Quoted in Sprinzak, "Rational Fanatics," p. 68.

153. Quoted in Hassan, "Letter From Gaza: An Arsenal of Believers," p. 38.

154. Hassan, "Letter From Gaza: An Arsenal of Believers," p. 39.

155. Data from the RAND Chronologies of Terrorism made available courtesy of Ms. Kim Cragin and Ms. Dorothy Chen.

156. "Hamas' Mishal: Jihad Palestinians' Sole Option," al-Zaman, 23 November 2000, p. 4, FBIS-NES, Document ID: GMP 20001123000110.

157. Quoted in Sprinzak, "Rational Fanatics," p. 1.

158. Quoted in Anders Strindberg, "'The Ultimate Sacrifice' The Social and Political Dynamics of Suicide Operations in Palestine," *MIPT Quarterly Bulletin* (Second Quarter, 2002), p. 4.

159. Quoted in Hassan, "Letter From Gaza: An Arsenal of Believers," p. 39.

160. Quoted in ibid.

161. Quoted in Hassan, "Letter From Gaza: An Arsenal of Believers," p. 38.

162. Quoted in Burhan Wazis, "Suicide Bombing is Democratic Right, Says the 'Soul' of Hamas," *The Observer* (London), 19 August 2001.

163. Quoted in Thomas L. Friedman, "Strategy of Suicide Bombings," *New York Times*, 31 March 2002.

164. Quoted in Jeffrey Goldberg, "The Martyr Strategy: What Does the New Phase of Terrorism Signify?," *The New Yorker*, 9 July 2001.

165. Quoted in Ari Shavit, "The Enemy Within," Ha'Aretz Friday Magazine, 20 August 2002, p. 3, available at (http://www.freeman.org/m_online/septo2/shavit.htm).

166. Interview with senior IDF officers, the Kirya, Tel Aviv, Israel, December 2002.

167. Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, "Arab Leaders Glorify Suicide Terrorism," 17 April 2002, available at (http//:www.adl.org/israel/Israel-suicide-terror.asp) accessed on 29 September 2002.

168. This clip was shown to participants at the International Policy Institute for Counter-Terrorism's (ICT) 3rd International Conference, Herzilya, Israel, 7–10 September 2003, among whom was one of the authors of this article.

169. FBIS, Near East/South Asia, "Israel" Palestinian Television Broadcasts Clip Encouraging Martyrdom," *Ma'ariv* (Tel Aviv), Hebrew, 11 August 2003, p. 8.

170. Lelyveld, "All Suicide Bombers Are Not Alike," p. 51.

171. Quoted in Hendawi, "Cult Evolves Around Suicide Bombers," 28 April 2002.

172. Ibid. Lelyveld cites a 78 percent approval. See Lelyveld, "All Suicide Bombers Are Not Alike," p. 50.

173. As one analyst notes of the 1995-1996 Hamas suicide bombing campaign: "the bombings were not directed to effect change in Israel; rather, they were intended to undermine the PA." See Ori Slonim, "The Hamas and Terror: An Alternative Explanation for the Use of Violence," *Strategic Assessment*, 2(3) (Ramat Aviv: Jaffee Center for Strategic Studies at Tel Aviv University, December 1999), p. 17.

174. See Naveh et al., *The Involvement of Arafat, PA Senior Officials and Apparatuses in Terrorism Against Israel, Corruption and Crime*, passim. See also, Matthew Levitt, "Designating the Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades," *Peacewatch*, no. 371 (Washington, DC: The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 25 March 2002), pp. 1–2; and, Stork, *Erased in a Moment*, pp. 77–79.

175. Luft, "The Palestinian H-Bomb: Terror's Winning Strategy," pp. 4–5.

176. The *Karine-A* was intercepted in the Red Sea on 3 January 2002 by Israeli commandos and the Israeli Navy while en route from Iran to Gaza. See Gal Luft, "Special Policy Forum Report: The *Karine-A* Affair: A Strategic Watershed in the Middle East?" *Peacewatch*, No. 361 (Washington, D.C.: The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 30 January 2002), pp. 1–2; David Makovsky, "The Seizure of Gaza-Bound Arms: Political Implications," *Peacewatch*, No. 358 (Washington, D.C.: The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 8 January 2002), pp. 1–2; Robert Satloff, "*Karine-A*: Strategic Implications of Iranian-Palestinian Collusion," *Policywatch*, no. 539 (Washington, DC: The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 15 January 2002), pp. 1–2 "Caught Red-Handed: The Inside Story of an Arms Shipment," *Jane's Foreign Report*, No. 2672, 17 January 2002, p. 1.

177. Among the injured was a Woodmere, Long Island resident named Mark Sokolow, who on September 11 had escaped unharmed from the second tower of the World Trade Center, only to find himself enmeshed in another life-threatening terrorist incident, this time in Jerusalem.

178. Luft, "The Palestinian H-Bomb: Terror's Winning Strategy," p. 5.

179. Database of Terrorism Attacks Against Israel, 1948–present, maintained by the National Security Studies Center, Haifa University, Mt. Carmel, Haifa, Israel.

180. See, for example, Eyad Sarraj, "The Making of a Suicide Bomber," 10 March 1996, available at (http://www.baraka.org); and, Mouin Rabbani, "Suicide Attacks Fueled by Alienation & Futility," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, 3 April 2001, available at (http://inq.philly.com/content/inquirer/2001/04/03/opinion/RABBABI03.htm).

181. Hassan, "Letter From Gaza: An Arsenal of Believers," p. 38.