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The rationality of terrorism and other forms of political violence: lessons from the Jewish campaign in Palestine, 1939–1947

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Does terrorism work? Its targets and victims steadfastly maintain that it does not; its practitioners and apologists that it does. Scholars and analysts are divided. But, if terrorism is as ineffective as many claim, why has it persisted for at least the past two millennia and indeed become an increasingly popular means of violent political expression in the twenty-first century? Using the Jewish terrorist campaign against the British in Palestine during the 1940s, this article attempts to shed light on this question. It concludes that notwithstanding the repeated denials of governments, terrorism can, in the right conditions and with the appropriate strategy and tactics, indeed 'work'. At minimum, even if terrorism's power to dramatically change the course of history (along the lines of the 11 September 2001 attacks) has been mercifully infrequent; terrorism's ability to act as a catalyst or fulminate for either wider conflagration or systemic political change appears historically undeniable.

Keywords: Begin; empowerment; Haganah; Irgun; Lohamei Herut Yisrael; Lehi; terrorism

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Does terrorism work? Its targets and victims steadfastly maintain that it does not;[1] its practitioners and apologists that it does.[2] Scholars and analysts are divided. Given the untold death and destruction wrought by terrorists, the question has an undeniable relevance that has only intensified since the war on terror was declared by President Bush in 2001. Yet, a definitive answer remains as elusive as a universally accepted definition of the phenomenon itself.[3]

'Terrorists can never win outright', Rhodesian Prime Minister Ian Smith confidently declared in 1977.[4] Following the 1983 suicide truck bombing that killed 241 US Marines in Lebanon, President Ronald Reagan defiantly proclaimed that 'the main thing', is to show that terrorism 'doesn't work ... [and] to prove that terrorist acts are not going to drive us away'.[5] Margaret Thatcher described the IRA's attempt to kill her at the 1984 Conservative Party Conference as illustrative not only of a failed attack, but of a fundamentally futile strategy.[6] Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert promised in July 2006 that his government 'will not give in

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to blackmail and will not negotiate with terrorists when it comes to the lives of Israel Defence Force soldiers', yet did exactly that a year later when he approved a deal that freed five Hezbollah terrorists in exchange for the bodies of two kidnapped Israeli sergeants.[7] And, after Basque separatists gunned down a Spanish policeman in December 2007, Prime Minister Jose Luis Rodriguez claimed that 'Forty years of black terrorist history have not been enough for them to gauge the strength of Spanish society. Hundreds of deaths and attacks have been insufficient to make them understand they will never achieve anything through violence.'[8]

Scholars have made similarly sweeping claims. Nobel laureate Thomas Schelling observed in 1991 that, despite considerable exertion, terrorists mostly have little to show for their efforts except for fleeting attention and evanescent publicity.[9] In the wake of the 11 September 2001 attacks, historical novelist, cum military historian, Caleb Carr, consolingly averred, 'the strategy of terror is a spectacularly failed one'.[10] And, in a provocative 2006 article titled 'Why Terrorism Does Not Work', Max Abrahms argued that terrorism was also tactically ineffective.[11] 'The notion that terrorism is an effective coercive instrument', he further concluded, 'is sustained by either single case studies or a few well-known terrorist victories, namely by Hezbollah and Palestinian terrorists groups'.[12]

Yet, if terrorism is so ineffective, why has it persisted for at least the past two millennia and indeed become an increasingly popular means of violent political expression in the twenty-first century?[13] The sense of empowerment and catharsis articulated by Frantz Fanon in *The Wretched of the Earth*[14] only partially explains terrorism's enduring attraction to the alienated and disenfranchised; the 'so-far powerless [and] would-be powerful', described over 30 years ago by Frederick J. Hacker, a psychiatrist like Fanon.[15] It is necessarily incomplete because individual motivations are only one side of a coin that also must address organizational dimensions and imperatives and the collective mindset that they reflect. Thus much as statesmen and scholars may trumpet terrorism's ineffectuality, it is nonetheless widely accepted that terrorist violence is neither irrational nor desperate: but instead is entirely rational and often carefully calculated. Terrorism is thus consciously embraced as a deliberate instrument of warfare; a pragmatic decision derived as a result of a discernibly logical process.[16] As Martha Crenshaw explained in her seminal 1981 article on the causes of terrorism.

> Campaigns of terrorism depend on rational political choice. As purposeful activity, terrorism is the result of an organization's decision that it is a politically useful means to oppose a government … Terrorism is seen collectively as a logical means to advance desired ends.[17]

In actual practice, Crenshaw's point is perhaps most clearly evidenced by Menachem Begin's famous elucidation of the Irgun Zvai Le'umi's (Hebrew: National Military Organization; also often known by its Hebrew acronym, Etzel) decision in 1944 to challenge Britain's rule of Palestine. 'What value in speeches?,' he asked, in his classic memoir of revolutionary warfare, *The Revolt*.

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> No, there was no other way. If we did not fight we should be destroyed. To fight was the only way to salvation.
>
> When Descartes said: 'I think, therefore, I am,' he uttered a very profound thought. But there are times in the history of peoples when thought alone does not prove their existence … There are times when everything in you cries out: your very self-respect as a human being lies in your resistance to evil.
>
> We fight, therefore we are![18]

Thus terrorism's posited ineffectiveness as a coercive strategy – confined to a handful of case studies or to infrequent and entirely *sui generis* successes – hardly squares with the terrorists' own fervent and abiding faith in the efficacy of their violence, its intractable persistence over the course of the past two millennia or indeed the disproportionate influence that even a small number of well-known victories has had in inspiring imitation and emulation by successive generations of terrorists. In other words, the handful of supposed exceptions may be far more important and far more compelling than the perceived rule. And, even if terrorism's power to dramatically change the course of history – along the lines of the 11 September 2001 attacks – has been mercifully infrequent; terrorism's ability to act as a catalyst or fulminate for either wider conflagration or systemic political change appears historically undeniable. The assassination in Sarajevo in June 1914 and the prelude to the 1967 Six Day War are examples of the former; while Ireland in 1922, Palestine in 1947, Cyprus in 1960, Algeria in 1962 are among the many examples depicting the latter. Indeed, the earlier testimonials to terrorism's ineffectiveness from various world leaders are contradicted by the facts that Rhodesia is now Zimbabwe, the US Marines soon left Lebanon, Martin McGuinnes is now the Deputy First Minister of Northern Ireland, and the violent struggle for independence by the Basque separatist group ETA has lasted for nearly 50 years.[19] 'The facts of history do not bear out this assertion of the uselessness of terrorism', Edward Hymans wrote in his 1974 book, *Terrorists and Terrorism*, 'for at all epochs and in all parts of the world governments have, in fact, repeatedly been forced by terrorists to change their policies, and in some cases, have been overthrown by terrorism'.[20] The Jewish terrorist campaign fought in Palestine during the 1940s is precisely a case in point.

Lessons from the Jewish terrorism campaign

During and after World War II Palestine's Jewish community and its British rulers came into conflict over a wide range of issues. They clashed over the right of Jews to immigrate to Palestine; over Jewish purchase and settlement of land; over the acquisition, import and storage of arms by Jews; over the clandestine training of Jewish self-defense forces; and – most fundamentally – over Palestine's political future. The Jewish struggle for statehood employed almost every means at its exponents' disposal: diplomacy, negotiation, lobbying, civil disobedience, propaganda, information operations, armed resistance, and terrorist violence. It is beyond the scope of this paper to discuss the entire spectrum of that

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struggle. Instead, it focuses specifically on the terrorist campaign waged by the Irgun and the strategy and generalship of Menachem Begin.

The Irgun was of course only one of three Jewish underground movements active in Palestine at that time. The others were the Haganah (Hebrew: defense) and the Lohamei Herut Yisrael (Freedom Fighters for Israel, known to Jews by its Hebrew acronym, Lehi, and to the British as the Stern Gang). The Haganah was the largest and most restrained of the three. It was primarily a self-defense force, conceived as the nucleus of a future Jewish army for a future Jewish state.[21] It would be incorrect to label the Haganah a terrorist organization. However, Lehi most certainly was. Even though its members never considered themselves terrorists *per se*, they nonetheless are unique in the annals of twentieth century terrorism given their candor about their use of proven terrorist tactics.[22] Lehi, however, never numbered more than 200–300 persons[23] and lacking weapons and resources they generally were unable to sustain a concerted terrorist campaign. Their most spectacular and important operations involved the assassinations in 1944 of Lord Moyne, the British Minister Resident for the Middle East, and in 1948 of Count Folke Bernadotte, the United Nations Mediator in Palestine.[24] The Irgun's campaign was the more significant of the two terrorist struggles in that it was sustained and unrelenting; but more importantly, it established a revolutionary model which thereafter was emulated and embraced by both anti-colonial and post-colonial era terrorist groups alike.

The Irgun's Revolt

Palestine had long been the scene of numerous riots and other manifestations of intercommunal violence that between 1936 and 1939 had culminated in a full-scale rebellion by its Arab inhabitants. In 1937, a new element was added to the country's incendiary landscape when the Irgun commenced retaliatory terrorist attacks on the Arabs. The group expanded its operations to include British targets in 1939 following the government's promulgation of a White Paper in May that imposed severe restrictions on Jewish immigration to Palestine, thereby closing one of the few remaining avenues of escape available to European Jews fleeing Hitler. But the Irgun's inchoate revolt against British rule was short-lived. Less than three months after it began, Britain was at war with Germany. Confronted by the prospect of the greater menace of a victorious Nazi Germany, the Irgun declared a truce and announced the suspension of all anti-British operations for the war's duration. Like the rest of the Jewish community in Palestine, who had also pledged to support the British war effort, the Irgun hoped that this loyalty would later result in the recognition of Zionist claims to statehood.

Meanwhile, in May 1942, a young private attached to General Anders' Polish army-in-exile arrived in Palestine. Menachem Begin's journey had been a circuitous one. Born in 1913 in Brest Litovsk, Poland, the future prime minister of Israel (1977–1983) had first become involved in Zionist politics as a teenager when he joined Betar, a right-wing nationalist Jewish youth group. By the time he

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had received his law degree from Warsaw University in 1935, Begin was head of the group's Organization Department for Poland.[25] Three years later he was appointed its national commander. However, when Germany invaded Poland in September 1939, Begin was forced to flee to Lithuania. A year later, Russian secret police arrested him on the ironic charge of being 'an agent of British imperialism'. After spending nine months in a local jail, Begin was sentenced to eight years' 'correctional labour'. In June 1941, when Germany invaded Russia, he was on a Russian ship carrying political prisoners to a Stalinist labour camp in Siberia.[26] A reprieve came in the form of an offer to join the Polish Army or continue his journey.[27] Begin chose the former and found himself in a unit ordered to Palestine. Shortly after his arrival, he established contact with the Irgun high command.[28]

Since the suspension of its revolt, the Irgun had fallen into disarray.[29] The deaths of its ideological mentor, Vladimir Jabotinsky, in August 1940 and its military commander, David Raziel, nine months later[30] had deprived the group of leadership and direction at a time when its self-imposed dormancy required someone at the top with the vision and organizational skills necessary to hold it together.[31] Throughout 1943, Begin met with the Irgun's surviving senior commanders to discuss the group's future.[32] As the war against Germany moved decisively in the Allies' favor, they became convinced that the Irgun should resume its revolt. Four dominant considerations influenced this decision. First and foremost was news of the terrible fate that had befallen European Jewry under Nazi domination. Second, the expiration in March 1944 of the White Paper's rigidly enforced five-year immigration quota would be likely to choke off all future Jewish immigration to Palestine.[33] Third, the Irgun's leaders agreed that the reasoning behind the self-imposed truce they had declared four years before – that harming Britain might help Germany – was no longer tenable since the course of the Second World War had now virtually assured an Allied victory.[34] Finally, by renewing the revolt, the Irgun's revamped high command sought to position themselves and their organization at the vanguard of the active realization of the Jews' political and nationalist aspirations.

On 1 December 1943 Begin formally assumed command of the group and finalized plans for the resumption of anti-British operations.[35] As a lowly enlisted man in an exile army with only the bare minimum of formal military training, Begin was an unlikely strategist. But he possessed an uncanny analytical ability to cut right to the heart of an issue and an intuitive sense about the interplay between violence, politics and propaganda that ideally qualified him to lead a terrorist organization. Begin's strategy was simple. The handful of men and few weapons that in 1943 comprised the Irgun could never hope to challenge the British army on the battlefield and win. Instead, the group would function in the setting and operate in the manner that best afforded the terrorist with means of concealment and escape. Based in the city, its members would bury themselves within the surrounding community, indistinguishable from ordinary, law-abiding citizens. Then, at the appropriate moment, they would emerge from the shadows

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to strike before disappearing back into the anonymity of Palestine's urban neighborhoods, remaining safely beyond the reach of the authorities.

The Irgun's plan, therefore, was not to defeat Britain militarily, but to use terrorist violence to undermine the government's prestige and control of Palestine by striking at symbols of British rule. 'History and our observation', Begin later recalled, 'persuaded us that if we could succeed in destroying the government's prestige in Eretz Israel [Hebrew: literally 'the land of Israel'], the removal of its rule would follow automatically. Thenceforward, we gave no peace to this weak spot. Throughout all the years of our uprising, we hit at the British Government's prestige, deliberately, tirelessly, unceasingly.'[36]

In contrast to other colonial rebellions that either had sought decisive military victories in actual battle or had relied on a prolonged strategy of attrition, the Irgun adopted a strategy that involved the relentless targeting of those institutions of government that unmistakably represented Britain's oppressive rule of Palestine. Thus the Irgun recommenced operations in February 1944 with the simultaneous bombings of the immigration department's offices in Palestine's three major cities – Jerusalem, Tel Aviv and Haifa. Subsequent attacks were mounted against the government land registry offices, from which the White Paper's provisions restricting Jewish land purchase were administered; the department of taxation and finance, responsible for collecting the revenue used to fund the government's repressive policies; and of course the security forces – the police and army – which were charged with the White Paper's enforcement.

The Irgun's most spectacular operation was without doubt its bombing in July 1946 of Jerusalem's King David Hotel. Although much has been written about this controversial incident, it is worth recalling that the King David was no ordinary hostelry. On two floors of its southern wing (beneath which the explosives were placed), the hotel housed the nerve centre of British rule in Palestine: the government secretariat and the headquarters of both British military forces in Palestine and Transjordan and British intelligence. The attack's target, therefore, was neither the hotel itself nor the persons working or staying in it, but the government and military offices located there. Nor was its purpose random, indiscriminate carnage. Unlike many terrorist groups today, the Irgun's strategy was not deliberately to target or wantonly harm civilians. At the same time, though, the claim of Begin and other apologists that warnings were issued to evacuate the hotel before the blast cannot absolve either the group or its commander from responsibility for the 91 persons killed and 45 others injured: men and women, Arabs, Jews and Britons alike. Indeed, whatever non-lethal intentions the Irgun may or may not have had, the fact remains that a tragedy of almost unparalleled magnitude was inflicted at the King David Hotel, so that to this day the bombing still holds an infamous distinction as one of the world's single most lethal terrorist incidents of the twentieth century.

Despite – or perhaps because of – the tragic loss of life, so far as the Irgun was concerned the bombing achieved its objective: attracting worldwide attention to the group's struggle and the worsening situation in Palestine. Editorials in all the

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British newspapers focused on the nugatory results of recent military operations against the terrorists that had been previously trumpeted as great successes. Typical of these was the *Manchester Guardian*'s, observation that the bombing 'will be a shock to those who imagined that the Government's firmness had put a stop to Jewish terrorism and had brought about an easier situation in Palestine. In fact, the opposite is the truth'.[37] These reactions accorded perfectly with Begin's plan to foster a climate of fear and alarm in Palestine so pervasive as to undermine confidence both there and in Britain in the government's ability to maintain order. Indeed, in these circumstances, the government could only respond by imposing on Palestine a harsh regimen of security measures encompassing a daily routine of curfews, road blocks, snap checks, cordon-and-search operations and, for a time, even martial law. The failure of these measures to stop the Irgun's unrelenting terrorist campaign would, Begin hoped, have the effect of further underscoring the government's weakness. He also banked on the fact that the massive disruptions caused to daily life and commerce by the harsh and repressive countermeasures that the British were forced to take would further alienate the community from the government, thwart its efforts to obtain the community's cooperation against the terrorists, and create in the minds of the Jews an image of the army and the police as oppressors rather than protectors. Moreover, the more conspicuous the security forces seemed, the stronger the terrorists appeared.

At the foundation of this strategy was Begin's belief that the British, unlike the Germans who during the war had carried out wholesale reprisals against civilians, were incapable of such barbarity.[38] 'We knew', he explained, 'that Eretz Israel, in consequence of the revolt, resembled a glass house. The world was looking into it with ever-increasing interest and could see most of what was happening inside ... Arms were our weapons of attack; the transparency of the 'glass' was our shield of defence.'[39] By compelling a liberal democracy like Britain to take increasingly repressive measures against the public, the terrorists sought to push Britain to the limit of its endurance. In this respect, the Irgun did not need to win a decisive military victory; they only had to avoid losing. Accordingly, British tactical 'successes' did nothing to change the balance of forces or bring the security forces any closer to victory. Rather, measures such as massive cordon-and-search operations and the imposition of martial law delivered only ephemeral benefits: bought at the cost of estranging the population from the government. Nearly a quarter of a century later, the Brazilian revolutionary theorist Carlos Marighela would advocate the same strategy in his famous 'Mini-Manual', the *Handbook of Urban Guerrilla War*.[40]

In sum, this was not a war of numbers. Success was measured not in terms of casualties inflicted (between 1945 and 1947, the worst years of the conflict, just under 150 British soldiers were killed) or assets destroyed, but – precisely as Begin had wanted – by psychological impact. In place of a conventional military strategy of confrontation in battle, Begin and his lieutenants conceived operations that were designed less to kill than to tarnish the government's prestige, demoralize its security forces and undermine Britain's resolve to remain in Palestine. Explaining

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his strategy, Begin argued that 'The very existence of an underground must, in the end, undermine the prestige of a colonial regime that lives by the legend of its omnipotence. Every attack which it fails to prevent is a blow at its standing. Even if the attack does not succeed, it makes a dent in that prestige, and that dent widens into a crack which is extended with every succeeding attack.'[41] Thus, even though the British forces outnumbered the terrorists by twenty to one – so that there was, according to one account, 'one armed soldier to each adult male Jew in Palestine'[42] – despite this overwhelming numerical superiority, the British were still unable to destroy the Irgun and maintain order in Palestine.

Finally, an integral and innovative part of the Irgun's strategy was Begin's use of daring and dramatic acts of violence to attract international attention to Palestine and thereby publicize simultaneously the Zionists' grievances against Britain and their claims for statehood. In an era long before the advent of 24-hour cable news and instantaneous satellite-transmitted broadcasts, the Irgun deliberately attempted to appeal to a worldwide audience far beyond the immediate confines of the local struggle, beyond even the ruling regime's own homeland. In particular, the Irgun – like its non-violent and less violent Zionist counterparts – sought to generate sympathy and marshal support among powerful allies such as the Jewish community in the United States and its elected representatives in Congress and the White House, as well as among the delegates to the fledgling United Nations Organization, to bring pressure to bear on Britain to grant Jewish statehood. The success of this strategy, Begin claims, may be seen in the paucity of global coverage afforded to the civil war that had erupted in Greece after the Second World War, compared to that devoted to events in Palestine. Palestine, he wrote, had undeniably become a 'centre of world interest'. The revolt had made it so. 'It is a fact', Begin maintains:

> that no partisan struggle had been so publicized throughout the world as was ours. … The reports on our operations, under screaming headlines, covered the front pages of newspapers everywhere, particularly in the United States … The interest of the newspapers is the measure of the interest of the public. And the public – not only Jews but non-Jews too – were manifestly interested in the blows we were striking in Eretz Israel.[43]

In this respect, pro-Irgun Jewish-American lobbyists were noticeably successful in obtaining the passage of resolutions by the US Congress condemning 'British oppression' and re-affirming American support for the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine.[44] These activities, which presaged the efforts undertaken in recent decades by Irish-American activists on behalf of Sinn Fein and the Provisional Irish Republican Army (PIRA), had similarly corrosive effects on Anglo-American relations more than half a century ago.

By 1947 the Irgun had in fact achieved its objectives. Reporting on the situation to Washington, the American consul-general in Jerusalem observed that

> with [British] officials attempting to administrate from behind masses of barbed wire, in heavily defended buildings, and with the same officials (minus wives and children evacuated some time ago) living in pathetic seclusion in 'security zones,'

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> one cannot escape the conclusion that the Government of Palestine is a hunted organization with little hope of ever being able to cope with conditions in this country as they exist today.[45]

Indeed, each successive terrorist outrage illuminated the government's inability to curb, much less defeat the terrorists. Already sapped by the Second World War, Britain's limited economic resources were further strained by the cost of deploying so large a military force to Palestine to cope with the tide of violence submerging the country. Public opinion in Britain, already ill-disposed to the continued loss of life and expenditure of effort in an unwinnable situation, was further inflamed by incidents such as the King David Hotel bombing and the Irgun's hanging in July 1947 of two sergeants in retaliation for the government's execution of three convicted Irgun terrorists. As the renowned British historian of the Middle East, Elizabeth Monroe, has noted in respect of the hangings: 'The British public had taken Palestine in its stride … and had looked upon 'disturbances' and 'violence' there much as it viewed 'the troubles' in Ireland – as an unpleasant experience that was part of the white man's burden.' All this changed, however, with the cold-blooded murder of the sergeants. Photographs of the grim death scene – depicting the two corpses just inches above the ground, the sergeants' hooded faces and bloodied shirts – were emblazoned across the front pages of British newspapers under headlines decrying their execution as an act of 'medieval barbarity'. As inured to the almost daily reports of the death and deprivation suffered by the army in Palestine as the British public was, the brutal execution of the two sergeants made a deep and unalterable impression on the national psyche. 'All home comment on that deed', Monroe continued, was 'different in tone from that on earlier terrorist acts, many of which caused greater loss of life – for instance, the blowing up of the officers' club or of the King David Hotel.'[46] For both the British public and the press, the murders seemed to demonstrate the futility of the situation in Palestine and the pointlessness of remaining there any longer than was absolutely necessary.

At the time, Britain was also of course coming under intense pressure from the United States and other quarters regarding the admission to Palestine of tens of thousands of Jewish displaced persons still languishing throughout liberated Europe and was itself trying to stem the flood of illegal Jewish immigrants attempting to enter Palestine. In addition, throughout the summer of 1947 the Special Committee on Palestine (UNSCOP) appointed by the UN General Assembly was completing its investigations regarding the country's future.[47] It is a measure of the Irgun's success that Begin was twice granted audiences with the committee to explain the group's aims, motivations and vision of a Jewish state in Palestine. The committee's unanimous recommendation calling for the immediate termination of British rule and granting of independence to Palestine finally forced the government's hand.[48] In September the colonial secretary, Arthur Creech-Jones, announced that Britain would no longer be responsible for governing Palestine and that all civilian and military personnel would be evacuated as soon as was practicable.

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A decade and a half after the event, Creech-Jones cited four pivotal considerations that influenced the government's decision. First, there were the irreconcilable differences between Palestine's Arab and Jewish communities; second, the drain on Britain's shrinking financial resources imposed by the country's heavy military commitment in Palestine; third, the force of international, American and parliamentary opinion; and finally – and, he believed, most significant – the public outcry in Britain that followed the Irgun's hanging of the two sergeants. Describing the confluence of events that compelled the government to surrender the mandate, the former colonial secretary recalled specifically that 'Terrorism was at its worst and the British public seemed unable to stand much more.' Hence, with 'accelerating speed', Creech-Jones explained, 'the Cabinet was pushed to the conclusion that they could [no] longer support the Mandate.'[49] On 15 May 1948 Britain's rule over Palestine formally ended and the establishment of the State of Israel was proclaimed. In a communiqué issued that same day by the Irgun, Begin declared:

> After many years of underground warfare, years of persecution and suffering... [the] Hebrew revolt of 1944–48 has been crowned with success... The rule of enslavement of Britain in our country has been beaten, uprooted, has crumbled and been dispersed … The State of Israel has arisen. And it has arisen 'Only Thus': through blood, fire, a strong hand and a mighty arm, with suffering and sacrifices.[50]

Conclusion

The establishment of the state of Israel was of course the product of other powerful forces in addition to terrorism. At the same time, however, it is indisputable that, at the very least, the successes won through violence by the Irgun clearly demonstrated that, notwithstanding the repeated denials of governments, terrorism can, in the right conditions and with the appropriate strategy and tactics, indeed 'work'. Even if the Irgun's success did not manifest itself in terms of the actual acquisition of power in government (Begin and his Herut Party remained in opposition for some 30 years), the meetings accorded to terrorist organizations hitherto branded as 'thugs' and 'bandits' in being granted audiences before the United Nations special committee, their success in attracting attention to themselves and their cause, and most significantly both hastening and affecting government decision-making, cannot be disregarded.

The Irgun's terrorism campaign is thus critical to understanding the evolution and development of modern, contemporary terrorism. They were the first to recognize the publicity value inherent in terrorism and to choreograph their violence for an audience far beyond the immediate geographical locus of their struggle. The Irgun directed its message to New York and Washington, DC, Paris and Moscow as much as to London and Jerusalem. The group's ability to mobilize sympathy and support outside the narrow confines of its actual theater of operation thus taught a powerful lesson to similarly aggrieved peoples elsewhere, who saw in terrorism an effective means of transforming hitherto local conflicts

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into international issues. Thus the foundations were laid for the transformation of terrorism in the late 1960s from a primarily localized phenomenon into the security problem of global proportions that it is today. Indeed, when US military forces invaded Afghanistan in 2001 they found a copy of Begin's seminal work, *The Revolt*, in the well-stocked library that al Qaeda maintained at one of its training facilities in that country.[51]

Acknowledgements

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Notes

1. See, for example, Tony Blair's statement to Parliament following the 7 July 2005 London transport bombings, 'PM: Terrorists "Will Never Win"'; Indian Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee's speech just days after the 11 September 2001 attacks, 'Prime Minister's Address to the Nation on Terrorist Attacks on the United States'; and David Cameron 'David Cameron on 7/7' (speech, Oxfordshire, 7 July, 2006), http://conservativehome.blogs.com/torydiary/2006/07/david_cameron_o.html.
2. This is self-evident, otherwise why would terrorism persist? Nonetheless terrorist group leaders or theoreticians as diverse as Ramdane Abane, Frantz Fanon, Menachem Begin, Itzhak Shamir, George Grivas, Carlos Marighela, Yasir Arafat, George Habash, Usama bin Laden, and Ayman al-Zawahiri among others, are all on record regarding terrorism's effectiveness (even if they deliberately eschew using that precise word to describe their actions).
3. See Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism*, 1–42.
4. Elson and Hawthorne, 'The White Bastion: Hanging Tough'.
5. Gwertzman, 'U.S. Denies Plan to Attack Syria'.
6. Thatcher, 'Speech to Conservative Party Conference'.
7. *Ha 'Aretz*, 'Blackmail, of course', *Ha 'Aretz*.
8. Burnett, 'Spanish Policeman is Killed in Attack in France'.
9. Schelling, 'What Purposes Can "International Terrorism" Serve?', 20.
10. Carr, *The Lessons Of Terror*, 11.
11. Abrahms, 'Why Terrorism Does Not Work', 76.
12. Ibid., 45.
13. In this respect, it is astonishing to note that nearly four times as many terrorist incidents have occurred in the six years since 2001 than in the previous six years (fewer than 6000 domestic and international incidents occurred between 1995 and 2001 compared with between 2002 and 2007. Information combining the RAND Corporation's terrorism database with that maintained by the University of Maryland made available courtesy of Dr. R. Kim Cragin of the RAND Corporation. See also, Thomson, 'Publisher's Page: Beating the Odds'.
14. Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*.
15. Hacker, *Crusaders, Criminals, Crazies*, 10.
16. Crenshaw, 'The Logic of Terrorism', 7. See also Hoffman, 'The Logic of Suicide Terrorism'; idem., and McCormick, 'Terrorism, Signaling, and Suicide Attack'; Kydd and Walter, 'The Strategies of Terrorism'; Lake, 'Rational Extremism'; Pape, 'The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism'; and, Pape, *Dying to Win*.

17. Crenshaw, 'The Causes of Terrorism', 385.
18. Begin, *The Revolt: Story of the Irgun*, 46.
19. With these examples I realize it appears as if I am conflating terrorism with guerrilla warfare and insurgency. However, terrorism in my view is a sub-set of guerrilla warfare and insurgency. All three, for instance employ the same tactics (assassination, kidnapping, hit-and-run attack, bombings of public gathering-places, hostage-taking, etc.) for the same purposes (to intimidate or coerce, thereby affecting behaviour through the arousal of fear). None typically wear a uniform or identifying insignia and thus are often indistinguishable from non-combatants. The differences between them are in numbers and capabilities. Guerrillas are numerically larger than terrorists and operate as a military unit: attacking enemy military forces, and seizing and holding territory (even if only ephemerally during daylight hours), while also exercising some form of sovereignty or control over a defined geographical area and its population. Insurgents share these same characteristics: however, their strategy and operations transcend hit-and-run attacks and undertake in coordinated informational (e.g., propaganda) and psychological warfare efforts designed to mobilize popular support in a struggle against an established national government, imperialist power, or foreign occupying force. See Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism*, 35–36.
20. Hyams, *Terrorists and Terrorism*, 9.
21. See the speech by Eliahu Golomb, the 'father' of the Haganah and its first commander, who guided its transformation from an underground fighting force into a full-fledged army quoted in Dinur, *Sefer Toldot Ha-Haganah* (*History of the Haganah*), vol. i, 154.
22. See, for example, Committee for the Publication of Lehi Writings, *B'Ha'Machterot* [In the Underground], vol. D, 45–46, vol. A, 357, vol. B, 141–4; Frank, *The Deed*, 131, 133–134; Heller, *The Stern Gang*, 104, 115, & 125; and Shamir, *Summing Up*, 151–2.
23. David Niv. *Az Ve'Achshav* [Then and Now], 24.
24. Itzhak Shamir, Nathan Friedman-Yellin and Israel Schieb formed the triumvirate that commanded Lehi following the death of the group's founder, Abraham Stern, in 1942. Shamir was Prime Minister of Israel from 1983 to 1992 (except for 25 months when he was Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister), Foreign Minister between 1980 and 1992 and Speaker of the Knesset (Israel's Parliament), 1977–1980. Shamir headed Israel's government longer than any other Prime Minister except David Ben-Gurion.
25. US National Archives and Records Agency, College Park, MD RG 226 OSS Report XL 18461, 'Biographical Information – Menachem Begin', 11 September 1945; Hurwitz, *Menachem Begin*, 12–3; and Sofer, *Begin: An Anatomy of Leadership*, 57–62. The abbreviation OSS stands for the Office of Strategic Services, the intelligence and clandestine warfare organization established by the United States Government in June 1942. The OSS was the forerunner of the US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). An 'L' or 'XL' prefix to OSS documents indicates that the distribution of such material was restricted to only the US government or military.
26. Begin, *White Nights*, passim.
27. Begin, *The Revolt*, 25.
28. Niv, *Ma'archot Ha-Irgun Ha-Zvai Ha-Leumi* [Battle For Freedom: The Irgun Zvai Leumi], vol. iii, 274.
29. Bauer, *From Diplomacy to Resistance*, 312–5, and Brenner, 'The 'Stern Gang', 116.
30. In May 1941 Raziel and three subordinates (accompanied by a British Army major and an aide) had secretly traveled to Iraq – at the behest of the British Army – to

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assist in the attempt to topple the pro-Axis Rashid Ali regime. Their specific mission was to destroy certain key oil fields, but the *Irgun* team had an ulterior motive of their own: the kidnapping of Haj Amin al-Husayni, the exiled leader of Palestine's Arab community. Before either of their objectives could be accomplished, however, the car in which Raziel and the two Britons were traveling was bombed by a German plane and Raziel was killed. See Niv, *Ma'archot Ha-Irgun*, vol. iii, 73–5; Levine, 'David Raziel, The Man and His Times', 312; and, Shamir, *Summing Up*, 23–5.

31. Bell, *Terror Out of Zion*, 56; and Sofer, *Begin*, 58–9.
32. Niv, *Ma'archot Ha-Irgun*, vol. iii, 276–7. British intelligence estimates placed the size of Irgun at approximately 4000 persons in 1944. See UK National Archives, Kew, London, WO 169/15703 PICME Paper No. 2 (Revised), 8 November 1944. A slightly higher (5000) is noted in American intelligence analyses. See US National Archives and Records Agency, College Park, MD RG 226 OSS Report 68179, 30 March 1944. Both estimates are likely exaggerated.
33. Begin, *The Revolt*, 26.
34. Begin, *The Revolt*, passim; Sofer, *Begin*, 63–6; and, NARS RG 226 OSS R&A Report No. 2612, 'The Objectives and Activities of the Irgun Zvai Leumi', 13 October 1944.
35. Niv, *Ma'archot Ha-Irgun*, vol. iii, 277.
36. Begin, *The Revolt*, 52.
37. Hoffman, 'Jewish Terrorist Activities', 327–8.
38. Begin, *The Revolt*, 52–4.
39. Ibid., *The Revolt*, 56.
40. Marighela, *For the Liberation of Brazil*, 61–97.
41. Begin, *The Revolt*, 52.
42. Hansard. *House of Commons*, vol. 441, col. 2342 (Oliver Stanley), 12 August 1947.
43. Begin, *The Revolt*, 54–5.
44. See texts of 80th Congress, House Joint Resolution 196, introduced by Andrew Somers on 15 May 1947, and Senate Resolution 149, introduced by Warren Magnusson *et al.* on 17 July 1947, in Zaar, *Rescue and Liberation*, 230, 243; House Joint Resolution 237, introduced by Somers on 11 July 1947, quoted in Hoffman, 'Jewish Terrorist Activities', 370.
45. Quoted in Cohen, *Palestine and the Great Powers*, 250.
46. Monroe, 'Mr Bevin's 'Arab Policy'', 34.
47. For details of UNSCOP's visit and deliberations, see Garcia-Granados, *The Birth of Israel*. Garcia-Granados was the Guatemalan representative on the committee.
48. The special committee issued its report on 31 August 1947 and unanimously recommended that Palestine should be granted its independence. See 'Summary of the Report of UNSCOP,' in Laqueur, *The Israel–Arab Reader* 108–12.
49. Creech-Jones Papers, Boxes 32/3 and 32/6, Letters, Creech-Jones to Munro [sic], 23 October, 30 November 1961.
50. 'Only Thus' was the Irgun's motto. See 'Speech of the Commander-in-Chief of the Irgun Zvai Le'umi, 15 May 1948', in Tavin and Alexander, *Psychological Warfare and Propaganda* 240–1.
51. Wright, *The Looming Tower*, 303.

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