

## ABSTRACT

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STUDENT: Douglas J. Brittain

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The Middle East is, unfortunately, one of the regions in the world where terrorists have managed to influence policy to a significant degree in recent years and, as we move toward the next millennium, it appears likely that this trend will continue. This study focuses on two of the most aggressive Middle Eastern terrorist groups: Hizballah and Hamas. Hizballah, composed primarily of Lebanese *Shiite* Islamic extremists, and Hamas, comprised predominantly of West Bank and Gaza *Sunni* Islamic extremists, seem, superficially at least, to have little in common. Although *Shiite* and *Sunni* Muslims have a long and well-documented history of intolerance for one another, both Hizballah and Hamas share a common goal -- the destruction of Israel. Hizballah and Hamas also both have a strong relationship with Iran. An effective working relationship between Hizballah and Hamas would certainly threaten the future of the Middle East peace process.

This study concentrates on both Hizballah and Hamas separately, and also in terms of their common relationships. Aspects of both organizations that are examined include origins, operating characteristics, objectives, ideology, organizational structure, leadership, membership, motivations, and future prospects. Next the commonalities between Hizballah and Hamas are studied, to include common goals, ideology, training, and their Iran connection.

Although there are established links between these otherwise disparate Islamic terrorist organizations in terms of goals, ideology, and training, the Iran connection is by far the strongest link between Hizballah and Hamas. Nevertheless, the relative *amount* of dependency on Iran by Hizballah is much greater than the amount of dependency on Iran by Hamas.

Hizballah and Hamas certainly have enough in common to work together on occasion toward the demise of their common enemy -- Israel. Although it is known that there are established links between the groups, the strength of these connections, and the frequency with which they actually *do* coordinate operations is still not known. Paradoxically, the strength of the indirect link through Iran may actually discourage the development of more direct links between Hizballah and Hamas.

Because they choose the time and place of their next attack, terrorists maintain a tactical advantage that the best intelligence and analysis may never completely overcome. Understanding and influencing the various mindsets that lead to terrorism may ultimately be the most effective way to get inside the decision making cycle of groups like Hizballah and Hamas.

**Hizballah and Hamas:**  
An Unholy Alliance?

by

Doug Brittain  
MSG, USA  
PGIP Class 9901

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## PREFACE

I arrived in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, on 26 June 1996 as a National Intelligence Support Team (NIST) member one day after the truck bombing of Khobar Tower. I spent the next three months -- through Operation DESERT STRIKE in October -- providing analytic support to the Joint Task Force-Southwest Asia J-2. This experience permanently highlighted for me the importance of both force protection and counterterrorism for today's analysts.

As I studied the Middle East this year, and various terrorist organizations which are active there, it occurred to me that some of them, Hizballah and Hamas in particular, might occasionally collaborate operationally -- especially when they share common goals. Because of the well established differences between Shiites, which Hizballah is predominantly comprised of, and Sunnis, which fill Hamas' ranks, any kind of formal relationship runs counter to intuition. But the world is a complex, often contradictory place, and the more I studied these two organizations, the more I suspected that there might be a number of links between them in certain areas.

Because of the high degree of current interest in the subject of terrorism, and the numerous and excellent classified studies on different aspects of the subject, I decided to do an unclassified all-source study using open source information. There are several connections between Hizballah and Hamas, as it turns out, some of the strongest of which are in the areas of common goals, common ideology, training, and a common state sponsor -- Iran.

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## CHAPTER 1

### MIDDLE EASTERN TERRORISM

The Middle Eastern landscape is inscribed with the calligraphy of terrorism, which is such an effective political tool for its practitioners that the likelihood of its continued and frequent use is very high. Israel's withdrawal from West Bank territory sounds great and briefs well, but the Palestinian residents remain cynical: "It's a joke [...] The only change is that now you're allowed to hold your **Kalashnikov** up in the air."<sup>1</sup> Israel's new Prime Minister Ehud **Barak** "who has pledged to pull Israeli forces out of southern Lebanon within a year, said he expects to know within 15 months whether permanent peace could be achieved with the Palestinians, Syrians and Lebanese."<sup>2</sup>

Another car bomb in another crowded Israeli marketplace in the near term could predictably unleash a severe response from the Israeli military. Although it may be unlikely that a major terrorist attack will occur while Israel is in the process of withdrawing from southern Lebanon, **Hizballah**, **Hamas**, and other terrorist organizations are committed to either the "elimination of all non-Islamic influences" from the region or, more specifically, the destruction of Israel. A U.S.-brokered peace with Israel is not what these organizations seek. Additionally, the sheer number of members in Middle

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<sup>1</sup>Lee Hockstader, "Israel Withdraws From 200 Square Miles," *The Washington Post*, 21 November 1998, Final Ed., A14.

<sup>2</sup>William Branigin, "Israeli Leader Hints Of Palestinian State," *The Washington Post*, 19 July 1999, Final Ed., A14.

East terrorist organizations, and the fact that most of them operate in somewhat autonomous cells could result in an attack not officially condoned by the group's leadership.

Middle Eastern terrorism has an especially long and virulent history, and Arab terrorist attacks against the Israelis accelerated following the Six-Day War in 1967. Nevertheless, of the 84 *international* terrorist attacks -- generally defined as terrorist attacks directed against foreign noncombatants, or attacks which cross national boundaries -- reported by Department of State in 1996, only two are directly attributable to Hamas.<sup>3</sup> None of the 84 attacks listed in 1996 were attributed to Hizballah. The story is similar in 1997 -- of 95 terrorist attacks reported by Department of State in 1997, only two are directly attributable to Hamas, and, once again, none to Hizballah.<sup>4</sup> This is a much lower frequency for attacks than might be expected intuitively, however the lethality of these attacks, many of which are vehicle bombs, does tend to be very impressive. Although 90 percent of all Muslims are Sunnis, there are more than 165 million Shiites,<sup>5</sup> a significant number of whom are Iranians. Sunni are orthodox Muslims and Shiites are the primary heterodox sect of Muslims. Shiites differ from Sunnis in their belief that Muhammad's descendants -- specifically from Muhammad's cousin and son-in-law, Ali, should govern the Islamic community, while Sunnis believe that legitimate political and religious authority originates with Allah, as revealed in the

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<sup>3</sup>"Appendix A: Chronology of Significant Terrorist Incidents, 1996," *Patterns of Global Terrorism: 1996*, URL: <<http://www.state.ic.gov/other/1996/appa.html>>, accessed 6 April 1999.

<sup>4</sup>"Appendix A: Chronology of Significant Terrorist Incidents," *Patterns of Global Terrorism: 1997*, URL: <<http://www.state.ic.gov/other/1998/chron.html>>, accessed 6 April 1999.

<sup>5</sup>"Shiites," *Encarta Online*, URL: <<http://encarta.msn.com/index/conciseindex/49/0491A000.htm>>, accessed 9 April 1999.

Qur'an, and as interpreted and administered by the **ulema** -- Islamic scholars. **Shiite** and **Sunni** Muslims have a fairly consistent record of opposition to and intolerance for one another, however modern **Shiite** leaders, starting with the Ayatollah Khomeini, have called for Muslim solidarity.

## THE PROBLEM

The focus of this study is on two Middle Eastern terrorist organizations: **Hizballah**, a Lebanese **Shiite** Islamic extremist group,<sup>6</sup> and **Hamas**, a predominately **Sunni** Islamic extremist organization. It will study both organizations in-depth and separately, and in terms of their relationship to each other. An effective working relationship between **Hizballah** and **Hamas**, two of the more aggressive Middle East terrorist organizations, would not bode well for the future of the Middle East peace process.

Although much is known about **Hizballah** and **Hamas** separately, very little is known about the existence of a relationship between these two organizations. We do know that both groups share a common objective -- the elimination of Israel. Both groups also have a common state sponsor -- Iran. Additionally, we know that the members of both groups train together. This thesis will determine whether **Hizballah** and **Hamas** have developed a working relationship and, if so, the nature and extent of that relationship.

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<sup>6</sup>It should be noted that just because a group is identified as Islamic -- or, more specifically, **Shiite**, e.g., does not mean that it is also "extremist." Far from it -- the *vast* majority of Muslims are peaceful, law abiding people.

## DEFINITION OF “TERRORISM”

There are almost as many definitions of terrorism as there are writers on the subject. Exact definitions of terrorism can be problematic, reflecting greater or lesser degrees of bias on the part of the writer. “Terrorism” is often just a convenient label for “what someone did to us,” overlooking the fact that it may have been in retaliation for a very similar action done by our group to “them.” St. Augustine relates the story of a pirate, captured by Alexander the Great, who asks the pirate “how he dares molest the sea, How dare you molest the whole world?” the pirate responds: “because I do it with a little ship only, I am called a thief; you, doing it with a great navy are called an Emperor.”<sup>7</sup>

For the purposes of this thesis, terrorism is defined as *the actual or implied use of violence, by a relatively small group, to generate fear in a target population.*<sup>8</sup> A common aspect of terrorist attacks is that they are often directed against a target which poses *no direct threat* to the terrorists. Some definitions designate the target population as noncombatants, but this definition does not make that distinction. This thesis is focused on both national -- within their own geopolitical boundaries -- and international terrorist attacks from both Hizballah and Hamas. The term “working relationship” refers to the *process* by which these two terrorist organizations, Hizballah and Hamas, cooperate to achieve their common goals: the derailment of the fragile Middle East peace process and the destruction of Israel.

There is a very fine distinction between terrorism and guerrilla warfare. Guerrilla forces more closely resemble regular combat forces and are more territory-based than

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<sup>7</sup>Noam Chomsky, *Pirates & Emperors: International Terrorism in the Real World* (Brattleboro, VT: Amana Books, 1986), 1.

<sup>8</sup>My definition is a compilation of several common definitions.

their terrorist cousins -- otherwise they are very similar. Although some dictionaries equate guerrillas with terrorists, guerrilla warfare is generally defined as “the use of hit-and-run tactics by small, mobile groups of irregular forces operating in territory controlled by a hostile, regular force.”<sup>9</sup>

Within the U.S. Intelligence Community, the term “counterterrorism” -- defined as “terrorism in reaction to or retaliation for some previous act of terrorism,”<sup>10</sup> is very commonly used in place of the dictionary definition of “antiterrorism” -- which means the fight against terrorism. In the interest of consistency, “counterterrorism” -- meaning “against terrorism” -- will be used in this thesis.

## ROOTS OF MIDDLE EASTERN TERRORISM

Middle Eastern terrorism can arguably trace its origins to the first century when Jewish Zealots fought Roman occupation forces over Judea, the area of modern-day Israel. The Zealots, initially a political group, began utilizing terrorist tactics in A.D. 6 to counter direct Roman rule and taxation.<sup>11</sup> Another historical example of terrorism from the region includes the Assassins, a splinter group of the Ismailis, a Shiite Muslim sect, which began killing Sunni Muslim leaders in northern Iran in the 12th century.<sup>12</sup> The Assassins were a force to be reckoned with for significant period of time: “Throughout the medieval period, the Assassins were regarded as a profound threat to

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<sup>9</sup> *Webster's Encyclopedic Unabridged Dictionary of the English Language, 1996*, under the word “guerrilla warfare.”

<sup>10</sup> *Webster's* under the word “counterterrorism.”

<sup>11</sup> “Zealots,” *Microsoft, Encarta 97 Encyclopedia*.

<sup>12</sup> “Zealots.”

the existing social, political and religious order.”<sup>13</sup> The radical Jewish Stern Gang, also known as LEHI (Lohame Herut Israel), engaged in terrorism in the 1940s. The Stern Gang was reportedly headed by Yitzhak Shamir following the death of its founder, Azram Stern, while in British police custody. The Stern Gang and other Jewish groups such as Irgun utilized terrorist tactics in order to end British rule over Palestine. 14

The Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), founded in 1964, has been an umbrella organization for various Palestinian factions and resistance groups such as Al Fatah. Current Palestinian President Yasser Arafat took over as PLO chairman in 1969.<sup>15</sup> Although the PLO has distanced itself from terrorist groups for the past decade, some very active anti-Israeli groups have arisen such as Hizballah and Hamas. These groups’ stated purpose is to destroy Israel and they also pose a threat to Israel’s allies through terrorist attacks. It may be more than mere coincidence that two world-class terrorist organizations have sprung up in the last two places that the PLO was headquartered -- Hizballah in Lebanon, and Hamas in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

## SOURCES OF TERRORISM

The underlying reasons for terrorism are both complex and numerous. In virtually every case terrorist organizations are much smaller than the political and state

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<sup>13</sup>David Capitanchik, “Terrorism and Islam,” in *Terrorism, Ideology and Revolution: The Origins of Modern Political Violence* ed. Noel O’Sullivan, (Boulder CO: Westview Press, 1986), 125.

<sup>14</sup>Capitanchik.

<sup>15</sup>“Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO),” Palestinian National Authority Official Website, URL: <[http://nmopic.pna.net/plo/pal\\_plo\\_1.htm](http://nmopic.pna.net/plo/pal_plo_1.htm)>, accessed 6 April 1999.

organizations that they oppose. Thus the smaller, “oppressed” group must resort to terrorist activities, in part because of its inferior size and power. An excerpt from Anwar al-Sadat’s autobiography provides some insight into how seeds of discontent which *could* have led to terrorism, even for a future President of Egypt, were sown during his formative years:

... the ballad which affected me most deeply was probably that of Zahran, the hero of Denshway. I recall listening to my mother reciting it to me as I lay stretched out on top of our huge rustic oven, half-asleep [...]. It appealed to me afresh every time I listened to it. British soldiers were shooting pigeons in Denshway, the story goes, when a stray bullet caused a wheat silo to catch fire. Farmers gathered and a British soldier fired at them and ran away; they ran after him, and in the ensuing scuffle the British soldier died. Many people were arrested and **court-martialed** on the spot. Scaffolds were erected before the sentences were even passed; a number of farmers were whipped, others hanged. **Zahran** was the hero of the battle against the British and the first to be hanged. The ballad dwells on Zahran’s courage and doggedness in the battle, how he walked with head held high to the scaffold, feeling proud that he had stood up to the aggressors and killed one of them.<sup>16</sup>

Whether the story of **Zahran** is objective and true or not misses the point -- from the *Egyptian perspective*, **Zahran** is a folk hero. Zahran’s courage, even in the face of overwhelming odds, and against an unjust enemy, is now a part of the collective Arab consciousness. The following is a more recent account of the 1982 massacres at **Sabra** and **Shatila**, two Palestinian refugee camps in West Beirut -- this is from a Palestinian perspective.

Fifteen years ago, **Munir** Mohammed survived one of the worst massacres in the recent history of the Middle East. He was only 12 at the time, but the memories still haunt him.

Following the assassination of Lebanese President **Bashir Gemayel** and its invasion of Lebanon, Israel sent its proxies, the Phalanges and members of the South Lebanon Army, into the **Sabra** and **Shatila** refugee camps on 16 September

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<sup>16</sup>**Anwar el-Sadat**, *In Search of Identity: An Autobiography* (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, Inc., 1977), 5-6.

1982. Under the approving and watchful eyes of the Israelis stationed around the camps, the militiamen went on a rampage, indiscriminately slaughtering children and the elderly, raping young girls and women, and butchering unarmed men. About 36 hours later, approximately 2,000 civilians lay dead, some so badly dismembered that they were unrecognizable.

While Palestinian refugees gathered to commemorate the 15-year anniversary of the massacre in front of the mass grave in **Shatila**, **Munir** remembered the family he lost and his own ordeal as a survivor. He recalled how he faked death throughout the night, lying still amid a pile of bodies and listening to the sound of moans and cries from his mother **Zehrah** and baby sister **Iman** who lay beside him. They both died a few hours later. Wounded and drenched in blood, **Munir** made his way out of a heap of corpses the next morning and was taken to a local hospital. Eleven months later, he started a new life in the United States. Out of a family of nine brothers and sisters, **Munir** has one brother left, **Nabil**, who settled with him in America, and one sister, **Najat**, who still lives in Lebanon. 17

Though terrorist organizations often fill their ranks from society's dispossessed, the terrorist organization's leadership in many cases represents the well-educated upper class. <sup>18</sup> "The concept of martyrdom, giving one's life for Allah, was common to all Moslem sects. The Koran taught that the paradise awaiting fighters slain in *in Jihad* (holy war) was far more glorious than the present."<sup>19</sup> Terrorist leaders often hold strong philosophical or religious beliefs and may find that terrorism offers an acceptable "antidote" for what they consider to be society's ills.

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<sup>17</sup>Ghada Khouri, "15 Years After the Sabra & Shatila Massacre: The State of Palestinian Refugees in Lebanon," URL: <<http://www.ptimes.com/issue77/articles.htm#anchor204073>>, accessed 10 April 1999.

<sup>18</sup>Usama bin Laden, for example.

<sup>19</sup>Larry Pintak, *Beirut Outtakes: A TV Correspondent's Portrait of America's Encounter with Terror* (Lexington, MA: Lexington Books, 1988), 205.

## RELEVANCE TO U.S. STRATEGY

A working relationship between Hizballah and Hamas would threaten U.S. strategic interests and Middle East regional stability. Although the U.S. has sometimes been the target of Hizballah attacks, Hamas has concentrated its efforts almost exclusively on the Israelis. Spectacular international terrorist attacks directed against the United States and its allies have, unfortunately, punctuated the nightly news since the end of the Cold War -- the emerging status of the U.S. as the world's sole superpower is no guarantee of freedom from terrorist attacks.<sup>20</sup> The Khobar Tower bombing in Saudi Arabia and the more recent attacks on the U.S. embassies in Nairobi, Kenya, and Dares Salaam, Tanzania, have emphasized the fact that the U.S. remains highly vulnerable to terrorism.

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<sup>20</sup>The post-Cold War emergence of the U.S. as the world's sole superpower may, paradoxically, have *added* to its inherent attractiveness as a target for international terrorism.

## CHAPTER 2

### HIZBALLAH (PARTY OF GOD)

The focus of this chapter is on the terrorist organization Hizballah (Party of God) and, more specifically, on the original Lebanese Hizballah, although related Hizballah factions are discussed. I will describe characteristics of the group, to include ideology; targets and tactics; membership; origins; operational characteristics; objectives; organizational structure; leadership; and motivations. Finally, I will assess Hizballah's future viability.

#### BACKGROUND

Hizballah, founded in 1982, is also known as Islamic Jihad, and Organization of the Oppressed on Earth. Hizballah is an international terrorist organization of several thousand radical Shiite Muslim members who operate primarily in Lebanon's Bekaa Valley, and in Beirut (see Figure 1). Hizballah's Lebanese militia numbers approximately 4000-5000 and support exceeds 70,000 personnel.<sup>21</sup> The number of worldwide support cells for Hizballah is not known. Iran is known to provide state sponsorship to Hizballah in the form of funding, supplies, and training. Syria permits Iran to transship equipment

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<sup>21</sup>“Hizbollah Through the Eyes of Nasrallah,” *Arabesque*, Vol. No. 1, URL: <<http://hardy.ocs.mq.edu.au/~control1/role/sim297/role4.html>>, accessed 7 May 1999.

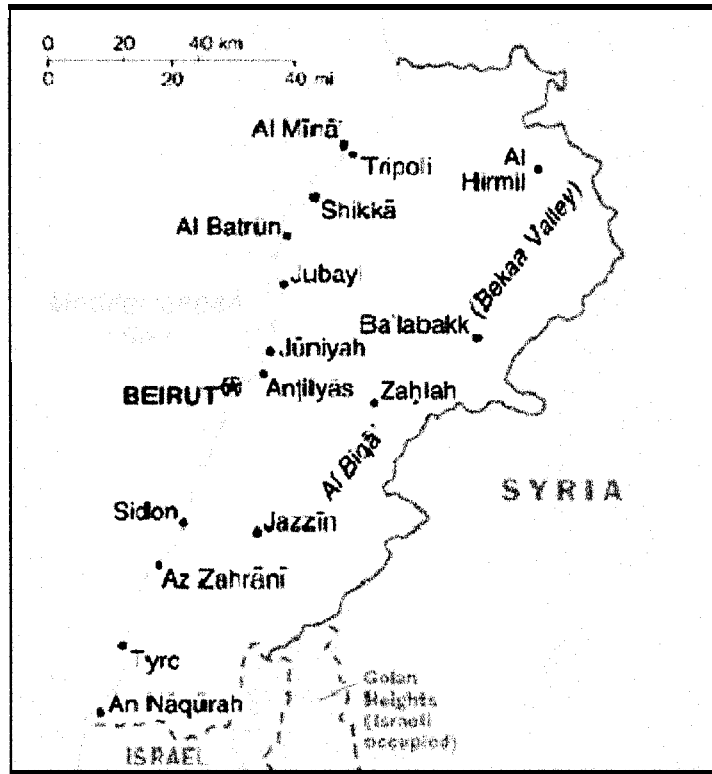


Figure 1. Lebanon

Source: "Lebanon," 1998 CIA *World Factbook*, URL: <<http://www.journalism.berkeley.edu/resources/internet/ciafact.htm>>, accessed 21 May 1999.

and supplies destined for Hizballah through Damascus. Hizballah's original goal was the creation of an Islamic state in Lebanon and the elimination of all non-Islamic influences in the region.<sup>22</sup> Hizballah is a well-trained and well equipped terrorist organization. Its military arm, Islamic Jihad, claimed responsibility for the 23 October 1983 suicide truck bombing of the U.S. Marine barracks in Beirut, Lebanon that killed 241 U.S. Marines and 56 French soldiers.

Hizb'allah's radicalization of the Shi'a community, through the exploitation of Shi'i symbols, and its declared allegiance to the Islamic Republic of Iran and Ayatollah Khomeini, underlined the movement's close ideological and spiritual

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<sup>22</sup>"Hizballah (Party of God)," *Patterns of Global Terrorism*, United States Department of State Publication 10321, URL: <<http://www.milnet.com/milnet/tgp/data/hizbalah.htm>>, accessed 6 April 1999.

deference to Islamic Iran's pan-Islamic vision and authority. At its simplest level, the very adoption of the name of Hizb'allah derived from the Quran (V, 56), which denotes the body of Muslims, symbolizes the revolutionary character of the movement, namely that the followers of Allah (*hizb'allah*) would triumph over the followers of Satan (*hizb-ush-Shaytan*).<sup>23</sup>

Other activities attributed to Hizballah include the April 1983 suicide car bombing of the U.S. Embassy in Beirut, the September 1984 truck bombing of the U.S. Embassy Annex in Beirut, the December 1984 hijacking of a Kuwaiti air jet en route to Tehran, and the June 1985 hijacking of TWA Flight 847 enroute to Athens. U.S. citizens were killed in every instance. Islamic Jihad also claimed responsibility for the March 1992 car bombing of the Israeli Embassy in Buenos Aires.<sup>24</sup> Hizballah kidnapped the majority of the Western hostages in Lebanon during the 1980s, including Professor Frank Reiger, William Buckley, the Reverend Benjamin Weir, Father Lawrence Jenco, Terry Anderson, David Jacobson, Thomas Sutherland, Terry Waite, and others.

Hizballah efforts during the 1990s, directed primarily against Israeli military targets, are unlikely to end anytime soon:

Reliable reports indicate that since April 1996 thirty (30) Iranian planes loaded with ammunition and weapons have landed at Damascus airport. Their cargo, which included Sagger anti-tank missiles, long range Katyusha rockets and high explosive anti-tank mines, was subsequently transferred to Hizbullah forces in south Lebanon. Moreover, according to reports in El-Hiyatt (January 21, 1997) Syria and Iran continue to jointly coordinate Hizbullah's current role and political future.<sup>25</sup>

Although Hizballah targets and tactics may have shifted, the operational tempo of their attacks has remained relatively high. Hizballah remains focused on both the

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<sup>23</sup>Magnus Ranstorp, *Hizb'allah in Lebanon: The Politics of the Western Hostage Crisis* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997), 40.

<sup>24</sup>"Hizballah (Party of God)."

<sup>25</sup>"Iran and Hizbullah.", The Information Division, Israel Foreign Ministry, 25 April 1998, URL: <[http://www.ict.org.il/inter\\_ter/frame.htm](http://www.ict.org.il/inter_ter/frame.htm)>, accessed 6 April 1999.

establishment of an Iranian-style Islamic state in Lebanon and on the violent opposition to any U. S.-sponsored peace between Arabs and Israelis. This organizational focus is, in large part, due to Hizballah's violent origins.

### **HIZBALLAH'S VIOLENT ORIGINS**

Members of the Lebanese Shiite community in the form of Hizballah serve Iranian strategic interests in Lebanon today, much as they did in 1982, shortly after the organization's inception. Iran still maintains about 1,500 Revolutionary Guards in Lebanon's Bekaa Valley, in direct support of Lebanon's Shiite population and in direct opposition to Lebanon's southern border state -- Israel.<sup>26</sup> Hizballah first reared its head in Beirut, Lebanon and in Lebanon's Bekaa Valley, as a direct result of power vacuums created by the expulsion of the PLO from Beirut in late 1982 and from the partial withdrawal of Israeli troops from the Bekaa Valley in 1983.

As the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) moved out of Lebanon, Hizballah was formed -- although Hizballah arose from this environment, it is important to note that it is *not* a Palestinian organization. In fact, Hizballah leader Hasan Nasrallah has called for Arafat's assassination.<sup>27</sup> Many Lebanese Shiites turned to Hizballah as a political and military tool "against the backdrop of social exclusion and economic deprivation within Lebanon."<sup>28</sup> Lebanese Shiites, thanks to Hizballah, have some

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<sup>26</sup>Eyal Zisser, "Hizballah In Lebanon: At The Crossroads," URL: <<http://www.biu.ac.il/SOC/besa/meria/zisser.htm>> accessed 16 April 1999.

<sup>27</sup>Boaz Ganor, "The Threats to Arafat and the Leaders of the Palestinian Authority," URL: <<http://www.ict.org.il./articles/nasrallah.htm>>, accessed 7 May 1999.

<sup>28</sup>Magnus Ranstorp, *Hizb'allah in Lebanon: The Politics of the Western Hostage Crisis* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997), 29.

political representation now -- eight seats in Parliament. This is seen as an improvement over their situation in the early 1980s, when they had *no* official recognition. About 800,000 people, primarily poor Shiite refugees from South Lebanon who fled the Israeli invasions and occupation of their former homeland, live in the 28 square kilometer southern Beirut neighborhood known as the “Belt of Misery.”<sup>29</sup>

Although the actual *creation* of the Hizb’allah movement occurred in June 1982 when a breakaway faction from Amal, the *Islamic Amal* party, merged with a network of radical Shi’ites from other Lebanese movements, such as the *Lebanese al-Da’wa*, the *Association of Muslim Ulama in Lebanon*, and the *Association of Muslim Students*, the various strands of these Shi’ite movements and organisations which formed into one political entity under the umbrella of Hizb’allah could trace their origins to the activities during the 1960-70s of the Shi’i religious academies in the south of Iraq most notably in the Shi’i shrine city of Najaf.<sup>30</sup>

Amal, the Syrian-backed Lebanese Shiite organization which preceded Hizballah, was considered too secular and too passive by Hizballah’s state-sponsor, Iran and by many Lebanese Shiites who sought an independent, Iranian-style Shiite state in Lebanon. Najaf, Iraqis where Khomeini spent 14 years in exile from Iran and is where most of Hizballah’s clerical leadership was educated and formed alliances with their Iranian counterparts.<sup>31</sup>

Hizballah’s first known attack was the April 1983 suicide car bombing of the U.S. Embassy in Beirut, Lebanon, followed by the October 1983 suicide truck bombing of the U.S. Marine barracks at Beirut International Airport. The Beirut bombing was unique in that it was a terrorist attack of a magnitude and nature not previously experienced by U.S.

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<sup>29</sup>Hala Jaber, *Hezbollah: Born with a Vengeance* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), 1-2.

<sup>30</sup>Ranstorp, 25-26.

<sup>31</sup>Ranstorp, 27.

armed forces. General “PX” Kelley, then Commandant of the Marine Corps had this to say:

Our security measures were not adequate to stop a large heavily laden truck, loaded with 5,000 pounds of high explosive, traveling at high speed and driven by a suicide driver, which executed the attack in [six] seconds from start to finish. This ‘flying truck bomb’ was an unprecedented escalation of the previous terrorist threat, both in size of the weapon and method of delivery. I must continue to emphasize, however, that under our current disposition, restrictions, and missions, we will always have vulnerabilities, and that the other side will make every effort to exploit them.<sup>32</sup>

The 32d Marine Amphibious Unit (MAU) arrived in Beirut in August 1982, as part of a multi-national task force, at the official request of the Lebanese Government. Their mission, along with their British, French, and Italian counterparts, was to evacuate the PLO from Beirut.<sup>33</sup> In February 1984, the 22d MAU departed Beirut, following the 23 October 1983 suicide truck bombing of the Marine barracks, in which 241 U.S. Servicemen, 220 of whom were marines, were killed.

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<sup>32</sup>Benis M. Frank, *U.S. Marines in Lebanon: 1982-1984* (Washington, DC: History and Museums Division Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps, 1987), 103.

<sup>33</sup>In the case of Lebanon, embroiled in war for several years prior to the arrival of U.S. Marines in 1982, the assistance of U.S. military forces was requested by the President-elect Gemayel. Initially, as was mentioned previously, the mission of the U.S. Marines was clearly defined and achievable: evacuate the PLO from Beirut; occupy and secure the port; maintain contact with other MNF members; conduct non-combatant evacuation operations (NEO) as required; and be prepared to withdraw on order. The best testimony that this was a “doable” objective, is demonstrated by the efficiency and speed with which all of the conditions were met -- the 32d MAU had departed Beirut, mission complete within *16 days* of their arrival. That is very good by any standard.

## OPERATING CHARACTERISTICS

Certain operating characteristics are common to all terrorist groups, including Hizballah: the choice of “soft” targets; anonymity of the group members; secrecy of the group; and compartmentalization of the group. Terrorism derives its great power from the use of extreme, unpredictable -- or, at least, unanticipated -- violence directed against symbolic targets of opposition states, political parties, corporations, religions, or ethnic groups. “Targets are selected for their symbolic value, not because killing or injuring them will necessarily make any material difference to the outcome of the struggle that has led to violent confrontation.”<sup>34</sup>

Once a terrorist target has been hit, the media illuminates the event, which in turn, if all goes according to plan for the terrorists, influences public or political opinion in their favor. Graphic media coverage often intensifies the effects of terrorist attacks, as the public is often left with visceral screen images of the victims of the latest bomb blast or machine gun attack. The impact of the Beirut Marine barracks bombing and of the Khobar Tower bombing on the collective American psyche -- and on the U.S. military, in particular -- cannot be overstated.

Anonymity of group members is one of the more difficult aspects of the problem from a law enforcement or intelligence perspective. Group members generally blend in with the indigenous population and may not fit a distinct profile, although young, poor, males are the usual suspects. Extreme secrecy is also maintained for obvious security reasons. Surprise is essential to terrorists, both as an operational necessity, and as a means to generate the psychological trauma that makes terrorism so effective.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>34</sup>“Understanding Terrorism,” *Online NewsHour Forum*, 15 August 1997, URL: <<http://www.pbs.org/newshour/forum/august97/terror01.html>>, accessed 6 April 1999.

<sup>35</sup>“Understanding Terrorism.”

Additionally, terrorist groups are often compartmentalized into separate, independent cells, each fully capable of hitting a target or targets without assistance -- or with limited assistance -- from other cells. Because the cells operate independently, there is little chance of linking one cell to any other cell within an organization. Hizballah has developed this technique from its earliest days, and suicide bombers, one of Hizballah's trademarks, generally leave no trail.

Hizballah's initial entry onto the world scene was in the form of spectacular car and truck bombs manned specifically, by suicide bombers. This was followed by a series of kidnappings of Westerners in Lebanon, and assorted airline hijackings. The trend in recent years, however, has been toward strictly military targets, primarily Israeli. Sheikh Nabil Qaouq, Hizballah's head military commander in South Lebanon, claims that Hizballah's military wing has made some significant advances in terms of technology and logistics.<sup>36</sup> This significant shift in target sets was probably done both to accommodate Shiites and to avoid alienating the rest of the world. Hizballah cannot meet any of its organizational objectives by becoming a pariah.

### **HIZBALLAH'S OBJECTIVES**

The influence of Iran, with its newly formed Islamic fundamentalist government, on Hizballah during its early days should not be underestimated. Although Hizballah's stated organizational objectives, published in February 1985, have not changed appreciably; they have certainly succeeded in accomplishing much of the second one:

1. To drive Israel out of Lebanon as a prelude to its complete annihilation and the liberation of Jerusalem.

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<sup>36</sup>Jaber, 38-39.

2. To force the U. S., France and their allies out of Lebanon and eradicate all traces of their influence in this country.
3. To subjugate the **Phalangists** to the rule of justice and bring them to justice for their crimes against the Muslims and Christians, perpetrated with the encouragement of the U. S. and Israel.
4. To give full freedom of choice to our people to determine their fate and choose the form of government they desire. Since we do not hide our commitment to the rule of Islam, we call upon the nation to choose an Islamic regime, which alone can assure justice and honor for all and foil any attempt at renewed imperialist infiltration of our country.<sup>37</sup>

Because of the financial and training support provided to **Hizballah** by Iran, Iranian influence on the organization is significant. “Not only is **HizbAllah** always associated with Iran-backed groups, but starting in early June [1996], Tehran has been stressing the growing importance of **HizbAllah** as the standard-bearer of future escalation and expansion of the Islamic Revolution throughout the world.”<sup>38</sup> On 22 March 1997, Hani Abdel Rahim al-Sayegh was arrested by Canadian immigration for involvement in the June 1996 bombing of **Khobar Tower**, near **Dhahran**, Saudi Arabia.

The [Canadian] report alleged that members of the Saudi **Hizballah** group had received training in camps run by the Lebanese **Hizballah** in eastern Lebanon’s **Bekaa** valley. The Saudi **Hizballah**, the report said, had no history of utilizing explosives. But the document noted that a detonator discovered at the bombing site near **Dhahran** was similar to ones previously employed by the Lebanon-based **Hizballah**.<sup>39</sup>

Sayegh, a Shiite Moslem, allegedly drove one of the two cars that accompanied the explosives-laden truck.

Lebanese **Hizballah**’s intended audience will always include the Lebanese Shiite population who provide direct support to the organization. Iran, due to its considerable

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<sup>37</sup>Zisser.

<sup>38</sup>Yossef Bodansky, “Rise of **HizbAllah** International,” 3 August 1996, *Defense and Foreign Affairs’ Strategic Policy*, Lexis-Nexis, 3 May 1999.

<sup>39</sup>“Canada Arrests Saudi Suspect in 1996 U.S. Base Bombing: Iranian Ties Alleged,” 17 April 1997, *Facts on File World News Digest*, Lexis-Nexis, 3 May 1999.

support to **Hizballah** is another audience, as is Syria. Israel, as the usual target of the attacks is also generally supposed to receive a strong message, as is the “imperialistic” West -- the U.S. in particular. And finally, the approval and support of Muslims everywhere, and Shiite Muslims in particular is sought -- although many pious Muslims strongly disapprove of the use of violence. Khomeini recognized the need for Muslim unity and called for it as “the main factor for Muslim victory.”<sup>40</sup>

## ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

Although **Hizballah** is sometimes perceived as a grass roots organization which arose spontaneously in support of Lebanese Shiites, its infrastructure closely resembles that of its corporate sponsor -- Iran.

This is most obvious with respect to the decisive role clerics play in leadership. Spiritual leader Muhammad Husayn **Fadlallah** serves as a source of inspiration and guidance. Beside him is the Advisory Council (**Majlis al-Shura**) of religious sages headed by the Secretary General of the organization, **Hasan Nasrallah**. The Advisory Council is supplemented by the executive committee in charge of political and organizational activities. Subordinate to the committee are other executive bodies, including a political bureau and cultural, educational and financial committees.

The military apparatus has training bases, weapon stores and recruitment offices, as well as military activities against Israel. Another important apparatus is propaganda whose publications include a weekly, *al' Ahd* and also **al-Sabil**, **alWahda alIslamiyya** and **alMuntaliq**. **Hizballah** operates a television and radio station. In the *Biqa'*, Beirut and south Lebanon are regional commanders, subordinate to **Hizballah's** Secretary General and a representative of the central apparatuses[.]<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>40</sup>“Islamic Unity,” URL: <<http://www.ummah.org.uk/Rahmat/uni.htm>>, accessed 9 May 1999.

<sup>41</sup>\* Zisser.

This formal infrastructure, it maybe argued, more closely resembles our earlier definition of guerrilla fighters than a terrorist organization. The difference between Hizballah and most guerrilla groups, however, is that Hizballah has taken its militant opposition to Zionism to the international arena. Also, Hizballah does not have a paramilitary “look” common to most guerrilla groups. Once their target has been hit, Hizballah’s group members can blend instantaneously back into the community.<sup>42</sup> Additionally, Hizballah has developed a socially acceptable side which includes community activism made possible by “tens of millions of dollars of economic assistance [from Iran] each year. This financing paid the salaries of members and made possible Hizballah's expansion into education, health and welfare.”<sup>43</sup>

A counterpart of Iran’s construction organisation, Jihad al-Binaa (JAB), Construction Jihad, opened in 1984 and the Islamic Health Committee (IHC) was launched the same year. In 1987, Iran’s home-grown social welfare operation, the Relief Committee of Imam Khomeini (RCIK), opened a branch in the Hrat Hreik neighbourhood in the southern suburbs of Beirut [RCIK now has branches in eight regions of Lebanon]. It was launched at the personal request of Ayatollah Khomeini. [...] The Relief Committee has since grown into a giant social welfare organisation, whose services vie, even now, with the Lebanese government’s efforts for the Shiite community .<sup>44</sup>

According to Al-Ayyam newspaper, Hizballah-Bahrain, as of June 1996, had a goal of recruiting 3,000 to their military wing. They also have training, information, and political branches. There is reportedly a fifth branch which targets women recruits. Jasmin Hasan Mansur al-Khayah and Ali Ahmad Kazim Abd-Ali, former leaders of the

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<sup>42</sup> It could be argued that Hizballah was a guerrilla group when it originated in Lebanon, and that it evolved to a terrorist organization over time. The Marines in Beirut, considered them guerrilla fighters, initially, and their tactics gradually shifted from conventional force-on-force engagements to more asymmetric -- car/truck bomb -- type attacks.

<sup>43</sup> Zisser.

<sup>44</sup> Jaber, 147-148.

military wing were arrested, but Khalid al-Shu'ala and Khalil Sultan, leaders of training and information branches, respectively, were still at large. The training conducted by al-Shu'ala was at Pasadran camps in Iran and in Hizballah camps in Lebanon.<sup>45</sup>

## LEADERSHIP

Terrorist organizations often fill their ranks from society's dispossessed, however the terrorist organization's leadership in many cases represent the well-educated upper class -- Usama bin Laden, for example. "The concept of martyrdom, giving one's life for Allah, was common to all Moslem sects. The Koran taught that the paradise awaiting fighters slain in jihad (holy war) was far more glorious than the present."<sup>46</sup> Terrorist leaders often hold strong philosophical or religious beliefs and may find that terrorism offers an acceptable "antidote" for what they consider to be society's ills -- extreme poverty; ethnic prejudice; under-representation in the political processes which affect them; or religious differences -- for example.

Some of Hizballah's leaders are known: the point-man, Sheikh Hassan Nasrallah, is Hizballah's Secretary-General. Nasrallah joined Hizballah in 1982, and was elected Secretary-General in 1992 after his friend and predecessor, Sheikh Abbas Mussawi was killed by Israeli Commandos.<sup>47</sup> Sheikh Hassan Nasrallah's son, Hadi, was killed in Israel's "security zone" in South Lebanon in late 1997. His body was exchanged 10

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<sup>45</sup>"Bahrain - Leaders of Group Accused of Coup Attempt Named," 5 June 1996, *Periscope Daily Defense News Capsules*, Lexis-Nexis, 3 May 1999.

<sup>46</sup>Larry Pintak, *Beirut Outtakes: A TV Correspondent's Portrait of America's Encounter with Terror* (Lexington, MA: Lexington Books, 1988), 205.

<sup>47</sup>"Cease-Fire Does Not Mean Peace: Hizballah's Secretary-General Vows Revenge," 13 May 1996, *Time*, Lexis-Nexis, 3 May 1999.

months later for the remains of an Israeli commando.<sup>48</sup> The Political Council is headed by Mohammed Ra'ed. Ra'ed recently stated: "There are numerous ways in which we can pursue the enemies, even after they withdraw from our occupied land. . . we will force the enemy to give an accounting for the crimes committed in the course of the invasion of Lebanon."<sup>49</sup> Mohammed Fneish<sup>50</sup> (Fnaysh), also a known leader of Hizballah's Political Council, is a member of the Lebanese Parliament. He is a Shiite teacher from Ma'roub.<sup>51</sup>

It has been reported that between 10-15 July 1996, an international terrorist summit was conducted near the Pakistani border town of Konli. The objective was to improve coordination between the various organizations:

Formal deliberations took at least a couple of nightly sessions. There were a lot of informal discussions and consultations between groups and individuals during the days between. The key participants included Usama bin Laden, Aymen al-Zawahiri, Abdul Rasul Sayyaf, and an Iranian intelligence senior officer [.. ..] Other participants included senior Iranian and Pakistani intelligence officers, representatives of Egyptian and Persian Gulf Islamists, including leading commanders in exile or training in London, Tehran and Beirut, senior commanders of Hizb-I-Islami (Gulbaddin Hekmatyar), Hamas, HizbAllah, and Algerian groups, as well as numerous delegates from Tehran and Khartoum.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>48</sup>"Israel, Lebanon Carry Out Prisoner, Body Exchange: France, Red Cross Help Broker Deal," 9 July 1998, *Facts on File World News Digest*, Lexis-Nexis, 3 May 1999.

<sup>49</sup>Dr. Reuven Erlich, "Hizballah Leaders: Terrorism against Israel to Continue even after IDF Withdrawal," as quoted by Radio Nur on 24 December 1998, URL: <<http://www.ict.org.il/articles/hizballa2.htm>>, accessed 7 May 1999.

<sup>50</sup>His nom de guerre is Abou Yasser.

<sup>51</sup>"Biographical Briefs of Members of the 1992 Parliament," URL: <<http://www.lcps-lebanon.org/pub/breview/br4/parlmtpt2.html>>, accessed 18 April 1999,

<sup>52</sup>Bodansky.

This report alleges that Hizballah had --by at least mid-1996 -- become international in scope, but states that “all major [...] operations remain state-controlled.”<sup>53</sup> Other attendees at the “summit” include:

Ramadan Shallah (head of the Palestinian Islamic Jihad), Ahrnad Salah [...] (the Egyptian Jihad), Imad Mughaniyah (Lebanese HizbAllah’s Special Operations Command), Muhammad Ali Ahmad (a representative of Usama bin Ladin), Ahmad Jibril (PFLP-GC), Imad al Alami and Mustafa al Liddawi (Hamas), Abdallah Ocalan (PICK), an envoy of Turkey’s Islamic party (Refah), and a representative of George Habbash (PFLP).<sup>54</sup>

The conference participants were united in their goal of using “force to confront all foreign forces stationed on Islamic land.”<sup>55</sup> The Islamic Change Movement renounced the continued presence of U. S. personnel in Saudi Arabia in a communique issued on 18 July 1996, and called for jihad against U.S. interests “anywhere in the world” in pursuing their goal.<sup>56</sup>

#### WHY RESORT TO TERRORISM?

Many Lebanese Shiites turned to Hizballah as a political and military tool “against the backdrop of social exclusion and economic deprivation within Lebanon.”<sup>57</sup> The 1982 massacres at Sabra and Shatila, two Palestinian refugee camps in West Beirut, were mentioned in the previous chapter. Additionally, it is unlikely that Lebanese

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<sup>53</sup> Bodansky.

<sup>54</sup> Bodansky.

<sup>55</sup> Bodansky.

<sup>56</sup> Bodansky.

<sup>57</sup> Ranstorp, 29.

Hizballah will soon forget Israel's Operation Grapes of Wrath, which took place in April of 1996. The intent of the Israelis was to destroy suspected Hizballah strongholds. After the first day's attacks, Hizballah responded by sending 40 rockets into Israel. Israel responded by ordering residents in over 60 villages to evacuate their homes, sending a stream of some 100,000-400,000 Lebanese refugees north, depending upon who is counting.

The massacre at Qana was the worst -- by some counts, 150 people were killed, many of them Shi'a, and more than 300 were injured. <sup>58</sup> The following is a description of the funeral for the victims of the Israeli attack on Qana:

It was hot. The corpses of the victims had already begun to decompose and the smell was overwhelming. Water was sprayed over the crowd to cool them from the heat of the sun. When the infants were taken out of the makeshift, cardboard coffins for burial, the crowd went berserk. A father jumped into a grave and took out the corpse of his baby, wrapped in a white body bag. He held the bundle high in the air and did a circuit in front of the crowd. Two tiny feet protruded. The crowd screamed, 'Resistance, Resistance, all of us are Resistance! Our children are Resistance!' <sup>59</sup>

It is difficult to imagine a set of circumstances which would create more hostility toward the Israelis. This resentment and frustration builds to a point where Hizballah's members are able to rationalize virtually any kind of violent act.

The high regard Muslims hold for martyrdom, giving one's life for Allah, helps to generate an especially fearsome kind of opponent:

Every evening, four-year-old Mohammed watches the same video. He puts the cassette on by himself and calls his baby sister to join him. It is a short film, primitively made, which lasts no more than five minutes. There is a row of buildings in a bleak landscape and then, suddenly, an explosion. 'There's my daddy,' says Mohammed.

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<sup>58</sup>"Qana Massacre," URL: <<http://www.travel-net.com/~sammy/qana.htm>>, accessed 7 May 1999.

<sup>59</sup>Jaber, 170.

Mohammed's father, **Salah Ghandour**, rammed a car packed with 450 kilograms of explosives into an Israeli convoy, in South Lebanon, on 25 May 1995. He blew himself to pieces and killed twelve Israeli soldiers. **Hezbollah** filmed the event, just as they record all their major operations, and distributed the video to all media outlets in the country.<sup>60</sup>

Three major events helped to catalyze the ideological acceptance of **Hizballah** by Lebanese **Shiites**: the mysterious disappearance in 1978 of Imam **Muss al-Sadr** in Libya; the invasion of southern Lebanon by the Israelis in 1978; and **Khomeini's** successful coup and subsequent establishment of a fundamentalist **Shiite Islamic state** in Iran in 1979.<sup>61</sup>

Although the political mobilization of the **Shi'i** community was accelerated by these factors and events, the 1982 Israeli invasion became a seminal event as it facilitated not only Iran's direct involvement with the **Shi'a** community, through the deployment of a small Iranian contingent to the **Biq'a** area of Lebanon, but also led to the proliferation of a number of radical and militant **Shi'a** movements. These groups merged into the establishment of a main revolutionary **Shi'a** movement, the **Hizb'allah**, an organisational umbrella composed of a coalition of radical movements under the leadership of a small group of **Najaf-educated clergy**.<sup>62</sup>

When questioned in an interview about **Hizballah's** use of terror, **Sheikh Hassan Nasrallah**, **Hizballah's** Secretary-General responded: "Terror? You perceive acts of self-defense as terror? We do not view our methods as unreasonable. The Western world and Israel has driven us to undertake what you perceive as drastic measures. They have infringed on our basic human rights... ." <sup>63</sup>

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<sup>60</sup>Jaber, 1.

<sup>61</sup>Ranstorp, 29.

<sup>62</sup>Ranstorp, 29-30.

<sup>63</sup>"Hizballah Through the Eyes of Nasrallah."

## HIZBALLAH'S FUTURE

The single greatest threat to the existence of Hizballah is peace in the region. Hizballah arose from the midst of chaos, civil war, and anarchy and a very good argument could be made that its survival depends upon the maintenance of at least some of these conditions. Or, if peace between Israel, Lebanon, and Syria, for example, does occur, Hizballah maybe forced to shift its objectives -- essentially change its essence. Lebanese Hizballah has many internal problems as well. Hizballah does not enjoy majority support even among the Shiite community. Essentially, 20-25 percent of the Lebanese Shiite community supports Hizballah, with Amal --a similar, somewhat more moderate, rival organization which advocates Shiite integration into the Lebanese community -- favored by more than 30 percent.<sup>64</sup>

The Shiites are just one of 18 recognized religious groups in Lebanon. Hizballah was able, through the late 1980s to act with impunity, controlling much of West Beirut and South Lebanon:

Since then, however, Hizballah has faced a series of challenges threatening its continued activity or even existence. The most important is the Ta' if accords which led to the end of the civil war that had fostered the organization's flowering. The Ta' if accords laid the foundations for a new, Syrian-backed Maronite Sunni order. The Shi'i community was excluded, despite being the country's largest single group. A second challenge is the Middle East peace process which may force an end to its struggle against Israel and erode the basis of its legitimacy and power. Finally, Iran's growing political and economic difficulties are liable to curtail its ability to back Hizballah politically, economically and militarily as generously as in the past.<sup>65</sup>

Paradoxically, however, the weaker Iran becomes, economically, the more likely it may be that it will resort to terrorism, through Hizballah and other groups that it sponsors.

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<sup>64</sup>Zisser.

<sup>65</sup>Zisser.

Additionally, the closer **Hizballah** gets to extinction, the more dangerous the organization may become.

**Hizballah** leader Sheikh Hassan Nasrallah, at the conference of Palestinian opposition groups held in Damascus on December 12, 1998, as quoted by Radio al-Quds:

“ . . .the Palestinian National Covenant remains valid as long as there is a knife in the hands of a Palestinian woman with which to stab a soldier or a settler. The Palestinian National Covenant remains valid as long as there are suicide bombers (who sacrifice themselves in the Holy name of Allah) to carry out attacks in Jerusalem and Tel-Aviv. The Palestinian National Covenant remains valid as long as there is a Palestinian child who hurls a stone at an Israeli soldier, and whose eyes are fixed on Palestine, from the River to the Sea.”

What is exceptional in these declarations is the fact that, until recently, **Hizballah** tended to preserve certain vagueness with regard to the continuation of terrorist activity from South Lebanon after an Israeli withdrawal. The current pronouncements are in direct contradiction to assumptions that an IDF withdrawal will lead to a cessation of terrorism from Lebanon, and to **Hizballah**'s conversion from terrorist movement to political party.<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>66</sup>Erich.

## CHAPTER 3

### HAMAS

The focus of this chapter is on the terrorist organization Hamas. I will describe characteristics of the group, to include origins; operational characteristics; objectives; organizational structure; ideology; targets and tactics; and leadership and membership. Finally, I will assess Hamas' future viability.

### **BACKGROUND**

One of the most active anti-Israeli terrorist organizations in recent years has been Hamas. HAMAS, an acronym for *Harakat al-Muqawamah al-Islamiyya* -- or Islamic Resistance Movement, grew out of Palestinian elements of the Muslim Brotherhood in late 1987. The word "Hamas" can also mean "zealot," or "strength" in Arabic.<sup>67</sup> Hamas members are located primarily in the Gaza Strip and in parts of the West Bank (see Figure 2) and, although the exact number of militants is unknown, the group has thousands of supporters. Hamas' overall objective is the establishment of an Islamic Palestinian state in the area now occupied by the state of Israel.<sup>68</sup> Hamas' activities

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<sup>67</sup>Yonah Alexander, *Middle East Terrorism: Selected Group Profiles* (Washington, DC: The Jewish Institute for National Security Affairs, 1994), 20.

<sup>68</sup>DCI CTC Background Information on Terrorist Groups: *The Islamic Resistance Movement (HAMS)*, URL: <<http://www.cia.ic.gov/dci/ctc/groups/42814297.html>>, accessed 2 June 1999.

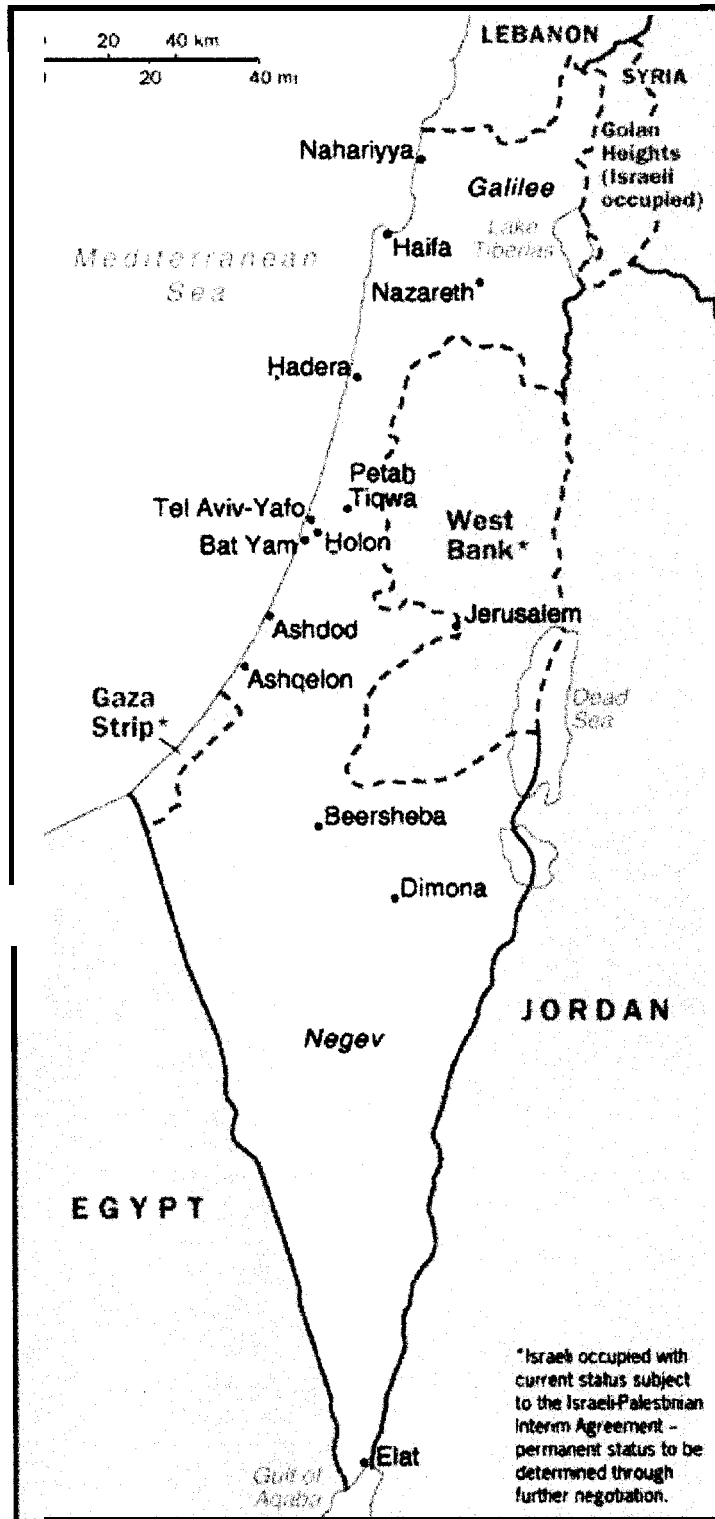


Figure 2. Israel, the West **Bank**, and the Gaza Strip  
 Source: "Israel," 1998 *CIA World Factbook*, URL: <<http://www.journalism.berkeley.edu/resources/internet/ciafact.htm>>, accessed 21 May 1999.

range from deadly attacks against Israeli civilian and military targets to social services in support of displaced or needy Palestinians.

“**Ham**as is now considered by everybody, the Israeli authorities included, as militarily the strongest Palestinian organization.”<sup>69</sup> Professor Israel Shahak attributes **Ham**as’ growing influence to four factors:

1. It derives enormous prestige from its increasingly successful guerrilla operations, especially those aimed at the Israeli army. After an ambush in which **Ham**as guerrillas killed Colonel Mintz, the coordinator of “special activities” in the Gaza Strip, and wounded a major and two soldiers without incurring any losses, many remarked that Fatah<sup>70</sup> had achieved nothing remotely resembling that ambush during the 28 years of its existence.
2. **Ham**as guerrillas generally refrain from clashes with other Palestinian factions, and their assaults on civilians have declined.
3. This in my personal view is the most important, **Ham**as leaders have a deserved reputation for honesty in financial affairs. They tend to live modestly, often in poverty. In Gaza Strip, for example, their homes are not situated in the wealthiest neighbourhoods, as are the homes of so many Fatah notables. Owing to that, they are more in touch with the ordinary people.
4. The **Ham**as guerrillas do not engage in vain displays and posturing. They do not walk around armed without purpose shooting into the air in order - as the Fatah Hawks explain it - “to show their presence.”<sup>71</sup>

## ORIGINS

**Ham**as considers 14 December 1987 its founding date -- this date marks the appearance of its first intifada leaflet. “That same month Sheikh Yassin also convened six senior Gaza Strip clerics and outlined to them his ideas for establishing the political

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<sup>69</sup>Israel Shahak, *Prof. Shahak on Hamas Popularity*, URL: <<http://www.iap.org/politics/mist/hrnspop-art.html>>, accessed 31 May 1999.

<sup>70</sup>Yasir Arafat’s secularist Palestinian guerrilla group,

<sup>71</sup>Shahak.

organization that came to be known as Hamas.”<sup>72</sup> Many of Hamas’ early efforts were directed -- with Israel’s blessings -- against the PLO and Fatah. FATAH, the acronym in reverse for The Palestine Liberation Movement, also means “conquest.”<sup>73</sup>

HAMAS is a radical Islamic fundamentalist organization set up by Sheikh Ahmed Yassin shortly after the *intifada* erupted in December 1987. Its aim was to counter and compete with the secular Palestinian command of the uprising and parallel the violent tactics of the radical Palestinian Islamic Jihad. HAMAS is based on the ideology of the Muslim Brotherhood which was founded in Egypt in 1928 by Sheikh Hasan al-Bana. HAMAS originated as the underground military wing of the Brotherhood, and has evolved into a strong political organization.<sup>74</sup>

The Muslim Brotherhood conducted its activities vicariously through Hamas’ precursor -- the Muslim Association (Mujema al Islami), until late 1987. The Association, founded in the mid-70s was led by the charismatic Sheikh Ahrnad Yassin, who holds a degree from the Ain-Shams University of Cairo. Initially, Israel allowed the non-nationalistic Association to operate in legitimate opposition to the PLO and other Palestinian nationalist organizations and the Association focused its efforts on peaceful Islamic principles and political, social, and charitable undertakings. By “the eve of the Intifada, an estimated 40 percent of all mosques in the Gaza Strip were under its control.”<sup>75</sup>

The Association did not restrict its activities to peaceful pursuits, however: In 1984, the Israeli security forces alleged that the Association was a front for a

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<sup>72</sup>Anat Kurz and Nahrnan Tal, *Hamas: Radical Islam in a National Struggle*, Jaffee Center for Strategic Studies, Tel-Aviv University, URL: <<http://www.tau.ac.il/jcss/m48chp1.html>>, accessed 31 May 1999.

<sup>73</sup>*Fatah*, URL: <<http://www.sindibad.co.uk/atoz/glossary/fatah.html>>, accessed 1 June 1999.

<sup>74</sup>Alexander, 21.

<sup>75</sup>Anat Kurz and Nahrnan Tal.

subversive organization aiming at the establishment of a Muslim Palestinian state on the ruins of the state of Israel. Weapons were seized in Association offices, and the leaders of the organization were arrested and put on trial. Sheikh Yassin said that the weapons were needed for self-defense, a claim dismissed by the court. Yassin was sentenced to thirteen years in prison, and the other defendants to periods of nine to twelve years. In 1985, Yassin was released as part of a prisoner exchange agreed upon between Israel and a Palestinian organization under Ahrnad Jibril. Yassin remained the dominant figure in the Muslim Association, though its formal leader was a pharmacist and Muslim Brotherhood activist, Dr. Ibrahim al-Yazuri. Yassin setup a new organization for the struggle against Israel, working closely with Dr. 'Abdal-'Aziz al Rantisi and Dr. Mahmoud al-Zahar, who became key figures in Hamas and its leading spokesmen. At the same time, Association activists became implicated in violent intimidation campaigns throughout the Gaza Strip aimed at imposing a religious way of life.<sup>76</sup>

Hamas' military wing, the Izz al-Din al-Qassam Battalions has engaged in numerous kidnappings, stabbings, shootings, bombings, and suicide car bombings -- directed primarily against Israeli civilians and military targets since the late 1980s. "In early December 1993, HAMAS stated that it would change tactics by targeting Israeli settlers instead of Israeli soldiers."<sup>77</sup> The organization has also allegedly overcome its differences with Fatah long enough to conduct at least one joint operation with the Fatah Hawks.<sup>78</sup>

## OPERATING CHARACTERISTICS

Although Hamas members use political, social, and violent means to achieve their goals, the aspect of their behavior that will be focused on the most is the violent action directed primarily against Israeli civilian and military targets. The el-Qassam units generally prefer extremely violent attacks directed against "soft" targets; they operate

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<sup>76</sup>Anat Kurz and Nahman Tal.

<sup>77</sup>Alexander, 26.

<sup>78</sup>Alexander, 29.

clandestinely, and utilize **compartmented** two-three person cells for security. These cells surveil potential targets, target new recruits, maintain safehouses, and manufacture homemade bombs for use in terrorist attacks.<sup>79</sup> Operatives are generally in their 20s or early 30s and are known to hide their weapons in mosques and in their sympathizers' homes.<sup>80</sup>

HAMAS members generally are ethnic Palestinians, but because of the status of the occupied territories and the Palestinian diaspora they maybe traveling on a variety of documents including [but not limited to] Jordanian, Tunisian, Israeli-issued Palestinian documents, Palestinian Authority-issued documents, Sudanese, Syrian, Iranian or Lebanese documents. Many HAMAS members are residents in the US and may have green cards or US passports, HAMAS militants are well trained in surveillance and **countersurveillance**.

Buses and bus stops are frequent targets of HAMAS. Shopping areas have also [frequently] been attacked. A suicide bomber typically carries an improvised explosive device in a duffel bag or briefcase and detonates the device when his vehicle draws close to the target in order to maximize casualties. The devices, usually weighing between 20 and 40 pounds, are composed of TNT or other high explosives or are made from easily obtainable chemicals.<sup>81</sup>

Operationally, Hamas tends to compartmentalize itself by fictional activity, which increases the difficulty of external penetration, and adds a level of security to its infrastructure.<sup>82</sup>

Hamas raises funds from several sources to finance its social and military activities. Donations and membership dues are collected from activists and supporters in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Fundraising is conducted in Islamic and Arab countries and in Palestinian communities worldwide. Reports have

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<sup>79</sup>*DCI CTC Background Information on Terrorist Groups: The Islamic Resistance Movement (HAMS).*

<sup>80</sup>Alexander, 26.

<sup>81</sup>*DCI CTC Background Information on Terrorist Groups: The Islamic Resistance Movement (HAMS).*

<sup>82</sup>*DCI CTC Background Information on Terrorist Groups: The Islamic Resistance Movement (HAMAS).*

indicated that HAMAS received direct financial aid from Arab and Islamic countries including Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states.<sup>83</sup>

The recent trend for Hamas has been away from suicide bombings, although they did conduct one in 1998. The April 1999 volume of *Filastin al-Muslimah*, the “organ of Hamas” reports:

1. There was a focus on achieving the element of surprise by using time delayed bombs and commando attacks by hand grenades. Those were the greater part of the effective operations, which caused most of the casualties.
2. Armed ambushes of shooting with light weapons.
3. There was only one suicide attack. This was due to an effort to preserve the variety of methods of operations, and to conserve the lives of the fighters for other types of missions.
4. Light weapons were most effective in terrorizing Israeli settlers, and there were two [HAMAS] fatalities from such attacks.
5. The operations were geographically widespread, with several in large cities like Tel-Aviv, Be>er Sheba and Jerusalem. This was done in order to discredit Israeli security theories by demonstrating the ability to cross all security barriers. 84

## HAMAS’ OBJECTIVES

Ultimately Hamas intends to establish “Islamic rule throughout the Islamic land.”<sup>85</sup> Hamas favors the Pan Islamic ideal and considers secularism and nationalism *un-Islamic* -- hence, it has always challenged the legitimacy of the PLO (PA), which is characterized by its secular/nationalistic theories.<sup>86</sup> Ideologically, Hamas is totally

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<sup>83</sup> Alexander, 25.

<sup>84</sup> *Hamas Publishes Annual Report on Terrorist Activity for 1998*, Reuven Paz, The International Policy Institute for Counter-Terrorism, URL: <<http://www.counterterror.org.il/>>, accessed 7 June 1999.

<sup>85</sup> Anat Kurz and Nahman Tal.

<sup>86</sup> Magnus Ranstorp, *Hizb ‘allah in Lebanon: The Politics of the Western Hostage Crisis* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1997), 57.

committed to the Islamic lifestyle; complete opposition to any Middle East peace between Israel and its Arab neighbors; the destruction of Israel; the subsequent creation of a Palestinian Arab state; and “the synthesis of Pan Islamic religious ideals and Palestinian nationalism.”<sup>87</sup> “The Islamic Resistance Movement is a distinguished Palestinian movement, whose allegiance is to Allah, and whose way of life is Islam. It strives to raise the banner of Allah over every inch of Palestine.”<sup>88</sup>

There does appear to be an inconsistency between Hamas’ rejection of secularism and nationalism on the one hand and their push for Palestinian nationalism on the other. “The leaders of Hamas were aware of the contradiction between their conceptual approach and the idea of particularist nationalism. To resolve it, they imbued the struggle for the liberation of Palestine with broader Islamic significance and ascribed religious meaning to the fight against Israel.”<sup>89</sup>

Hamas has three fundamental principles:

- . Palestine is a gift of God to the Muslims and cannot be negotiated away with non-believers.
- Jihad (holy war) is the means by which Palestine will be freed from Lebanon to the Sinai and from the Mediterranean to the Jordan.
- Palestine must be an Islamic theocracy governed by Islamic law.<sup>90</sup>

An understanding of the Muslim concepts of “tsaber” --or “sabr” -- and “dawa” is helpful in understanding Hamas’ long-term strategy:

The strategy of Hamas is rooted in the concept of tsaber, which means

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<sup>87</sup>Alexander, 20.

<sup>88</sup>*The Covenant of the HAMS: Main Points*, URL: <<http://www.jcrc.org/main/hamas1.htm>>, accessed 3 June 1999.

<sup>89</sup>Anat Kurz and Nahman Tal.

<sup>90</sup>*DCI CTC Background Information on Terrorist Groups: The Islamic Resistance Movement (HAMS)*.

patience, and also endurance, [and] forbearance. In practical terms, it implies self-restraint in the face of stronger rivals, and under non-Muslim rule in particular. **Tsaber** permits, even recommends, suspension of **Jihad** - the direct confrontation between believers and forces in their environment, until circumstances are ripe for achieving the ultimate goal, which is the establishment of Islamic rule throughout the Islamic land. **Tsaber**, which is the salient characteristic of the strategy of the Muslim Brotherhood, has gained special significance for **Hamas**, considered the last Islamic movement fighting a foreign, non-Islamic rule.

**Dawa**, the Islamization of the Muslim society through social mobilization in the spirit of Islam, is a complementary course of action. It is a strategy to be employed at anytime, yet when **Jihad** is infeasible or too risky, **Dawa** constitutes the only available policy. Through **Dawa** the ground for **Jihad** is supposed to be prepared.<sup>91</sup>

**Tsaber** and **dawa** are basically pragmatic ideas and their practice helps to ensure both the survival and the growth of **Hamas**. **Hamas'** desire to attain its strategic goals helps to define, shape, and maintain its organizational structure.

## ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

**Hamas** has the broad support base within the Territories that is characteristic of a popular movement. It is very well run organization and has a fundamental Islamic foundation. As mentioned previously, operational considerations have caused **Hamas** to compartmentalize by functional area. Although **Hamas** has historically been run in a highly centralized manner, it has very few distinctive institutions, apart from the mosques. Organizationally, **Hamas** is comprised of a Propaganda Wing; a Political Department; the Military Wing -- **Izz al-Din al-Qassam** squads; a Security Wing; and an Events Unit. Financial contributions from Islamic institutions outside the Territories are considered crucial to the solvency of **Hamas**.<sup>92</sup>

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<sup>91</sup>Anat Kurz and Nahman Tal.

<sup>92</sup>Anat Kurz and Nahman Tal.

Hamas has maintained the distinction between the Propaganda Wing and the Political Department, but the organizational connections between the two are also well-established. The *Propaganda Wing* generates and issues Hamas publications and bulletins. The *Political Department* is divided into regional commands within the Territories which are part of the Shura Council -- Hamas' "supreme leadership [...] with members both inside and outside the Territories, mainly Jordan."<sup>93</sup> In December 1987, Sheikh Yassin:

[C]onvened six senior Gaza Strip clerics and outlined to them his ideas for establishing the political organization that came to be known as Hamas. The Gaza Strip was divided into six sectors, each under the responsibility of a cleric, who immediately established Hamas cells and set out to expand membership. In January 1988, Sheikh Yassin invited Jamil Hammami, of the Muslim Brotherhood in the West Bank, to join the movement. Hammami agreed, and Hamas began to make its presence felt in the West Bank, which was also divided into sectors of responsibility.<sup>94</sup>

The mosques play a central role in the Hamas organizational framework:

"Members are recruited from among believers, persuasion efforts take place in the mosques, which are also the point of departure for meetings, demonstrations, distribution of leaflets, and even for terrorist attacks."<sup>95</sup> The mosques also serve as collection centers for financial contributions from Islamic associations from outside the Occupied Territories. These finances directly benefit Hamas and its members.<sup>96</sup>

The *Military Wing* -- al-Qassam squads -- conducts well-planned operations against Israeli civilian and military targets and against Palestinians who collaborate with

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<sup>93</sup>Anat Kurz and Nahman Tal.

<sup>94</sup>Anat Kurz and Nahman Tal.

<sup>95</sup>Anat Kurz and Nahman Tal.

<sup>96</sup>Anat Kurz and Nahman Tal.

the Israelis. Hamas' willingness to target civilians is probably affected more by purely pragmatic considerations such as political fallout, public opinion, and retaliation than by ideological motivations. Hamas issued several statements, beginning in December 1993, to the effect that Israeli civilians, rather than Israeli soldiers, would become their targets of choice -- a "total war" kind of concept which may have backfired on them.

Between 13 September 1993 (the signing of the Oslo Agreement) and 31 December 1996, 202 Israeli citizens were killed in terrorist attacks - 132 of them civilians and 70 from the security forces. Nine hundred seventy nine Israelis were wounded, 614 of them civilians and 365 were from the security forces. One hundred twenty eight of the fatalities were victims of suicide attacks, in which 638 were also wounded. Eighty of the fatalities and 395 of the injured resulted from Hamas operations, while 48 fatalities and 243 were the result of Islamic Jihad operations. Notable is the proportion of Israelis killed since the signing of the Oslo Agreement within the total number of victims registered following the eruption of the Intifada. Thus, 202 of the 366 Israelis killed during the period late December 1987- late 1996, were victims of attacks perpetrated after the signing of the accord.<sup>97</sup>

The Oslo Agreement is The Palestinian - Israeli Interim Agreement on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Amnesty International has condemned the indiscriminate killing of civilians by Hamas.<sup>98</sup> Most of Hamas' Military Wing is located within the Territories, **as is** the primary military command and control network.

The *Security Wing* was established in 1986, primarily to deal with Palestinians suspected of engaging in activities inimical to the principles of Islam. It has targeted Palestinians suspected of collaboration with Israel. Many alleged collaborators were abducted and interrogated. Sometimes, the accusations constituted grounds for execution.

The role of the *Events Unit*, setup after the founding of Hamas, and active mainly during the Intifada, was "to participate in the uprising and to escalate it." Its activists, organized in popular committees, were responsible for running the mass civilian aspects of the Intifada. This involved initiating and enforcing strikes,

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<sup>97</sup>Anat Kurz and Nahman Tal.

<sup>98</sup>*Israel: Amnesty International Condemns Killing of Civilians*, 21 March 1997, URL: <<http://www.amnesty.org/news/1997/51501597.htm>>, accessed 6 June 1999.

inciting street riots and demonstrations, blocking roads, writing nationalist and religious graffiti on walls, assisting families that suffered losses in the uprising, and burying the people killed during clashes with the Israeli security forces.<sup>99</sup>

Additionally, Hamas has developed “organizational and financial links with the Iranian government.”<sup>100</sup> Reportedly, Iran has agreed to pay Hamas between \$10-20 million U.S. dollars annually in return for Hamas’ undermining of the peace process. “Warmer relations between Iran and HAMAS can be partially explained by the latter’s improving relations with the Iranian-backed Hizballah in Lebanon. Utilizing Iranian backing, Hizballah and HAMAS regard themselves as allies but they operate independently of each other.”<sup>101</sup>

## LEADERSHIP/MEMBERSHIP

Sheikh Ahmad Yassin founded Hamas in 1987 and remains the spiritual leader of the organization. Yassin, a paraplegic Muslim cleric who received a life sentence from the Israeli government in 1989, was released from prison in 1997. Sheikh Ahmad Yassin, Dr. Abdelaziz Rantisi, and Dr. Muhammad al-Zahhar are leading members of a religious council (majlis al-shura) -- within the West Bank and Gaza -- which governs Hamas.<sup>102</sup>

Outside the Territories, the organization has three public figures in the shape of Ibrahim Ghosheh, its spokesperson, Muhammad Nazzal, its representative

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<sup>99</sup>Anat Kurz and Nahman Tal.

<sup>100</sup>Alexander, 21.

<sup>101</sup>Alexander, 25.

<sup>102</sup>Hamas, I URL: <<http://www.sindibad.co.uk/atoz/hamas/hamascont.html>>, accessed 4 June 1999.

in Jordan, and Dr. Muhammad Abu Marzuk, who has been denounced by the Israelis as the true head of Hamas and who was arrested in July 1995 in the United States, where he now awaits a decision regarding his extradition.<sup>103</sup>

Dr. Marzuk, currently residing in Jordan, headed the Hamas political wing and reportedly acted as a liaison to several other Middle East terrorist groups.<sup>104</sup> Hamas had this to say about Marzuk's arrest: "The continuing detention of Dr. Abu Marzuq will add to the Arab and Muslim anger that is raging against the US hostile policies. Hamas enjoys the support and sympathy of the Arab and Muslim masses as well as of the freedom supporters in the world."<sup>105</sup> "In October 1992 Abu Marzuq headed a HAMAS 'political and military delegation' to Teheran for the purpose of 'concluding] a number of political and military cooperation agreements with Iran and Lebanese Hizballah.'"<sup>106</sup> Marzuk, who lived in the U.S. for a total of 14 years, reportedly resided in Falls Church, Virginia until late 1992. Four of his children were born in the U.S.<sup>107</sup>

Khalid Mish'al succeeds Abu Marzuk as the current head of the of Hamas' Amman, Jordan-based Political Department.<sup>108</sup> "From his base in Jordan, Mish'al, in addition to his political functions, activates various groups in Europe and Israel which initiate, encourage and commit acts of terror and sabotage. Funds to finance these

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<sup>103</sup>*Hamas.*

<sup>104</sup>Alexander, 23.

<sup>105</sup>"HAMAS Demands Immediate Release of Abu Marzuq," *Al-Akhbar*, URL: <<http://iap.org/news/Al-Akhbar/199507/19950728.1.html>>, accessed 4 June 1999.

<sup>106</sup>*Musa Abu Marzuq*, Anti-Defamation League Backgrounder, 28 July 1995, URL: <[http://www.adl.org/presrele/terror\\_92/2511\\_92.html](http://www.adl.org/presrele/terror_92/2511_92.html)>, accessed 4 June 1999.

<sup>107</sup>*Musa Abu Marzuq.*

<sup>108</sup>"MidEast: HAMAS Leader says Israel Elections will not Change Anything," 2 April 1999, *British Broadcasting Corporation*, Lexis-Nexis, 1 June 1999.

activities are channeled through his office.”<sup>109</sup> Mish’al on the strategic objective of Hamas: “This is the main objective of the heroic Resistance and Jihad; it is to exert continuous pressure on the Enemy and to deny it any sort of stability.”<sup>110</sup> On 25 September 1997, the Mosad conducted an unsuccessful attempt to assassinate Khalid Mish’al in Amman, Jordan:

On September 25, 1997, the Mosad agents waited at the entrance of the Hamas offices in Amman, with the intention of assassinating Khalid Mish’al. They succeeded in injuring him, using a lethal substance. However, immediately afterwards, Khalid Mish’al’s personal chauffeur and a security guard intervened. The chauffeur, who saw what was happening, hit the agent with a newspaper on his hand. The security guard began to chase the agents, and was able to note the license plate number of the car in which they had escaped, and boarded a passing car in order to pursue them. The agents were unaware that they were being followed. After some 300 meters, they stopped their car and left it. The security guard chased them and, with the help of a plainclothes policeman, managed to overpower and apprehend them. The agents were driven by the policeman and the security guard in a taxi to the nearest police station, and placed under arrest. When news of the agents’ arrest broke in Israel, the Head of the Mosad flew to Jordan, with the Prime Minister’s consent, in order to report the events to the King in person, bringing with him an antidote to treat Khalid Mish’al. Mish’al was given the antidote, thus saving his life. In the negotiations subsequently conducted for the release of the agents, an agreement was reached with the Jordanian authorities whereby, in exchange for the release of Shaykh Yasin and a number of other prisoners held in Israel, they would release our agents and allow them to return to Israel.<sup>111</sup>

Dr. Marzuk has denied reported discussions between Hamas and Syrian officials about moving Hamas’ Political Department to Damascus.<sup>112</sup> Israeli Intelligence complicity is

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<sup>109</sup>*Report of the Commission Concerning the Events in Jordan September 1997*, URL: <<http://www.fas.org/irp/world/israel/ciechanover.htm>>, accessed 5 June 1999.

<sup>110</sup>*Interview with HAMS Leader Khalid Mish ‘al: Occupation Should not Feel Like Stability*, URL: <[http://www.demon.co.uk/alquds/ptimes\\_mishal.htm](http://www.demon.co.uk/alquds/ptimes_mishal.htm)>, accessed 5 June 1999.

<sup>111</sup>*Report of the Commission Concerning the Events in Jordan September 1997*.

<sup>112</sup>“HAMAS Declines Participation in Anti-Wye Accord Rally,” 10 November 1998, *Al-Sabil*, Lexis-Nexis, 1 June 1999.

also suspected in the January 1996 assassination -- when his cell phone exploded -- of Hamas' master **bombmaker** Yehya Ayyash, "The Engineer."<sup>113</sup>

Other key leaders in Hamas include: "Mustafa Kanua, deported from Gaza in 1991, represents Hamas in Lebanon and is the Hamas liaison to Hizballah [...] Imad al-Alami, an engineer deported from Gaza in 1990, is Hamas liaison to Iran and is based in Tehran;" Abd al-Aziz Rantisi, "deported along with some 400 Palestinians to southern Lebanon in December 1992 where he served as the deportees' spokesman;" Ibrahim Rusha, a Jordan-based official spokesman for Hamas; and Mohammed Sawalha, a London-based Hamas leader.<sup>114</sup>

Hamas arose from the Muslim Brotherhood, "with the younger militants taking a greater share of responsibilities." ]<sup>15</sup> Hamas like other terrorist organizations, wields "influence disproportionate to its actual membership."<sup>16</sup> Hamas has "thousands of supporters and sympathizers, including a small, but unknown [... number] of hardcore operatives."<sup>17</sup> These hardcore operatives are, as mentioned, almost always Palestinian, often from the Occupied Territories, Sunni Muslims, and generally males in their 20s or 30s, Mosques often serve as recruiting stations.<sup>18</sup> Hamas members, who have always

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<sup>113</sup>"Sheikh Yassin: HAMAS' Agenda Unrelated to Israeli Intentions," 15 January 1999, *Mideast Mirror*, Lexis-Nexis, 1 June 1999.

<sup>114</sup>Alexander, 24.

<sup>115</sup>*Hamas*.

<sup>116</sup>Anat Kurz and Nahman Tal.

<sup>117</sup>Alexander.

<sup>118</sup>Anat Kurz and Nahman Tal.

identified themselves with society's have-nets, consider their militant actions to be "in parallel with the Israeli repression."<sup>119</sup>

## HAMAS' FUTURE

As Hamas arose during the intifada, and during its initial development, it relied heavily on violence as its primary means of expression. Hamas, like most organizations has matured to a point that it can now influence regional politics through political and social mechanisms, which are sometimes more effective than violent actions. Violence -- very effective in generating initial publicity -- can in fact, be self-defeating as Hamas evolves: "Throughout this process, interests of rank and file are created; their promotion and satisfaction become dependent upon the organization's well-being. Therefore, maintaining the organization and consolidating its power tend to become an objective of high priority in itself."<sup>120</sup>

External factors such as Israeli and Palestinian reactions to Hamas' actions dictate, in large part, the internal evolution of Hamas:

Due to the nature of insurgent goals, and the spectacular actions frequently employed to promote them, external pressures tend to be extreme and powerful. The ability of organizations such as Hamas to survive challenges posed by the hostile environment, however, is determined to a considerable degree by their own policies and deeds.<sup>121</sup>

As the political, religious, and social environment in the Middle East changes -- partly as a result of Hamas' terrorist attacks -- Hamas must change its tactics. The one element of

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<sup>11</sup> *Humus*.

<sup>120</sup> Anat Kurz and Nahman Tal.

<sup>121</sup> Anat Kurz and Nahman Tal.

Hamas which relies on violent conflict for its legitimacy is the Military Wing -- the other departments can thrive under peaceful conditions or in conflict. "You can't close the Hamas schools without having some substitute, or you will put children out on the streets, and there will be 100,000 terrorists," a senior Israeli military intelligence officer told reporters at a recent briefing."<sup>22</sup>

"A central consideration for insurgent organizations is the priority accorded to violent versus non-violent modes of struggle. This choice is particularly relevant for organizations which have abroad popular base, such as Hamas. In the case of Hamas, the strategic choice fluctuates between Dawa and Jihad."<sup>123</sup> Hamas has changed and will continue to do so based on pragmatic reactions to internal and external forces in its environment -- especially if the organization moves from the margins of Palestinian society to the mainstream.

Hamas has experienced internal conflict as well:

About eight years after the organization was founded, and some three years since the PLO and Israel had embarked upon direct negotiations, the dissociation of the military wing from the political leadership of Hamas became evident. By mid- 1996, the rivalry between Hamas leadership in the Territories and leaders living in exile also became open and harsh.<sup>124</sup>

The Hamas leadership in the Territories sought a more moderate, non-violent path and this departure from the violent "norm" generated considerable internal debate. Nevertheless, the PLO changed its tactics and has flourished as a result -- even **Hizballah** now has seats in the Lebanese Parliament -- few would have considered this possible during these organizations' formative years. An organization such as Hamas is most

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<sup>122</sup>"Suicide Bombs and Social Welfare Stoke Support for Hamas," URL: <<http://www.nando.net/newsroom/nt/309suicide.html>>, accessed 8 June 1999.

<sup>123</sup>Anat Kurz and Nahman Tal.

<sup>124</sup>Anat Kurz and Nahman Tal.

likely to change its strategy and tactics only after its leaders and members perceive a substantive change in the conditions which led to their use of terrorist attacks in the first place.

CHAPTER 4  
HIZBALLAH AND HAMAS:  
COMMONALITIES

Upon conquering the city of Mecca in AD 630, Muhammad declared a general amnesty. “The people of Mecca were free to choose or reject Islam. Among those pardoned were the powerful leaders of the Quraysh tribe who were guilty of unspeakable atrocities against Muslims.”<sup>125</sup> The Prophet Muhammad’s example of forgiveness and tolerance is one which is reinforced throughout the Quran, but which sometimes seems lost on Islam’s more fanatic adherents. The militant members of Hizballah and Hamas fall squarely into this category.

Hizballah and Hamas seem, at first glance, to be too dissimilar to one another to ever cooperate operationally. Hizballah is comprised of Shiite Muslims, while Hamas’ members are primarily Sunnis. Sunnis and Shiites have a long history of intolerance for each other which has, on occasion, led to direct confrontation. Although the membership of both groups is virtually 100 percent Arab, Hamas members are *Palestinian* Arabs -- most Hizballah members are Lebanese. The two organizations are also separated geographically -- by as much as 200 miles in some cases -- with most of Hizballah’s operatives located in the Bekaa Valley and in South Beirut, and the majority of Hamas’ militants active in the West Bank and in the Gaza Strip.

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<sup>125</sup>Mohammad Mohaddessin, *Islamic Fundamentalism: The New Global Threat* (Washington DC: Seven Locks Press, 1993), 3.

One problem that any Islamist organization may face, Hizballah and Hamas included, is the natural tension between Shiites and Sunnis; between Shiites -- Hizballah and the Amal militia; between Sunnis -- Hamas and the Palestine Islamic Jihad; and between the Palestinian Authority and virtually every other group. Although both Shiites and Sunnis believe in the primacy of the Quran and that Mohammed was the last prophet, -- the "Seal of the Prophets" -- Shiites hold that a continuous series of spiritual leaders -- imams -- followed Mohammed and they have a different understanding of Islamic law. The differences between Shiites and Sunnis in the seventh century "broadened out into a schism as great as that between the Orthodox, [the] Catholics and the Protestants in Christianity."<sup>126</sup> The Lebanese Hizballah originated as a radical alternative to the less militant Amal movement: "Hizballah rejected any compromise with Lebanese Christians, Israel, and the United States. This hardline approach appealed to many Shias, who abandoned the mainstream Amal movement to join Hizballah."<sup>127</sup> "Despite the relative rapprochement between the Islamic Jihad and Hamas during the Intifada, however, their competition and rivalry are still fierce, significant, and bitter."<sup>128</sup>

So, while there are some very powerful common ideologies between Hizballah and Hamas, there are also some good reasons why the two groups will probably not ever work together seamlessly. This is not to say, however, that Hizballah and Hamas are philosophically too far apart to set their differences aside, at least temporarily, to do damage to their common enemy -- Israel. Hizballah and Hamas, in spite of their

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<sup>126</sup>"Sunnis and Shiites, the Great Schism," *Out There News*, URL: <<http://www.megastories.com/islam/glossary/sunnishi.htm>>, accessed 17 June 1999.

<sup>127</sup>*Politics in Lebanon: History of the Political Parties*, URL: <<http://www.techfak.uni-kiel.de/~agh/parthist.html>>, accessed 17 June 1999.

<sup>128</sup>Boaz Ganor, "The Islamic Jihad: the Imperative of Holy War," The International Policy Institute for Counter-Terrorism, URL: <<http://www.ict.org.il/>>, accessed 16 June 1999.

differences, do share some strategic goals; have ideology in common; train many of their operatives together; and both groups have a distinct connection to Iran.

## COMMON GOALS

One of the fundamental goals of both Hizballah and Hamas -- *the annihilation of Israel* -- gives them a similar optic through which to view the Middle East and international relations, specifically with respect to the Israeli-Arab peace process. The destruction of Israel, it should be noted, has a great deal of appeal to some of the national powers in the region, to include Iran and Syria, who might set aside their political differences in the interest of striking a blow against their mutual enemy -- Israel. As early as 1996, Iran and Syria had reportedly agreed to cooperate between themselves in the event of a Syrian-Israeli conflict. A Syrian response to Israeli retaliatory strikes against terrorist targets in South Lebanon -- probably directed against either Hizballah or Amal -- which would result in "planned Syrian deaths" was considered a likely scenario.<sup>129</sup>

Hizballah's ideology revolves around several circles, beginning with the inner circle, consisting of the oppressed Lebanese Shi'i community, proceeding outward to Lebanese society at large, the entire Islamic world, and finally encompassing the oppressed everywhere in the world. It has both short-term and long-term objectives, which can be summarized as follows:

1. The abolishment of the confessional system in Lebanon and the transformation of the country into an Islamic state with justice, equality, peace and security for all through the application of the Islamic legal code (Shari' a);
2. Resistance to nationalism, imperialism and Western arrogance and the liberation of all oppressed Muslim peoples;
3. Bringing about Islamic unity in order to transform Islam into a universal power and establish Islamic rule; and

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<sup>129</sup>Murray Kahl, "Approaching the New Cycle of Arab-Israeli Fighting," URL: <[http://www.ortzion.org/taskfor\\_1.html](http://www.ortzion.org/taskfor_1.html)>, accessed 10 June 1999.

#### 4. Negation of Israel, and the liberation of Jerusalem and Palestine. <sup>130</sup>

Hamas, on the other hand:

[..] presents the Arab-Israeli conflict as the epitome of an inherently irreconcilable struggle between Jews and Muslims, and Judaism and Islam. It is not a national or territorial conflict but a historical, religious, cultural and existential conflict between “truth and falsehood,” the believers and the infidels, in which one side will eventually be the victor. The only way to confront this struggle is through Islam and by means of jihad (holy war), until victory or martyrdom. <sup>131</sup>

This do-or-die mentality does not lend itself easily to compromise: “[...] our [Hizballah’s] opposition to the present system is the function of two factors; (1) the present regime is the product of an arrogance so unjust that no reform or modification can remedy it. It should be changed radically, and (2) World Imperialism which is hostile to Islam.” <sup>132</sup> Even though this debate, as presented, sounds irreconcilable because of incompatible ideologies, Hizballah and Hamas attacks may actually be fueled less by true religious zeal than by a general hatred for anything that smacks of the wealthy, arrogant -- and decadent -- West.

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<sup>130</sup>Esther Webman, “Anti-Semitic Motifs in the Ideology of Hizballah and Hamas,” The International Policy Institute for Counter-Terrorism, URL: <<http://www.ict.org.il/>>, accessed 15 June 1999.

<sup>131</sup>Esther Webman, “Anti-Semitic Motifs in the Ideology of Hizballah and Hamas.”

<sup>132</sup>*An Open Letter: The Hizballah Program*, The International Policy Institute for Counter-Terrorism, URL: <<http://www.ict.org.il/>>, accessed 16 June 1999.

## IDEOLOGY

Much of the appeal for adherents of both Hizballah and Hamas is a Pan Islamic ideology: the appeal to Muslims everywhere to overlook individual and partisan distinctions in the interest of the common goals of the group.

We are an umma linked to the Muslims of the whole world by the solid doctrinal and religious connection of Islam, whose message God wanted to be fulfilled by the Seal of the Prophets, i.e., Muhammad. This is why whatever touches or strikes the Muslims in Afghanistan, Iraq, the Philippines and elsewhere reverberates throughout the whole Muslim umma of which we are an integral part. <sup>133</sup>

Additionally, a convention held in Islamabad, Pakistan from 23 to 25 October 1998, was attended by representatives of over 30 Islamic groups, to include Hamas, represented by Ibrahim Ghosheh. “An interesting element in the above-mentioned convention [was] the participation of Hamas for the first time in the convention. It marks the expanding relations of the Palestinian Islamic movement with other Islamic groups and movements, especially in the Asiatic region of the Muslim world.”\* 34

“The message of Hamas and Hizbollah is direct and compelling: the armed struggle is everything, and everyone is in the struggle. One makes the revolution by the simple expedient of joining up, or (which amounts to the same thing) by taking the gun. ~135 The Muslim concept of *jihad* or “holy war,” means “to struggle for an idea, or a principle” in its broadest sense, but is refined by terrorists such as Hizballah and Hamas

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<sup>133</sup>*An Open Letter: The Hizballah Program.*

<sup>134</sup>Reuven Paz, “Islamic Groups: the International Connection,” The International Policy Institute for Counter-Terrorism, 3 January 1999, URL:<<http://www.ict.org.il/>>, accessed 14 June 1999.

<sup>135</sup>Stephen C. Pelletiere, *Hamas and Hizballah: The Radical Challenge to Israel in the Occupied Territories* (Carlisle Barracks, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, 1994), 34.

to mean an armed conflict against those whom they consider infidels --or *kafirs* -- and aggressors. Islamic doctrine divides the world into Dar al-Islam, the world of Islam, and Dar al-Harb, the world of War. Consequently, the dichotomy between Islam's true believers and the rest of the world is a familiar concept to Muslims. "[..T]hese perceptions were strengthened and enhanced before the Islamic radical revival by similar ideas developed under national, socialist or secular regimes, which had viewed the West as colonialist and imperialist. However, the basic hatred to the wealthy West under American hegemony has only taken a religious guise in the last three decades."<sup>136</sup>

## TRAINING

Hizballah and Harnas operatives have reportedly trained together, at least to some extent: "Iran has opened training camps, including one at Qaranji near Qum, for commando units of the Hezbollah, the Hamas and the Palestinian Islamic Jihad."<sup>137</sup>

Additionally:

Iran-Hamas relations were put on a more formal basis in October 1992, when a delegation from Hamas' Consultative Council and its Political Bureau, led by Dr. Muss Abu-Marzuq and spokesman Ibrahim Ghawshah, visited Tehran for talks. Among other results of the meetings, Iran permitted Hamas to open an office in Tehran and promised it assistance in establishing a radio station. According to Palestinian sources, the Iranians pledged \$30 million a year to Hamas, and agreed to have its Revolutionary Guards train thousands of Hamas activists in Iran and in Hizballah camps in Lebanon. The agreement also left open the possibility of

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<sup>136</sup>Reuven Paz, "Is There an 'Islamic Terrorism' ?," The International Policy Institute for Counter-Terrorism, 7 September 1998, URL: <<http://www.ict.org.ii/>>, accessed 14 June 1999.

<sup>137</sup>"Islam in Europe," *Al-Watan Al-Arabi*, Lebanon, 24 December 1994, URL: <<http://srpska-mreza.com/kosovo/islam-europe-jiwd-94.html>>, accessed 11 June 1999.

Hamas extending its struggle into southern Lebanon through operational cooperation with Hizballah.<sup>138</sup>

In December 1992, Israel deported 418 members of Hamas to southern Lebanon, where they were refugees for over a year.<sup>139</sup> Hizballah took the opportunity to impress upon the Hamas members the virtues of martyrdom as applied to suicide bomb attacks. Hizballah's success in influencing Hamas to begin suicide bombings is demonstrated by the regularity with which these attacks have taken place since 1994 --after the return of the Hamas refugees to the Occupied Territories.

Prior to 1994, Hamas had not employed suicide attacks. What would possess anyone to become a suicide bomber? "Islamic Jihad and Hamas have close to 80 young men<sup>140</sup> secretly waiting for martyrdom. The ultimate reward is life-time financial help for their families, and for immediate entry into Paradise and sainthood as a 'Shaheed,' a martyr for Allah."<sup>141</sup> Suicide bombings by Hamas maybe on the decline, however, as there was only one such incident in 1998. When questioned regarding the effectiveness of suicide bombings by Islamic terrorist organizations, Egyptian Brigadier-General (Retired) Tala't Muslim replied that the operations were an integral part of the "legitimate armed struggle against the Zionist occupation." "This is undoubtedly one of the means that every nation should take in its struggle with the enemy." He continues: "The neglect of it is the neglect of one of the most important and vital methods of

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<sup>138</sup>Anat Kurz and Nahman Tal, *Humus: Radical Islam in a National Struggle*, Jaffee Center for Strategic Studies, Tel-Aviv University, URL: <<http://www.tau.ac.il/jcss/m48chp1.html>>, accessed 19 June 1999.

<sup>139</sup>Stephen C. Pelletiere, *Hamas and Hizballah: The Radical Challenge to Israel in the Occupied Territories*, 36.

<sup>140</sup>Although the exact time-frame is not clear, the source of this information (see footnote 141 below) was last modified on 18 November 1997.

<sup>141</sup>*Shaheed: What Makes a Suicide Bomber?* URL: <<http://www.teleimages.com/25.html>>, accessed 11 June 1999.

struggle. These methods have removed all doubt over the ability of the Arab nation to employ the military option.<sup>142</sup> It is interesting that the General considers suicide attacks a “military” option. He also concludes, in the same interview, that **Jihadi** operations in the Middle East have been more influential than the Arab militaries have been in determining the outcome of the Arab - Israeli struggle.

General Muslim also addresses deficiencies he sees in terrorist training -- specifically in the planning and execution phases:

Good planning brings about the concentration of powers in order to act against several targets at the same time and place, and hence to increase the losses of the enemy to such a degree that he will seriously reassess his actions. It is possible to hit specific targets such as electricity network, water supply or an Israeli military camp. Bombing of such vital targets within a short time would not let the enemy recover from the first one before being hit by the next. <sup>\*43</sup>

## THE IRAN CONNECTION

**Hizballah** and Hamas also have a common state sponsor in Iran, although there are major differences in the *amount* of dependency placed by these organizations on Iran. **Hizballah** relies very heavily on Iranian funding and logistics and Iranian influence on that organization is significant, while for Hamas, Iran is just another **funding** source. “Since Khomeini’s rise to power in 1979, Iran has maintained aspirations to lead the radical Islamic camp and continues to deepen its ties to extremist states and terrorist groups throughout the Middle East (**Hizbullah** in Lebanon, Hamas and the Islamic Jihad

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<sup>142</sup>Reuven Paz, “An Egyptian Strategic Expert Talks about the Future of the Terrorist Activity of Islamic Movements against Israel after the Wye River Accord,” The International Policy Institute for Counter-Terrorism, January 1999, URL: <<http://www.ict.org.il/>>, accessed 15 June 1999.

<sup>143</sup>Reuven Paz, “An Egyptian Strategic Expert Talks about the Future of the Terrorist Activity of Islamic Movements against Israel after the Wye River Accord.”

in the West Bank and Gaza).”<sup>144</sup> Iran would *like* to gain as much influence with Hamas as possible. “With Iran engaged in a determined bid to undermine the peace process, the Hamas militants are increasingly vulnerable to external manipulation. The recent roundup of Hamas members by the Palestinian Authority turned up one detailed account of travel and training in explosives received in Iran, accompanied by indoctrination to martyrdom.”<sup>145</sup> There are reports of Iranian influence in Hamas attacks: “Israel now has information that the March 1997 bombing in Cafe Apropos in Tel Aviv was conducted [...] in coordination with the HAMAS command center in Damascus -- itself controlled by Syrian and Iranian intelligence.”<sup>146</sup>

Iran is the bridge between otherwise disparate Islamic terrorist organizations throughout the Middle East and the world. “Iran is the world’s leading sponsor of international terrorism. As the preeminent sponsor of extremist Islamic and Palestinian groups such as Hamas, Hezbollah and Islamic Jihad, the Iranians provide them with funds, weapons, and training.”<sup>147</sup> Iran’s money, arms, training, and ideology sometimes convinces groups which are generally antagonistic toward one another to cooperate in the interest of attaining their common goal -- the extermination of Israel: “It should be

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<sup>144</sup>“Iran and Hizbullah,” The International Policy Institute for Counter-Terrorism, URL: <<http://www.ict.org.il/>>, accessed 16 June 1999.

<sup>145</sup>Robert H. Pelletreau, *Dealing with the Muslim Politics of the Middle East: Algeria, Hamas, Iran*, Address before the Council on Foreign Relations, New York, 8 May 1996, URL: <<http://www.state.gov/www/regions/nea/960508.html>>, accessed 12 June 1999.

<sup>146</sup>Yossef Bodansky, “Escalation in the North,” 15 May 1997, *CMEP News Service*, URL: <<http://www.wlo-usa.org/Opinion/Bodansky/Bodansky1.htm>>, accessed 12 June 1999.

<sup>147</sup>“Anti Terrorism Legislation: Iran Foreign Oil Sanctions Act Action Needed in Aftermath of Terrorism in Israel,” URL: <<http://www.bnaibrith.org/pan/4bombing.html>>, accessed 14 June 1999.

emphasized that the joint goal of the Islamic Jihad factions and the Palestinian and Shiite terror organizations in Lebanon, the aspiration to destroy the State of Israel, underlies the cooperation among these organizations [... .]" 148

Islamic Jihad originated in Lebanon after the 1982 Israeli invasion -- Operation Peace for Galilee. Imad Moraniya, reportedly one of Islamic Jihad's primary leaders, joined Hizballah in 1982 and quickly became the head of Lebanese-Hizballah Security. Additionally, Moraniya is considered "responsible for a long list of attacks against the United States and against Western targets and civilians in Lebanon, is subordinate to Iran but also has close ties with various Palestinian organizations.'" 149

Much of Iran's support to terrorism is a result of the Ayatollah Khomeini's "Islamic revolutionary ideology," which advocates worldwide support of radical Islam. Officially, however, "Tehran strongly denies any military and/or financial assistance to these movements. It must be emphasized that such denial is deeply imbedded in the Shi'ite tradition, in the principle of the "taqiyya" (dissimulation or concealing the faith) which was used as a means of protection against the persecutors of the Shi'ite religion. " 150

And further:

Hamas has recently founded a new Islamic body in Lebanon—"The Association of the Islamic Clerics of Palestine in Lebanon" (Tajammu' Ulama Filastin in Lebanon). This association is meant to serve as the movement's highest Islamic council for the conduct of its activity among the Palestinians in Lebanon. The association is identical to the "Association of Islamic Clerics of Palestine," a front

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<sup>148</sup>Boaz Ganor, "The Islamic Jihad: the Imperative of Holy War," *A Special Report*, The International Policy Institute for Counter-Terrorism, URL: <<http://www.ict.org.il/>>, accessed 14 June 1999.

<sup>149</sup>Boaz Ganor.

<sup>150</sup>*Iranian Support of Terrorism*, The International Policy Institute for Counter-Terrorism, URL: <<http://www.ict.org.il/>>, accessed 15 June 1999.

group created by Hamas three years ago in the Territories. It is also identical to the "Association of Islamic Clerics in Lebanon and theBeqa' Valley." This lat[t]er is a very active front institution that was founded in the 1980s on Iranian initiative, in order to consolidate Shi' ite and Sunni clerics in Lebanon under the patronage of Iran and Hizballah.<sup>151</sup>

Assessment of the Iranian threat to Israel is further complicated by the development and testing of their Shihab-3 missile -- which can reach the Israeli heartland from Iran. Will this change the non-conventional threat to Israel posed by Iranian backed terrorists such as Hizballah and Hamas? Whereas the primary threat to Israel posed by Iran was in the form of terrorism: "comprehensive assistance to the Hizballah in Lebanon and more limited aid to the Islamic Palestinian organizations, Hamas and Islamic Jihad," Iran had no conventional military attack capability against Israel.<sup>152</sup> The Shihab-3 changes that equation -- but it maybe a few years before Iran actually gets these missiles on-line. Although the future role of Hizballah, Hamas and other terrorist organizations in Middle Eastern politics is far from clear, it is possible that their role might be diminished, over the long term, with the improvement of missile range capabilities in Iran -- if Iran develops a capability to pose a conventional missile threat to Israel, it may rely less on terrorist organizations like Hizballah and Hamas.

Even though Iran under President Khatami has tried to politically distance itself from direct involvement with terrorist organizations, it is assessed that the government of Iran is still engaging in terrorism by proxy:

Despite some positive public statements, Iran continues to support groups engaged in terrorism, and to assassinate opponents of the clerical regime. Since

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<sup>151</sup>Reuven Paz, "Hamas Expanding its Activity in the Lebanese Palestinian Refugee Camps," 22 December 1998, The International Policy Institute for Counter-Terrorism, URL: <<http://www.ict.org.il/>>, accessed 15 June 1999.

<sup>152</sup>Ephraim Kam, "The Iranian Threat: Cause for Concern, Not Alarm," Jaffee Center for Strategic Studies, Tel Aviv University, October 1998, URL: <<http://www.tau.ac.il/jcss/v1n3p1.html>>, accessed 12 June 1999.

President Khatami's election, several senior officials have condemned terrorism. [...] However, Iran still funds, trains, and arms groups that engage in terrorism; senior Iranian officials continue meeting with representatives of terrorist groups such as Islamic Jihad, Hamas, and Hezbollah (Khatami himself met with Hezbollah Secretary General Hassan Nasrallah in Tehran one month before Hezbollah tried infiltrating a suicide bomber into Israel).<sup>153</sup>

This is not to say that President Khatami in any way condones Hizballah or suicide bombing attacks. What it does suggest is that more moderate Islamic views may take some time to take hold. On the other hand, President Khatami's views may never come to fruition: "Rafsanjani too, was considered in his time to be a moderate leader who would usher in a new policy of peace and restoration of normal relations with the outside world." \*54

As Iran struggles to liberalize its Islamic republic (no one would suggest publicly that the theocracy be scrapped), the big question is how far Khatami's geniality and popular support will carry him in his contest with the hard-liners, headed by Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, the "supreme leader" of the republic. What is certain, however, is that Iranians, after two decades of war and revolution, want some freedom and levity back in their lives.<sup>155</sup>

In late 1997, leaders of the eighth 55 member nation Islamic Conference summit, meeting in Tehran, condemned terrorism "in all forms," along with the killing of "innocent" people. Exactly who is "innocent" is, of course, always subject to interpretation: "A moderate tone was also evident at the summit on the Muslim world's

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<sup>153</sup>Michael Eisenstadt, "Iran Under Khatami: Weapons of Mass Destruction, Terrorism, and the Arab-Israeli Conflict," 14 May 1998, Statement Before the U. S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Subcommittee on Near East and South Asian Affairs, URL: <<http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/media/mike.htm>>, accessed 13 June 1999.

<sup>154</sup>Ely Karmon, "Iran's Policy on Terrorism in the 1990s," The International Policy Institute for Counter-Terrorism, 7 September 1998, URL: <<http://www.ict.org.il/>>, accessed 14 June 1999.

<sup>155</sup>Fen Montaigne, "Iran: Testing the waters of Reform," *National Geographic*, 196, no. 1 (July 1999): 7-10.

relationship with other cultures. While denouncing disrespect for religious and cultural traditions, the declaration backed co-existence and interaction, emphasizing that peace and tolerance enjoyed historical roots in Islamic civilization.”\* 56

But a more significant aspect of the summit -- which was by far the biggest international event in Iran since the clergy seized power in a broad-based movement against the Shah in 1979 -- was the use Teheran made of it to build bridges with the Arab leaders and to improve its overseas image. But it provided, above all, an occasion which the moderate faction in Iran, led by President Mohammad Khatami, exploited to good effect in its ideological battle with the hardliners, headed by supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamanei. Although the radical clergy took advantage of Muslim annoyance with the Middle East peace process to defend its anti-American stance, it was Mr. Khatami, the country's newly elected head of government, whose diplomacy of moderation dominated the summit proceedings. By all accounts, he eclipsed Ayatollah Khamanei with his call for peaceful and productive co-existence between Islam and other religions. He was emphatic about the need for dialogue between civilizations, and even said: “there are so many positive achievements by the Western world that non-Westerns can learn from.”<sup>157</sup>

Assuming that President Khatami *wants* to instill a less militant political ideology in Iran, he still faces an uphill battle: “President Khatami is strapped by a Constitution that gives the Supreme Leader, Ali Khomeini, sweeping powers, so there is little he can do to bring about structural change given the stiff opposition from the clergy.”<sup>158</sup> Unfortunately, “[o]ne can certainly say that the mullah's regime is neither inclined nor able to abandon terrorism as one of the primary instruments of its foreign policy.”<sup>159</sup>

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<sup>156</sup>Nazir Kamal, “Moderates in Iran Eclipse Hardliners at Islamic Meeting,” *Straits Times*, 18 Dec 1997, URL: <<http://www.moe.edu.sg/neu/online/pub-content-moderatesiran.html>>, accessed 13 June 1999.

<sup>157</sup>Nazir Kamal, “Moderates in Iran Eclipse Hardliners at Islamic Meeting.”

<sup>158</sup>Nazir Kamal, “Iran's Shaky Balance of Power,” *Straits Times*, 11 August 1998, URL: <<http://www.moe.edu.sg/neu/online/pub-content-Iran'sbalanceofpwr.html>>, accessed 13 June 1999.

<sup>159</sup>Mohammad Mohaddessin, 124.

Fundamentally, Iran's negative views of Israel and of the Middle East peace process still dovetail nicely with the views of both Hizballah and Hamas: "The one realm where Iran has made no attempt to disguise its ideological fervor is with regard to its implacable hatred of Israel. Iran remains committed to the proposition that Israel has no right to exist and that its destruction is a desideratum." \*60

Additionally:

It comes as no surprise, then, that one of Iran's major policy goals is the wrecking of the Middle East peace process. [.. In the] Arab World, which is overwhelmingly Moslem, a peace with Israel contradicts an essential pillar of Iranian ideology. To this end Iran has fomented terrorism, either in the West Bank and Gaza or on Israel's northern border, in an attempt to bring about the collapse of the peace process. <sup>161</sup>

Thus, while in 1998 Iran was not categorized as *the* primary state sponsor of terrorism by the State Department, it was still acknowledged that Iran remains *a very* active supporter of terrorist groups such as Hizballah and Hamas. <sup>162</sup> This perceived shift in Iran's propensity for violent terrorist attacks directed against Israel and its allies may be based as much on politics as on a substantive change Iran's policy. "Iran, despite its continuous support for various terrorist organizations, has been relegated to a secondary role in this year's report. This is due to the desire on the part of the U.S. for an improvement in relations with Iran." <sup>163</sup>

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<sup>160</sup>"Iran and Hizballah," The International Policy Institute for Counter-Terrorism.

<sup>161</sup>"Iran and Hizballah," The International Policy Institute for Counter-Terrorism.

<sup>162</sup>"Patterns of Global Terrorism: 1998 Overview of State-Sponsored Terrorism," URL: <<http://www.state.gov/www/global/terrorism/1998Report/sponsor.html>>, accessed 20 June, 1999.

<sup>163</sup>Yoram Schweitzer, "Patterns of Global Terrorism 1998- What has Changed," The International Policy Institute for Counter-Terrorism, 10 May 1999, URL: <<http://www.ict.org.il/>>, accessed 20 June 1999.

## FUTURE PROSPECTS

There is no doubt that Hizballah and Hamas have more than enough in common to set aside their differences on occasion in pursuit of their common goal -- the extermination of Israel. Whether they actually *do* work closely together, and how often this occurs is still debatable. While Hizballah, Hamas, and other Middle Eastern terrorist organizations play a politically sensitive part in the stability of the region, the key players are still countries such as Iran and Syria -- which tend to view terrorist organizations as extensions of their foreign policy. The natural evolution of some terrorist groups, as demonstrated by the PLO (PA), Hizballah, and more recently by Hamas, is towards a less radical, more sustainable organization. As they attain political and social legitimacy, their former radical views and activities become self-defeating.

The most realistic perspective from which to view Hizballah and Hamas -- and the groups that will eventually replace them -- is within the geopolitical and economic contexts that create the horrific conditions under which these terrorist organizations germinate and flourish. This is not to say that the reduction of poverty levels and social inequities will ever completely eliminate terrorist organizations like Hizballah and Hamas, but it may help.

## CHAPTER 5

### FINAL WORDS:

#### PERSPECTIVES AND CONCLUSIONS

Three different perspectives will be considered in deterring/defeating terrorism: that of the strategic/policy-maker, the analytical, and the tactical perspective. The counterterror policies of the U. S., the Israelis and the 22 member states of the League of Arab States will be discussed briefly, and finally, some conclusions will be drawn.

#### U.S. COUNTERTERROR **POLICY**

Of primary importance to U.S. **policymakers** with regard to the Middle East is the understanding that the “solution” they propose needs to **fit** the culture. The U.S. has a track record of being called on to put out fires in the region and then leaving our “fire trucks” on the lawn. We are ready for the next fire, but the Arab perspective is that we should take our fire trucks and go home. Our inability to internalize this concept is at the **heart** of many of the tensions between the U.S. and our Arab allies and enemies. We have a national tendency towards arrogance which does not serve us well in our Middle Eastern dealings.

In retaliation for the 1983 attacks on U.S. citizens in Lebanon, the USS *New Jersey* shelled enemy command and forward observation posts in Lebanon’s Chouf

Mountains, “reportedly killing high-ranking Syrian military personnel.”<sup>164</sup> Critics of the attack, however, compared the employment of the *New Jersey* against terrorists to using “a sledge hammer to kill a bothersome flea.”<sup>165</sup> This analogy also points beyond simple overkill for the flea, to an inherent danger to one’s *self* in going after a small pest with a too-large weapon. Responses that are timely, target specific, and of an appropriate magnitude<sup>166</sup> are the most acceptable politically.

From an analytical perspective, the gap needs to be bridged between *what is* happening to *why* it is happening and, when possible, to *predict* what might happen next. Political cultures, including our own, create their own “realities,” reinforced by ideology and historical myth. Lebanon in 1982 was representative of the threat environment the U.S. faces today: there was a non-traditional threat, albeit one that was not recognized and focused on until too late; the U. S. *vital* national interest was not threatened; and military instruments were of limited value. Sending U. S. Marines back into Beirut took us into an arena where our strategic reach had exceeded our tactical grasp. Additionally, in Lebanon, we faced the challenge of maintaining order *within* a state, a potentially much more difficult task than maintaining order *between* states. When U.S. forces reentered Lebanon, it was in a peacemaking/keeping role. This kind of role is generally quite vague in terms of achievable objectives. Following the bombing of the U.S. Embassy in April of 1983, everyone -- from policymakers to tactical commanders -- had a very poor picture of what was going on in Beirut.

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<sup>164</sup>Neil C. Livingston and Terrell E. Arnold, *Fighting Back: Winning the War against Terrorism* (Lexington MA: Lexington Books, 1986), 122.

<sup>165</sup>Livingston.

<sup>166</sup>Livingston, 121

Casper Weinberger's six tests for the use of combat power abroad are still relevant today:

- . Is it vital to the national interest?
- . Is it **winnable**?
- . Are there clearly defined objectives?
- . Are we able to reassess and adjust force size, composition and disposition?
- . Does it have the support of the American people?
- . Is force used only as a last resort?

If we keep U.S. forces *out* of areas where these criteria are not met, the likelihood of provoking terrorist attacks will be greatly diminished. Additionally, U.S. forces should *never* be placed into a high threat environment -- conventional or otherwise -- where personnel security is beyond U. S. control.

U.S. policy on terrorism has maintained its consistency in recent years, though the focus has **shifted** at times, reflecting changing world conditions and, perhaps, international and domestic political considerations. The following remarks were made by Coordinator for Counterterrorism Ambassador Philip C. Wilcox, Jr. to the Denver Council on Foreign Relations on 12 September 1996.

- First, our policy is to seek out relentlessly and punish terrorists wherever they may be, using the combined assets of U. S. law enforcement, diplomacy, and intelligence.
- Second, we make no concessions to terrorists. We refuse to bow to demands for political concessions or ransom.
- Third, we designate states who sponsor terrorism, impose economic sanctions, and ask our friends to do likewise.
- Fourth, we stress the rule of law in dealing with terrorists, and insist that terrorism is an unmitigated crime, whatever its motives or causes.
- Fifth, we have superb military assets for use, when in rare cases the situation demands.
- Sixth, since terrorists operate in the dark, we are investing heavily in collection and analysis of intelligence.
- Seventh, the Department of State's Bureau of Diplomatic Security has trained over 18,000 foreign government officials from over 80 countries in **counterterrorism** techniques and aviation security through our Anti-Terrorism Assistance Program.
- Eighth, we also have a strong program of research and development in

counterterrorism technology, especially in explosives detection.

-- Ninth, this week [12 September 1996] the President proposed a \$1 billion package of additional counterterrorism measures that will enhance aviation security, increase the number of law enforcement agents, and improve their forensic capabilities.

-- Tenth, and finally, cooperation with other states is indispensable to stop terrorists, as terrorism becomes increasingly translational.<sup>167</sup>

Arguably, the first (seek out and punish), second (no concessions), and fifth (use of military assets) points are those aspects of the U.S. policy which directly impact terrorist organizations. The first, second, and third (designate state sponsors of terrorism and impose multilateral sanctions, when possible) points are the ones most emphasized in terms of U.S. policy.<sup>168</sup> There are also international legal conventions, bilateral extradition treaties, and United Nations Security Council and General Assembly Resolutions on international terrorism which the U.S. subscribes to.<sup>169</sup>

As for the effectiveness of economic sanctions against Iran:

There has been no notable change in the behavior of the Islamic Republic on any of the issues of major concern to Washington. And whatever flexibility has been evident in the regime's overall policies has been due to purely expedient reasons of self-interest and not to [U. S.] containment pressures. Washington may have made its point, but it has not achieved its objectives.<sup>170</sup>

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<sup>167</sup>Ambassador Philip C. Wilcox, Jr., Coordinator for Counterterrorism, U.S. Department of State, "International Terrorism," remarks made to the Denver Council on Foreign Relations, Denver, Colorado, 12 September 1996, URL: <<http://www.state.gov/www/global/terrorism/960912.html>>, accessed 6 April 1999.

<sup>168</sup>U S Department of State, "Patterns of Global Terrorism: 1996," *The DISAM Journal*, Volume 19, Number 4 (Summer 1997):31.

<sup>169</sup>"International Terrorism Conventions," released by the Office for Counterterrorism, 17 August 1998, URL: <[http://www.state.gov/www/global/terrorism/980817\\_terror\\_conv.html](http://www.state.gov/www/global/terrorism/980817_terror_conv.html)>, accessed 6 April 1999.

<sup>170</sup>Jahangir Amuzegar, "Iran's Economy and the US Sanctions," *The Middle East Journal*, Volume 51, Number 2 (Spring 1997): 194.

Economic sanctions are indirect and of questionable efficiency, but their value in dealing with state sponsorship of terrorism may sometimes be understated by proponents of U. S. military response. Multilateral sanctions, in particular, may offer useful economic leverage in dealing with state-sponsors to terrorism, if not the terrorists themselves.

The Omnibus Counterterrorism Act of 1996, in recognition of the international terrorism threat to American citizens and U.S. strategic interests, proposed the following changes to federal law.

- New federal jurisdiction to prosecute acts of terrorism carried out within the United States, as well as conspiracies hereto commit terrorism abroad. There is currently no federal statute outlawing terrorism. In the case of the bombings of the World Trade Center and the Oklahoma City federal building, federal jurisdiction was established only because of the nature of the targets, their occupants, and the means by which the attack was carried out.
- Provisions to expand restrictions on access to the U. S. and facilitate exclusion of aliens who are representatives and leaders of designated terrorist groups.
- An expanded ban on providing material support -- training, weapons, safehouses, fundraising, and financial services -- for terrorism and terrorist organizations.
- Expanded jurisdiction to prevent the transfer of nuclear materials, including materials from the [.. .f]ormer Soviet Union.
- Implementation of an International Convention on Plastic Explosives to require manufacturers to mark materials to make them easier to detect at airports and other sites.<sup>171</sup>

Once again, the need to reach national and international consensus on a definition of “terrorism” becomes clear. Note the emphasis, in the analysis that follows, placed on the *attitude* of terrorists -- which may subsequently influence their actions -- towards the definition of “terrorism”:

The definition of terrorism does not require that the terrorist organizations themselves accept it as such. Nevertheless, reaching international agreement will be easier the more objective the definition, and the more the definition takes into

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<sup>171</sup>“The Omnibus Counterterrorism Act,” 11 March 1996, Anti-Defamation League Backgrounder, URL: <[http://www.adl.org/presrele/teror\\_92/2690\\_92.html](http://www.adl.org/presrele/teror_92/2690_92.html)>, accessed 25 June 1999.

account the demands and viewpoints of terrorist organizations and their supporters. The proposed definition, as noted, draws a distinction between terrorism and guerrilla warfare at both the conceptual and moral levels. If properly applied, it could challenge organizations that are presently involved in terrorism to abandon it so as to engage exclusively in guerrilla warfare.<sup>172</sup>

Mr. Ganor goes on to point out that because international convention makes no distinction between terrorist and guerrilla attacks, potential terrorists offer far greater political impact while generally posing much less physical risk to the militants.<sup>173</sup>

The proposed ban on fundraising for terrorist organizations is noteworthy as well: [...] money is fungible. It is virtually impossible to determine the final destination or ultimate use of a contribution -- notwithstanding the donor's good intent. Many terrorist organizations, including Hamas, Islamic Jihad, and Hezbollah, do perform a variety of social service functions, which, in turn, enhance their credibility and political strength with their constituency. There is no way to know whether these financial contributions go towards a kindergarten or terrorist activities.<sup>174</sup>

Hamas' reaction to the ban on fundraising has been predictably negative:

It is clear that the American authorities, under the pressure of the Jewish-Zionist Lobby, fight the Islamic activity in the U. S. and especially the one dedicated to serve the Palestinian people socially and culturally. They do this under a claim, which so far they have failed to prove, that American finance goes to Hamas and other Palestinian organizations in the Territories through foundations for Islamic activity in the U. S.<sup>175</sup>

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<sup>172</sup>Boaz Ganor, "Defining Terrorism: Is One Man's Terrorist Another Man's Freedom Fighter?" The International Policy Institute for Counter-Terrorism, URL: <<http://www.ict.org>>, accessed 29 June 1999.

<sup>173</sup>Boaz Ganor, "Defining Terrorism: Is One Man's Terrorist Another Man's Freedom Fighter?"

<sup>174</sup>"The Omnibus Counterterrorism Act," 11 March 1996, Anti-Defamation League Backgrounder.

<sup>175</sup>Mahmoud Khatib, "American Law against the Islamic Activity," *Filastin al-Muslimah*, June 1998, Translated by Reuven Paz, URL: <<http://www.ict.org>>, accessed 28 June 1999.

Fostering peace and economic stability in the Middle East is a perennial theme for U.S. policy makers. U.S. policies on terrorism are inherently defensive and reactive. Although preemptive strikes against terrorists do occur, they carry considerable political risk. The U.S. cruise-missile attacks in the Sudan serve as a recent example.<sup>176</sup> The Israelis, however, have not been so reserved in this regard.

## ISRAELI COUNTERTERROR POLICY

Any meaningful discussion of the Middle Eastern peace process must be examined within the strategic context of the Israeli campaign against terrorism. Israeli policies are, after all, often what the terrorist organizations are reacting to and trying to influence. Israeli responses to terrorist attacks have tended to be somewhat general. “The Israelis also customarily raze the homes of Arabs on the occupied West Bank whose relatives have been implicated in terrorist attacks [...] in the hope that such retaliation will serve as a check on terrorist activities.”<sup>177</sup> Although Israel’s policies have their international critics, Israel has, in a sense, used the terrorists’ own tactic of attacking non-threatening targets against them. Whether or not one agrees with Israel’s official policies towards terrorism, it could be argued that the policies have certainly done more to unite Arabs in general than was probably ever intended.

Israel’s operational **counterterrorist** activities consist of offensive measures -- focusing on the **pre-attack** organizational or planning stages; defensive measures -- which attempt to disrupt an attack that is underway; and punitive measures -- “legal activity, which is aimed at punishment of the planners and the operatives of terror attacks, as well

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<sup>176</sup>Jane Perlez, “In Sudan, Furor and a Warning Amid the Ruins,” *The New York Times*, 22 August 1998, Final Ed., A1.

<sup>177</sup>Livingston, 122.

as the supporters of terrorist organizations. “<sup>178</sup> The punitive measures could presumably take place well after an attack was completed. Preemptive strikes against terrorist targets do not necessarily fit neatly into a particular category -- they could be offensive, defensive, or punitive, depending upon the circumstances and the timing.

Boaz Ganor, of The International Policy Institute for Counter-Terrorism, points out that -- within the context of Israeli - PLO negotiations in the mid-90s -- “[i]f gains in the negotiations are viewed by Palestinian Arabs as the result of rising Islamic fundamentalist terrorism, this will produce an even greater incentive to adhere to terrorism as a method of doing business.” Ganor further calls for a new strategy against terrorism, recognizing the need for “public stamina in coping with terror.” He considers public morale to be the critical factor in the fight against terrorism.

Ganor maintains that the strategy should include: “Rigorous enforcement of the obligation of the PLO leadership to oppose terrorism; refusal to release imprisoned terrorist-murderers; aggressive action against terror groups; and the nurturing of international cooperation in the war against terrorism.”<sup>79</sup> Ganor highlights the importance of public education concerning terrorism, separating terrorist issues from political agendas, and the role played by the media “[t]he news media must also be mobilized in the struggle; limiting interviews with terrorists or their leaders will make it difficult for them to convey their message to the civilian population, thus disrupting their war of morale.” The point that counterterrorist strategy should not be politicized by the media -- even though terrorism sells papers and attracts viewers -- is an important one.

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<sup>178</sup>Boaz Ganor, “Israeli Counter-Terrorist Activity,” The International Policy Institute for Counter-Terrorism, URL: <<http://www.ict.org.il/>>, accessed 25 June 1999,

<sup>179</sup>Boaz Ganor, “A New Strategy Against the New Terror,” The International Policy Institute for Counter-Terrorism, Reprinted from *Policy View*, The Shalem Center - National Policy Institute, No. 10, January, 1995, URL:<<http://www.ict.org.il/>>, accessed 25 June 1999.

The point might also be made that the very act of making counterterrorism a national priority actually accomplishes one of the primary goals of a terrorist organization -- drawing attention to their struggle. And finally, Ganor calls for a “universal, normative and binding definition of terrorism” to facilitate international cooperation against terrorism.<sup>180</sup>

## ARAB COUNTERTERROR POLICY

On 22 April 1998, representatives of the 22 member states of the League of Arab States signed an unprecedented Accord to fight terrorism and extremism. The Secretary of the League described the signing as a unique achievement. The main principles and terms of the Accord follow:

The Main Principles Of The Accord:

1. Commitment to high moral and religious principles, above all the rules of the Islamic Shari' a and the human heritage of the Arab Nation, which condemns violence and terrorism and stresses the defense of human rights and cooperation between societies for the sake of peace.
2. Commitment to the rules of the covenant of the League of Arab States, of the UN, International Law and all other related international agreements. These are all the wellspring of international society in its pursuit of peace and security for all.
3. Differentiation between terrorist crimes and the struggle against foreign occupation and aggression, according to the principles of International Law.
4. Intensification of the Arab cooperation and coordination in the judicial security fields, and the creation of a common ground for this coordination by accepted bases to the judicial means of operations.
5. Coordination between the terms of this accord and the laws and steps taken by every individual state, in order to fulfill the common national aims of this accord.<sup>181</sup>

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<sup>180</sup>Boaz Ganor, “A New Strategy Against the New Terror.”

<sup>181</sup>Reuven Paz, “April 22, 1998 Arab League States sign an accord to fight Terrorism and Extremism,” The International Policy Institute for Counter-Terrorism, URL:<<http://www.ict.org.il/>>, accessed 25 June 1999.

The first principle is an appeal to age-old Islamic law, but the second principle emphasizes a commitment to international law -- not a universally attractive proposition to many fundamentalist Muslims. The third principle -- distinguishing between "terrorist" crimes and struggles against "foreign occupation and aggression" gives them their "wiggle room." This is the principle that a state caught sponsoring terrorism might use as an excuse for its actions. The fourth principle aims at Arab interstate cooperation and the fifth seems to broaden the cooperation and coordination effort to include the rest of the world, although this is not completely clear.

The Main Terms Of The Accord:

1. The members of the League commit themselves not to use their lands as an arena for planning, organizing or carrying out terrorist crimes of any kind nor take part in such activity. This includes the prevention of infiltration of terrorist elements into their lands or the sojourn upon them of individuals as well as groups, nor accommodation, training, finance, arms or any other assistance.
2. The members of the League, mainly those which have common borders, commit themselves to coordinate the means of Counter-Terrorism, including the arrest of terrorists and bringing them to judgment according to their national laws, or surrendering them according to this accord or bilateral accords.
3. The exchange of information, researches and experience among the members of the League, and conducting of common training courses in order to promote the scientific and practical abilities of those who work in the field of Counter-Terrorism.
4. The extradition of prisoners or detainees of terrorist nature who are wanted by any other state member of the League, in accordance with accepted and defined rules. The appeals for extradition should be exchanged between the concerned officials directly or through the Justice Ministries or the diplomatic channels.
5. Every state has the right to ask another state to take in its place the necessary legal measures related to Terrorism on its lands. The Member States of the League also commit themselves to give the other states all the possible assistance needed in the investigations or the trials of Terrorist nature.
6. Terrorists should be tried according to the national law or extradited according to this accord or the bilateral accords between the two states involved.<sup>182</sup>

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<sup>182</sup>Reuven Paz, "April 22, 1998 Arab League States sign an accord to fight Terrorism and Extremism."

Although the terms seem substantive, it is not immediately apparent whether or not the intent is to foster exchanges between the signatories of the Accord exclusively or whether the rest of the world is to be included. Whether or not real progress -- even between the signatories-- will actually be made remains to be seen. Additionally, “progress” made among the Arab states might not translate readily to “progress” for the Middle East peace process. Enough significant rifts exist between many of the Arab states to make close cooperation between themselves in combating terrorism, or on any substantive issue, an unlikely prospect in the near term, signed accords notwithstanding.

Nonetheless, Martin S. Indyk, Assistant Secretary for Near Eastern Affairs, stated recently:

In the Middle East, as in the rest of the world, we stand on the threshold of a new millennium. But this region finds itself caught between its turbulent, conflict-ridden past and a future of greater peace, stability, prosperity, and popular participation. It is not yet clear which direction the Middle East will take because the indicators are mixed.

The difficulties in the Arab-Israeli peace process on all tracks over the past 2 1/2 years had the effect of dramatically slowing the momentum toward positive change in the region, and it reduced the hopes of many that a comprehensive peace would usher in a new era of coexistence and regional cooperation. Last month, however, the Israeli people voted for change, and Prime Minister-elect Ehud **Barak** now has a strong mandate to continue the search for a comprehensive Arab-Israeli peace. <sup>\*83</sup>

In spite of Secretary Indyk’s optimism, fighting between Lebanese Hizballah and Israel recently escalated sharply: Outgoing Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu ordered an air bombing of two Beirut power plants and bridges along Lebanon’s coastal highway after about two dozen Katyusha rockets and mortars were fired into northern Israel. Prime Minister-elect **Barak** was, apparently, not consulted prior to the retaliatory strikes.

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<sup>183</sup>Martin S. Indyk, “United States Policy Toward the Middle East,” Testimony to the House International Relations Committee, 8 June 1999, URL: <[http://www.state.gov/www/policy\\_remarks/1999/990608\\_indyk\\_mepolicy.html](http://www.state.gov/www/policy_remarks/1999/990608_indyk_mepolicy.html)>, accessed 28 June 1999.

“The flare-up seemed likely to cloud recent optimism generated by reports that President Hafez Assad of Syria and Israel’s Prime Minister-elect, Ehud Barak, are determined to resume negotiations on a peace agreement that would settle the long poisonous Lebanese-Israeli border conflict aswell.”<sup>184</sup>

It is accepted axiom today that the cooperation on the bilateral, regional and international levels is essential in preventing and neutralizing not only international terrorism, but also internal terrorism in many countries. [...] Without a sincere and close cooperation between the various countries in the intelligence field, everyone will become at one time or another [a] victim of terrorism, and examples of the past are well known. There is urgent need for an international legislation concerning terrorism. <sup>185</sup>

Optimistic forecasts to the contrary, whether or not a lasting Arab-Israeli peace is possible in the near future might best be scrutinized under the optic of an economic-social-political-religious-historical model. This leads, I believe, to a well-founded pessimism regarding the likelihood of peace in the region.

## CONCLUSIONS

Hizballah and Hamas may currently be operating at levels well below their destructive potential. Linking their interests to regional political and economic stability, whenever possible, may help. This is not always possible, however, especially when some of the leaders may have a built-in resistance to change. Some scholars argue

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<sup>184</sup>Lee Hockstader, “Israeli Bombs Hit Targets Near Beirut,” *The Washington Post*, 25 June 1999, Final Ed., A21.

<sup>185</sup>Dr. Ely Karmon, “Intelligence and the Challenge of Terrorism in the 21 st Century,” November 3, 1998, The International Policy Institute for Counter-Terrorism, URL: <<http://www.ict.org.ii/>>, accessed 25 June 1999.

convincingly, though, that “the opportunity to participate tends to encourage pragmatism and compromise.”<sup>186</sup>

There is no doubt that Hizballah and Hamas have managed to set aside their differences from time to time to do battle with Israel -- in political and in operational modes. Whether or not systemic measures are in place to make this a routine procedure is still debatable. Although direct organizational liasons between Hizballah and Hamas are maintained, the strongest link by far is Iran. The strength of this somewhat indirect link through Iran may, paradoxically, discourage the development of more direct links between the groups themselves.

Predicting a terrorist attack is like predicting an avalanche -- maybe harder. An analyst can predict the *likelihood* of an attack, but it is almost impossible to pinpoint where and when it will occur. Additionally, the sheer number of members in organizations such as Hizballah and Hamas, and the fact that most of them operate in somewhat autonomous cells could result in attacks not officially condoned by the group's leadership. It is also important for analysts to recognize that, although some terrorists may be motivated by idealism, many of their attacks have very pragmatic, politically achievable goals. Perhaps equally important is the concept that the identity of the state sponsors of terrorism -- whether Iran or Syria -- or of the identity of the terrorist groups -- whether it is the Muslim Brotherhood, or Hamas, or Islamic Jihad -- is not necessarily as important as understanding the conditions that lead to terrorism and the structure and operational characteristics of the groups.

What matters most in the region is not so much which terrorist groups are doing what at this specific moment, or what key leaders are up to -- although that is of genuine concern -- but the progress of the Middle East Peace process. Hizballah and Hamas have

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<sup>186</sup>Augustus Richard Norton, “Hizballah: From Radicalism to Pragmatism?” *Middle East Policy*, 5, no. 4 (January 1998): 156.

both done much to undermine regional peace and stability and the groups that follow them may prove to be just as effective. But the *peace process* needs to be maintained by every available means. Both Hizballah and Hamas have adjusted their operations according to political and tactical realities and both groups have demonstrated an ability to survive in spite of the fact that they often face fairly overwhelming odds. They have managed, by means of clever spin-control, and legitimate grievances, to whip up a very dangerous core of militants who are virtually unstoppable -- especially in their suicide bombing role.

Stopping suicide bombers is a difficult task, but influencing the mindset that leads to suicide bombings is infinitely more difficult. "There being no way to overwhelm a terrorist --who always maintains the advantage of tactical surprise-- massing force makes no sense at all. In contrast, terrorists are dispersed, hard to trace, and assimilated into local society, and so deny U.S. forces a center of gravity to attack." <sup>187</sup> For counterterrorism to be effective, analysts must get inside the decision making cycle of the terrorists. Intelligence analysis should be predictive and proactive, not reactive; however the terrorist's ability to choose the time and place for an attack is an enormous tactical advantage that the best intelligence and technology will never completely overcome.

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<sup>187</sup>Anthony E. Mitchell, "Policy Brief Protecting American Soldiers in the Persian Gulf," *Middle East Quarterly*, Volume V, Number 2 (June 1998): 6.

APPENDIX A:  
AN OPEN LETTER: THE **HIZBALLAH** PROGRAM

The following description of Hizballah was extracted from The International Policy Institute for Counter-Terrorism Internet site titled “An Open Letter: The Hizballah Program” at URL: <<http://www.ict.org>. ii/>, on 16 June 1999.

## An Open Letter The **Hizballah** Program

The Jerusalem Quarterly, number Forty-Eight, Fall 1988.

This is a slightly abridged translation of "Nass al-Risala al-Maftuha allati wajahaha Hizballah ila-l-Mustad'afin fi Lubnan wa-l-Alam", published February 16, 1985 in al-Safir (Beirut), and also in a separate brochure. It carries the unmistakable imprint of Sheikh Muhammad Hussein Fadlallah, the Hizballah mentor, and is inspired by his book Ma'maal-Quwma fi-l-Islam (Beirut 1979). See also his article in al-Muntalak (Beirut), October 1986.

### Our Identity

We are often asked: Who are we, the Hizballah, and what is our identity? We are the sons of the **umma** (Muslim community) - the party of God (Hizb Allah) the vanguard of which was made victorious by God in Iran. There the vanguard succeeded to lay down the bases of a Muslim state which plays a central role in the world. We obey the orders of one leader, wise and just, that of our tutor and **faqih** (jurist) who fulfills all the necessary conditions: Ruhollah Musawi Khomeini. God save him!

By virtue of the above, we do not constitute an organized and closed party in Lebanon. nor are we a tight political cadre. We are an **umma** linked to the Muslims of the whole world by the solid doctrinal and religious connection of Islam, whose message God wanted to be fulfilled by the Seal of the Prophets, i.e., Muhammad. This is why whatever touches or strikes the Muslims in Afghanistan, Iraq, the Philippines and elsewhere reverberates throughout the whole Muslim **umma** of which we are an integral part. Our behavior is dictated to us by legal principles laid down by the light of an overall political conception defined by the leading jurist (**wilayat al-faqih**).

As for our culture, it is based on the Holy Koran, the **Sunna** and the legal rulings of the **faqih** who is our source of imitation (**marja' al-taqlid**). Our culture is crystal clear. It is not complicated and is accessible to all.

No one can imagine the importance of our military potential as our military apparatus is not separate from our overall social fabric. Each of us is a fighting soldier. And when it becomes necessary to carry out the Holy War, each of us takes up his assignment in the fight in accordance with the injunctions of the Law, and that in the framework of the mission carried out under the tutelage of the Commanding Jurist.

### Our Fight

The US has tried, through its local agents, to persuade the people that those who crushed their arrogance in Lebanon and frustrated their conspiracy against the oppressed (**mustad'afin**) were nothing but a bunch of fanatic terrorists whose sole aim is to dynamite

bars and destroy slot machines. Such suggestions cannot and will not mislead our umma, for the whole world knows that whoever wishes to oppose the US, that arrogant superpower, cannot indulge in marginal acts which may make it deviate from its major objective. We combat abomination and we shall tear out its very roots, its primary roots, which are the US. All attempts made to drive us into marginal actions will fail, especially as our determination to fight the US is solid.

We declare openly and loudly that we are an umma which fears God only and is by no means ready to tolerate injustice, aggression and humiliation. America, its Atlantic Pact allies, and the Zionist entity in the holy land of Palestine, attacked us and continue to do so without respite. Their aim is to make us eat dust continually. This is why we are, more and more, in a state of permanent alert in order to repel aggression and defend our religion, our existence, our dignity. They invaded our country, destroyed our villages, slit the throats of our children, violated our sanctuaries and appointed masters over our people who committed the worst massacres against our **umma**. They do not cease to give **support** to these allies of Israel, and do not enable us to decide our future according to our own wishes.

In a single night the Israelis and the **Phalangists** executed thousands of our sons, women and children in **Sabra** and **Shatilla**. No international organization protested or denounced this ferocious massacre in an effective manner, a massacre perpetrated with the tacit accord of America's European allies, which had retreated a few days, maybe even a few hours earlier, from the Palestinian camps. The Lebanese defeatists accepted putting the camps under the protection of that **crafty** fox, the US envoy Philip Habib.

We have no alternative but to confront aggression by sacrifice. The coordination between the **Phalangists** and Israel continues and develops. A hundred thousand victims - this is the approximate balance sheet of crimes committed by them and by the US against us. Almost half a million Muslims were forced to leave their homes. Their quarters were virtually totally destroyed in Nab'a, my own Beirut suburb, as well as in Burj Hammud, Dekonaneh, Tel Zaatar, Sinbay, **Ghawarina** and **Jubeil** - all in areas controlled today by the 'Lebanese Forces',. The Zionist occupation then launched its **usurpatory** invasion of Lebanon in full and open collusion with the Phalanges. The latter condemned all attempts **to** resist the invading forces. They participated in the implementation of certain Israeli plans in order to accomplish its Lebanese dream and acceded to all Israeli requests in order to gain power.

And this is, in fact, what happened. **Bashir Jumayyil**, that butcher, seized power with the help also of OPEC countries and the **Jumayyil** family. **Bashir** tried to improve his ugly image by joining the six-member Committee of Public Safety presided over by former President Elias Sarkis, which **was** nothing but an American-Israeli bridge borrowed by the **Phalangists** in order to control the oppressed. Our people could not tolerate humiliation any more. It destroyed the oppressors, the invaders and their lackeys. But the US persisted in its folly and installed **Arnin Jumayyil** to replace his brother. Some of his

first so called achievements were to destroy the homes of refugees and other displaced persons, attack mosques, and order the army to bombard the southern suburbs of Beirut, where the oppressed people resided. He invited European troops to help him against us and signed the May 17th, [1984] accord with Israel making Lebanon an American protectorate.

Our people could not bear any more treachery. It decided to oppose infidelity -be it French, American or Israeli -by striking at their headquarters and launching a veritable war of resistance against the Occupation forces. Finally, the enemy had to decide to retreat by stages.

### Our Objectives

Let us put it truthfully: the sons of Hiz[...b]allah know who are their major enemies in the Middle East - the Phalanges, Israel, France and the US. The sons of our umma are now in a state of growing confrontation with them, and will remain so until the realization of the following three objectives:

- (a) to expel the Americans, the French and their allies definitely from Lebanon, putting an end to any colonialist entity on our land;
- (b) to submit the Phalanges to a just power and bring them all to justice for the crimes they have perpetrated against Muslims and Christians;
- (c) to permit all the sons of our people to determine their future and to choose in all the liberty the form of government they desire. We call upon all of them to pick the option of Islamic government which, alone, is capable of guaranteeing justice and liberty for all. Only an Islamic regime can stop any further tentative attempts of imperialistic infiltration into our country.

These are Lebanon's objectives; those are its enemies. As for our friends, they are all the worlds oppressed peoples. Our friends are also those who combat our enemies and who defend us from their evil. Towards these friends, individuals as well as organizations, we turn and say: Friends, wherever you are in Lebanon... we are in agreement with you on the great and necessary objectives: destroying American hegemony in our land; putting an end to the burdensome Israeli Occupation; beating back all thePhalangists' attempts to monopolize power and administration,

Even though we have, friends, quite different viewpoints as to the means of the struggle, on the levels upon which it must be carried out, we should surmount these tiny divergencies and consolidate cooperation between us in view of the grand design.

We are an umma which adheres to the message of Islam. We want all the oppressed to be able to study the divine message in order to bring justice, peace and tranquility to the world. This is why we don't want to impose Islam upon anybody, as much as we that others impose upon us their convictions and their political systems. We don't want Islam to reign in Lebanon by force as is the case with the Maronites today. This is the minimum that we can accept in order to be able to accede by legal means to realize our ambitions,

to save Lebanon from its dependence upon East and West, to put an end to foreign occupation and to adopt a regime freely wanted by the people of Lebanon.

This is our perception of the present state of affairs. This is the Lebanon we envision. In the light of our conceptions, our opposition to the present system is the function of two factors; (1) the present regime is the product of an arrogance so unjust that no reform or modification can remedy it. It should be changed radically, and (2) World Imperialism which is hostile to Islam.

We consider that all opposition in Lebanon voiced in the name of reform can only profit, ultimately, the present system. All such opposition which operates within the framework of the conservation and safeguarding of the present constitution without demanding changes at the level of the very foundation of the regime is, hence, an opposition of pure formality which cannot satisfy the interests of the oppressed masses. Likewise, any opposition which confronts the present regime but within the limits fixed by it, is an illusory opposition which renders a great service to the Jumayyil system. Moreover, we cannot be concerned by any proposition of political reform which accepts the rotten system actually in effect. We could not care less about the creation of this or that governmental coalition or about the participation of this or that political personality in some ministerial post, which is but a part of this unjust regime.

The politics followed by the chiefs of political Maronism through the 'Lebanese Front' and the 'Lebanese Forces' cannot guarantee peace and tranquility for the Christians of Lebanon, whereas it is predicated upon 'asabiyya (narrow-minded particularism), on confessional privileges and on the alliance with colonialism. The Lebanese crisis has proven that confessional privileges are one of the principal causes of the great explosion which ravaged the country. It also proved that outside help was of no use to the Christians of Lebanon, just when they need it most. The bell tolled for the fanatic Christians to rid themselves of denominational allegiance and of illusion deriving from the monopolization of privileges to the detriment of other communities. The Christians should answer the appeal from heaven and have recourse to reason instead of arms, to persuasion instead of **confessionalism**.

To the Christians

If you, Christians, cannot tolerate that Muslims share with you certain domains of government, Allah has also made it intolerable for Muslims to participate in an unjust regime, unjust for you and for us, in a regime which is not predicated upon the prescriptions (**ahkam**) of religion and upon the basis of the Law (the Shari'a) as laid down by Muhammad, the Seal of the Prophets. If you search for justice, who is more just than Allah? It is He who sent down from the sky the message of Islam through his successive prophets in order that they judge the people and give everyone his rights. If you were deceived and misled into believing that we anticipate vengeance against you - your fears are unjustified. For those of you who are peaceful, continue to live in our midst without anybody even thinking to trouble you.

We don't wish you evil. We call upon you to embrace Islam so that you can be happy in this world and the next. If you refuse to adhere to Islam, maintain your ties with the Muslims and don't take part in any activity against them. Free yourselves from the consequences of hateful **confessionalism**. Banish from your hearts all fanaticism and parochialism. Open your hearts to our Call (da'wa) which we address to you. Open yourselves up to Islam where you'll find salvation and happiness upon earth and in the hereafter. We extend this invitation also to all the oppressed among the non-Muslims. As for those who belong to Islam only formally, we exhort them to adhere to Islam in religious practice and to renounce all fanaticisms which are rejected by our religion.

### World Scene

We reject both the USSR and the US, both Capitalism and Communism, for both are incapable of laying the foundations for a just society.

With special vehemence we reject UNIFIL as they were sent by world arrogance to occupy areas evacuated by Israel and serve for the latter as a buffer zone. They should be treated much like the Zionists. All should know that the goals of the **Phalangists** regime do not carry any weight with the Combatants of the Holy War, i.e., the Islamic resistance. This is the quagmire which awaits all foreign intervention.

There, then, are our conceptions and our objectives which serve as our basis and inspire our march. Those who accept them should know that all rights belong to Allah and He bestows them. Those who reject them, we'll be patient with them, till Allah decides between us and the people of injustice.

### The Necessity for the Destruction of Israel (See ICT Note)

We see in Israel the vanguard of the United States in our Islamic world. It is the hated enemy that must be fought until the hated ones get what they deserve. This enemy is the greatest danger to our future generations and to the destiny of our lands, particularly as it glorifies the ideas of settlement and expansion, initiated in Palestine, and yearning outward to the extension of the Great Israel, from the Euphrates to the Nile.

Our primary assumption in our fight against Israel states that the Zionist entity is aggressive from its inception, and built on lands wrested from their owners, at the expense of the rights of the Muslim people. Therefore our struggle will end only when this entity is obliterated. We recognize no treaty with it, no cease fire, and no peace agreements, whether separate or consolidated.

We vigorously condemn all plans for negotiation with Israel, and regard all negotiators as enemies, for the reason that such negotiation is nothing but the recognition of the legitimacy of the Zionist occupation of Palestine. Therefore we oppose and reject the Camp David Agreements, the proposals of King **Fahd**, the Fez and Reagan plan, Brezhnev's and the French-Egyptian proposals, and all other programs that include the recognition (even the implied recognition) of the Zionist entity.

ICT note: This paragraph did not appear in the original translation published by the Jerusalem Quarterly. It is possible that this [.. omission] is due to the fact that the source (al-Safir) for the translation did not include this text, which appears in the original Hizballah Program. The original Program was published on 16 February 1985. The organization's spokesman, Sheikh Ibrahim al-Amin read the Program at the al-Ouzai Mosque in west Beirut and afterwards it was published as an open letter "to all the [... Oppressed] in Lebanon and the World'. It should be[...emphasized] that none of Hizballah's web sites have published the full text of the organization's program, and they prefer to publish the 1996 [..electoral] program which was intended for the specific [...propaganda] campaign before the Lebanese Parliamentary elections in 1996.

APPENDIX B:  
THE COVENANT OF THE HAMAS: MAIN POINTS

The following description of Hamas was extracted from the Information Division, Israel Foreign Ministry Internet site titled "The Covenant of the HAMAS: Main Points" at URL: <<http://www.jcrc.org/main/hamas1.htm>> on 3 June 1999.

## THE COVENANT OF THE HAMAS - MAIN POINTS

The Covenant of the Islamic Resistance Movement was issued on August 18, 1988. The Islamic Resistance Movement, also known as the HAMAS, is an extremist fundamentalist Islamic organization operating in the territories under Israeli control. Its Covenant is a comprehensive manifesto comprised of 36 separate articles, all of which promote the basic HAMAS goal of destroying the State of Israel through Jihad (Islamic Holy War). The following are excerpts of the HAMAS Covenant:

### Goals of the HAMAS:

“The Islamic Resistance Movement is a distinguished Palestinian movement, whose allegiance is to Allah, and whose way of life is Islam. It strives to raise the banner of Allah over every inch of Palestine.” (Article 6)

### On the Destruction of Israel:

“Israel will exist and will continue to exist until Islam will obliterate it, just as it obliterated others before it.” (Preamble)

### The Exclusive Moslem Nature of the Area:

“The land of Palestine is an Islamic **Waqf** [Holy Possession] consecrated for future Moslem generations until Judgment Day. No one can renounce it or any part, or abandon it or any part of it.” (Article 11)

“Palestine is an Islamic land... Since this is the case, the Liberation of Palestine is an individual duty for every Moslem wherever he may be.” (Article 13)

### The Call to **Jihad**:

“The day the enemies usurp part of Moslem land, **Jihad** becomes the individual duty of every Moslem. In the face of the Jews’ usurpation, it is compulsory that the banner of **Jihad** be raised.” (Article 15)

“Ranks will close, fighters joining other fighters, and masses everywhere in the Islamic world will come forward in response to the call of duty, loudly proclaiming: ‘Hail to Jihad!’. This cry will reach the heavens and will go on being resounded until liberation is achieved, the invaders vanquished and Allah’s victory comes about.” (Article 33)

### Rejection of a Negotiated Peace Settlement:

“[Peace] initiatives, and so-called peaceful solutions and international conferences are in contradiction to the principles of the Islamic Resistance Movement... Those conferences are no more than a means to appoint the infidels as arbitrators in the lands of Islam... There is no solution for the Palestinian problem except by **Jihad**. Initiatives, proposals and international conferences are but a waste of time, an exercise in futility.” (Article 13)

### Condemnation of the Israel-Egypt Peace Treaty:

“Egypt was, to a great extent, removed from the circle of struggle [against Zionism] through the treacherous Camp David Agreement. The Zionists are trying to draw other

Arab countries into similar agreements in order to bring them outside the circle of struggle. . . . Leaving the circle of struggle against Zionism is high treason, and cursed be he who perpetrates such an act.” (Article 32)

**Anti-Semitic Incitement:**

“The Day of Judgment will not come about until Moslems fight Jews and kill them. Then, the Jews will hide behind rocks and trees, and the rocks and trees will cry out: ‘O Moslem, there is a Jew hiding behind me, come and kill him.’” (Article 7)

“The enemies have been scheming for a long time... and have accumulated huge and influential material wealth. With their money, they took control of the world media... With their money they stirred revolutions in various parts of the globe... They stood behind the French Revolution, the Communist Revolution and most of the revolutions we hear about... With their money they formed secret organizations - such as the Freemasons, Rotary Clubs and the Lions - which are spreading around the world, in order to destroy societies and carry out Zionist interests... They stood behind World War 1 . . . and formed the League of Nations through which they could rule the world. They were behind World War II, through which they made huge financial gains... There is no war going on anywhere without them having their finger in it.” (Article 22)

“Zionism scheming has no end, and after Palestine, they will covet expansion from the Nile to the Euphrates River. When they have finished digesting the area on which they have laid their hand, they will look forward to more expansion. Their scheme has been laid out in the ‘Protocols of the Elders of Zion.’” (Article 32)

“The HAMAS regards itself the spearhead and the vanguard of the circle of struggle against World Zionism... Islamic groups all over the Arab world should also do the same, since they are best equipped for their future role in the fight against the warmongering Jews.” (Article 32).

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