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PSYCHOLOGICAL OPERATIONS AS THE DEFENCE TO SUICIDE BOMBING

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Syndicate 7
23 April 2009

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Abstract

This paper reviews existing scholarship on the subject of suicide terrorism in order to identify an effective defensive tactic. Review of the literature illustrates that little attention has been given to identifying a defence beyond attempts to profile likely suicide bombers. Further, what is evident is that the majority of authors thoroughly study one suicide group and then attempt to extrapolate conclusions to all suicide terror groups. This paper follows a different approach. From a review of all studied suicide groups, common characteristics were recognized and support for suicide terror from the local community was identified as the most likely target for attack. Defensive tactics currently employed were reviewed and their relative weaknesses exposed. Having identified the likely target for attack and having further identified its lawful limitations, psychological operations as the tactic to separate the community from the suicide group is argued as the defence to suicide bombing. The historic use of psychological operations in a counter-insurgency demonstrates the effectiveness of the tactic and this observation is reinforced by the present successful use of psychological operations by insurgents. The paper concludes by providing a strategy to battle insurgent rhetoric and proposes psychological operations messaging that will defend against suicide bombing.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

In 1983, a vehicle loaded with explosives detonated at a barracks housing US marines in Beirut.¹ In the aftermath, analysts attempted to theorize and articulate the possible motivations of suicide bombers but to little avail. Such efforts re-doubled after 9/11, and since then, as a consequence of the high incidence of suicide bombing that has attended the US invasion of Iraq. Although stating the obvious, the difficulty in clearly defining personalities and motivations of suicide bombers is that the successful suicide bomber is difficult to interview.

While academic literature is replete with theories and speculation on suicide bomber profiles, the common thread running through all works is the tendency to examine only one area of conflict where suicide bomb attacks have been used, then attempt to extrapolate that analysis and apply it to all forms of suicide bombing. The purpose of this thesis is neither to put forward a theoretical psychological profile, nor attempt to identify a suicide bomber's motivation. The purpose of this thesis is to examine whether an adequate defence to suicide bombing exists so as to avoid their full force or effect.

The present defensive approach to suicide attack includes the pre-emptive killing of the suicide bomber before he/she is able to detonate. One method of deducing a defence beyond such a tactical last resort is analogous to one of the methods used to

¹Nurit Kliot and Igal Charney, "The geography of suicide terrorism in Israel," *GeoJournal* 66, (2006): 357-358; <http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?index=0&did=1200939141&SrchMode=1&sid=12&Fmt=6&VInst=PROD&VType=PQD&RQT=309&VName=PQD&TS=1237850361&clientId=1711> ; Internet; accessed 13 February 2008.

design a vaccine to fight infection. Many vaccine design research labs have sufficient resources to screen every possible vaccine target for an assessment of efficiency as a vaccine candidate. This method is costly in funds and time and lacks both efficiency and analytical rigour. Another method is to first assess the nature of the potential vaccine targets and to then attack the vaccine target common to all forms of the particular infection.

The method used here in identifying the defence to suicide bombing is analogous as it, as well, begins with identifying the key commonalities with suicide bombing throughout the world and, once identified, assesses the appropriate strategy. Such a methodology has the advantage of ensuring effort and funds are expended on what is assessed as likely to be effective and, further, is the product of analysis as opposed to random chance.

One can conclude that there are certain commonalities present among all suicide attacks, such as the political motivation of a national independence or national recognition,² the effective use of media as well as a community of support. Given that suicide attacks continue regardless of present attempts at suicide bombing defence, undermining the motivation of potential suicide bombers and diminishing the support of the community is the most effective weapon. In short, the defence to suicide bombing is the use of psychological operations aimed at undermining community support for suicide attacks.

²National independence includes, for purposes of this definition, the desire to create a Caliphate as desired by elements of Salafi Muslim extremists.

Before continuing, defining how suicide bombing or suicide attacks are considered in this analysis is necessary. The parent strategy, terrorism, is either a strategy of coercion where violence is used to convince a state to alter a position or a strategy of supporting political mobilization.³ Suicide bombing, the chosen tactic of the weak against the strong, is a form of demonstrative terrorism,⁴ a form of terrorism that is directed primarily at gaining publicity or attention for purposes such as garnering world attention, recruiting other terrorists or persuading the opposition to alter any form of specific policy.⁵ The suicide bomber attacks in a manner that kills oneself as a component of the attack plan. This differs from the stories of the soldier fighting to the last man as a delaying tactic so that his comrades may escape from a firefight. The principal intent of the soldier is to fight with a hope that he/she may live. In contrast, a suicide bomber's intent is to die; to survive the attack would be a failure. Combat soldiers may initiate and continue firefights with certain knowledge that his/her actions may cause their death but the intent is to, if at all possible, survive to fight another day.⁶

³ Hoffman, Bruce and McCormick, Gordon H. "Terrorism, Signaling, and Suicide Attack" *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 27, (2004): 245-246; <http://web.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdf?vid=3&hid=106&sid=866a1277-e53d-429d-9ab3-3d4420750f7c%40sessionmgr103>; Internet; accessed 19 January 2009.

⁴Robert A. Pape, "The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism." *The American Political Science Review* 97, no. 3 (Aug 2003): 345; <http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?index=38&did=1195355231&SrchMode=1&sid=17&Fmt=6&VInst=PROD&VType=PQD&RQT=309&VName=PQD&TS=1237850965&clientId=1711>; Internet; accessed 11 February 2008.

⁵See also Hoffman, Bruce and McCormick, Gordon H. "Terrorism, Signaling, and Suicide Attack," 243-281 for further discussion of suicide attacks and strategic "signaling".

⁶See also James Dingley and Marcello Mollica, "The Human Body as a Terrorist Weapon: Hunger Strikes and Suicide Bombers" *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 30, (2007): 459-460; <http://web.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdf?vid=3&hid=106&sid=866a1277-e53d-429d-9ab3-3d4420750f7c%40sessionmgr103>; Internet; accessed 19 January 2009 for a discussion on the differing morality between soldiers and suicide bombers.

Using this definition, Kamikaze pilots of World War II fit the definition of suicide bombers and literature has recognized them as such.⁷

Suicide bombing is a highly effective guided weapon as the suicide bomber has the ability to choose the target and to either detonate when the bomber believes most advantageous or to back off for a more opportune time. Further, suicide bombing is an effective weapon when technologically overmatched as the cost to the terror group is low in both financial and military resources.⁸ Suicide bombers have attacked both civilian and military targets and they usually detonate their explosives by a hand-pulled detonator. Explosives may be worn as a belt or vest around the suicide bomber or may be carried in some form of land, air or water transport. Medical research has demonstrated that attacks in confined spaces caused more casualties than an attack in the open and, because of that, the most common cause of injury and death is overpressure from the explosive blast.⁹ That said, suicide terrorist groups have increased injuries from secondary blast injuries by adding small metal objects such as bolts to the explosive package.

As already mentioned, interviewing successful suicide bombers is simply impossible. Successful suicide bombers have left taped messages that provide both an explanation and justification for their suicide attack but the content of such messages do little to forward investigation into suicide bombing. Authors have interviewed a few

⁷ Terri Toles Patkin, "Explosive Baggage: Female Palestinian Suicide Bombers and the Rhetoric of Emotion." *Women and Language* 27, no. 2 (Fall 2004): 79; <http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?index=0&did=807871501&SrchMode=1&sid=18&Fmt=6&VInst=PROD&VType=PQD&RQT=309&VName=PQD&TS=1237851045&clientId=1711>; Internet; accessed 12 December 2008.

⁸ Hoffman, Bruce and McCormick, Gordon H. "Terrorism, Signaling, and Suicide Attack," 269.

⁹ Dr. Steven Marc Friedman, "The science and medicine of suicide bombing." *Canadian Jewish News* 35, no. 33 (August 18, 2005): 9; <http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?index=0&did=887712681&Srch>

individuals in prison that failed in their suicide mission due to either a failure in the bomb equipment or a change of heart. Other authors have interviewed family members and friends of a successful suicide bomber. Although limited by a prisoner's honesty or potential desire to state what might improve their situation or else limited by the extent of understanding by the family members left behind, such research is all that is available to shed light upon a suicide bomber's motivation. It is beyond the scope of this thesis to conduct similar interviews and, hence, the basis of analysis, findings and conclusions is a review of the existing literature supplemented with an Internet accessible database of terrorist attacks (<http://www.terrorisminfo.mipt.org/incidentcalendar.asp>). With the data available from previous research, the question arises as to whether a defence to suicide bombing can be deduced?

Psychological operations aimed at reducing community support for suicide attacks are the most effective defence to suicide terrorism. The commonalities of dominant groups that utilize suicide terrorism include a strong leadership, motivation for some form of statehood, effective use of the media for spread of the terrorist's messages and a community that supports suicide attacks. The defensive strategies presently available, from national legislation which attempts to prevent suicide terrorism through criminal investigation and prosecution, to targeted assassination of key terrorist leadership are not effective as demonstrated by suicide attacks that have occurred regardless of such initiatives. In short, the present initiatives are not the full answer. Psychological operations are the solution because the key defence to suicide attack is to convince potential suicide attackers to either resist recruitment efforts or to abandon their

suicide mission. The potential recruit's community is the best source of dissuasion from any such activity. Past lessons, including the realization that suicide terror groups are effectively using psychological operations to both recruit future suicide attackers and to garner public support, demonstrate that psychological operations as a defence to suicide terrorism is necessary to, at first, counter the terrorist's use of psychological operations and, subsequently, to gain the advantage in the battle for community support.

CHAPTER 2

THE WEAPON

In order to determine an effective defence to suicide bombing, and in order to identify the target for attack, an understanding of the disparate nature of worldwide suicide bombing is necessary. An understanding of the varied nature of suicide attacks assists in realizing that broad categorization is difficult and, further, that extrapolation of conclusions from psychological profiles and motivations of one suicide group to all other is presently impossible. However, once the commonalities of suicide attacks are understood, commonalities that include community support and strong leadership, the necessity for psychological operations as the weapon of choice becomes clear. Psychological operations defend against suicide bombing as such operations target the vulnerable community support in a manner acceptable at law. The need to attack any one of the commonalities, as would a vaccine against a commonality of an infection, is necessary but only community support serves as an effective candidate for defence to suicide terrorism. Killing key leadership will not serve as an effective defence and granting statehood to the terrorists is not politically acceptable. International law prohibits killing the community that supports terrorism and in fact such killing would approach genocide if continued to its full extent; thus, only non-kinetic targeting is permitted. A form of non-kinetic targeting, and the effective form in any insurgency, is psychological operations.

As identified by Kimhi and Even, a common error in the literature is an examination of one theatre of conflict that has generated suicide attacks and then an

attempt to extrapolate the findings and conclusions to all.¹⁰ Ironically, Mia Bloom's review of Kimhi and Even's article identifies that, even with the tendency of extrapolating conclusions obtained through a pipe-straw is well recognized, Kimhi and Even did exactly that.¹¹ The authors attempt to identify attacker profiles in a well-meaning way but critical review of the respective analyses illustrates that, in general, suicide attack profiles simply share little in common. Perhaps, in correction as argued by Lester, Yang and Lindsay, no psychological profile has been identified to date and that, perhaps, it is too early to submit that no such commonality exists.¹² Regardless of which argument is correct, the reality at present is that no commonality in profile has been identified. Further, contrary to earlier assessments that suicide bombers were "unstable individuals with a death wish,"¹³ psychologists who have studied suicide bombers captured before successfully completing their mission have discovered that suicide bombers are motivated and committed and that "these people are rational, logical, deliberate and deeply devoted to their cause."¹⁴ The difficulties of identifying and

¹⁰ Shaul Kimhi and Shemuel Even, "Who Are the Palestinian Suicide Bombers?" *Terrorism and Political Violence* 16, no. 4 (Winter 2004): 822; [http:// web.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdf?vid=3&hid=17&sid=d930e25d-2a39-4a0d-bc42-b25d61f78040%40sessionmgr3](http://web.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdf?vid=3&hid=17&sid=d930e25d-2a39-4a0d-bc42-b25d61f78040%40sessionmgr3); Internet; accessed 19 January 2009.

¹¹ Mia Bloom, "Response to "Who Are the Palestinian Suicide Bombers?"" *Terrorism and Political Violence* 16, no. 4 (Winter 2004): 849; <http://web.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdf?vid=3&hid=17&sid=d930e25d-2a39-4a0d-bc42-b25d61f78040%40sessionmgr3>; Internet; accessed 19 January 2009.

¹² Lester, David, Yang, Bijou and Lindsay, Mark. "Suicide Bombers: Are Psychological Profiles Possible?" *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 27, (2004): 283; [http:// web.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdf? vid=3&hid=106&sid=866a1277-e53d-429d-9ab3-3d4420750f7c%40sessionmgr103](http://web.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdf?vid=3&hid=106&sid=866a1277-e53d-429d-9ab3-3d4420750f7c%40sessionmgr103); Internet; accessed 19 January 2009.

¹³ Robert J Brym, and Bader Araj, "Suicide Bombing as Strategy and Interaction: The Case of the Second Intifada." *Social Forces* 84, no. 4 (June 2006): 1970; <http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?index=0&did=1066736511&SrchMode=1&sid=10&Fmt=6&VInst=PROD&VType=PQD&RQT=309&VName=PQD&TS=1237765723&clientId=1711> ; Internet; accessed 12 December 2008.

¹⁴ Anonymous. "The Fourth Wave" *Canada and the World Backgrounder* 67, no. 4 (January 2002): 10; <http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?index=0&did=109465502&SrchMode=1&sid=1&Fmt>

profiling a suicide terrorist therefore become extremely difficult if the assessment is that of an average person¹⁵ and, if no profile can be identified, no defence to suicide tactics can be based upon profile screening.

If no profile is common to all suicide bombers, other commonalities among suicide bombers must be identified for defensive exploitation. In order, then, to assess whether any common target for defence to suicide bombing exists, an understanding of the major groups of suicide bombers is necessary to allow further analysis of commonality, if any, and subsequent targeting. As with vaccine design, it is inefficient to attempt to attack suicide terrorism as an entity because efforts are expended without an assessment of likely efficiency. In other words, it is pointless to attempt to defend against all aspects of suicide terrorism as resources, including time, are limited. The effective defence to suicide terrorism will be that defence that affects a commonality of all suicide terrorist groups as such shared traits are an exploitable weakness. Identifiable commonalities of suicide terror groups include a desire for statehood as a motivation for suicide attacks, the use of the media, the goal or intent behind the use of the attack, strong leadership and, finally, the support of the community in which the suicide bombers live and operate. Of the identified commonalities, the support of the community is the most vulnerable and is where efforts of defence will prove the most efficient.

=6&VInst=PROD&VType=PQD&RQT=309&VName=PQD&TS=1237765395&clientId=1711; Internet; accessed 12 December 2008.

¹⁵See Robert J Brym, and Bader Araj, "Suicide Bombing as Strategy and Interaction: The Case of the Second Intifada" 1971 for discussion of the attempts at suicide attacker profiling by the Israelis.

WHO ARE SUICIDE BOMBERS?

Although community support for suicide terrorism is perhaps the most efficient target as a defence to suicide terrorism, it is also among the most difficult to attack. It would be far simpler if it were possible to simply target the suicide bomber well before he/she was able to detonate. Unfortunately, there is no identifiable commonality among suicide bombers. The terrorist groups that employ the tactic are diverse but, at the least, an understanding of their diversity is necessary to identify hidden commonalities.

Islamic Jihadists

Although 9/11 was an attack of civilian targets on US soil, 9/11 was not the first time the US was the victim of suicide attack. The US has previously been victimized by suicide attacks in Beirut in 1983 and the USS Cole in 2000. The more significant aspect of 9/11, however, is that the majority of suicide attacks worldwide since 2001 have been from groups that would fit within the broad category of Islamic Jihadists.¹⁶ Followers of this ideology are often an extreme offshoot of the Salafi doctrine and they follow their faith just as did the early Muslims. That said the extreme Salafis also use the faith of Islam to support their use of violence to achieve their political end-state.¹⁷ There is not

¹⁶ Nichole Argo, "The Role of Social Context in Terrorist Attacks.," *The Chronicle of Higher Education* 52, no. 22 (Feb 3, 2006): B19; <http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?index=6&did=999384261&SrchMode=1&sid=3&Fmt=3&VInt=PROD&VType=PQD&RQT=309&VName=PQD&TS=1237765457&clientId=1711> ; Internet; accessed 27 January 2009.

the scope to explore the Islamic Jihadist ideology within this research project but much of the recent literature has focused upon Al Qaeda and the Islamic Jihadist insurgency in Iraq.¹⁸ What is also clear is that Islamic Jihadist influences are evident in numerous insurgencies worldwide including Morocco¹⁹ and Afghanistan. The various factions within this broad group differ in many respects. A specific subset of this group, the Chechen suicide bomber, will be considered separately due to their unique nature among Islamic Jihadists.

Although the various Islamic Jihadist factions have many differences, one commonality is the view that the term “suicide attack” is inappropriate. Suicide is expressly condemned by the Quran:

And do not kill yourself, for God is merciful to you. Whoever kills himself with an iron weapon, then the iron weapon will remain in his hand and he will continually stab himself in the belly with it in the fire of hell eternally, forever and ever; whoever kills himself by drinking poison will eternally drink poison in the hellfire, and whoever kills himself by falling off a mountain will fall forever in the fire of hell.²⁰

¹⁷ Farhana Ali and Jerrold Post, “The History and Evolution of Martyrdom in the Service of Defensive Jihad: An Analysis of Suicide Bombers in Current Conflicts.” *Social Research* 75 (Summer 2008): 617; <http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?index=0&did=1580027231&SrchMode=1&sid=1&Fmt=6&VInst=PROD&VType=PQD&RQT=309&VName=PQD&TS=1237763805&clientId=1711> ; Internet; accessed 27 January 2009.

¹⁸See Mohammed M. Hafez, *Suicide Bombers of Iraq: The Strategy and Ideology of Martyrdom* (Washington D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 2007).

¹⁹Rogelio Alonso and Marcos Garcia Rey, “The Evolution of Jihadist Terrorism in Morocco.” *Terrorism and Political Violence* 19 (2007): 571-592; <http://web.ebscohost.com/ehost/detail?vid=3&hid=17&sid=d930e25d-2a39-4a0d-bc42-b25d61f78040%40sessionmgr3&bdata=JnNpdGU9ZWhvc3QtbGI2ZQ%3d%3d#db=tsh&AN=27192922> ; Internet; accessed 10 February 2009.

²⁰Farhana Ali and Jerrold Post, “The History and Evolution of Martyrdom in the Service of Defensive Jihad: An Analysis of Suicide Bombers in Current Conflicts,” 626. See also Hafez, Mohammed M. *Suicide Bombers of Iraq: The Strategy and Ideology of Martyrdom* (Washington D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 2007), 129-131.

From a tradition dating back to Imam Ali and his son Hussein's murder shortly after the Prophet Muhammad's death in 680 AD,²¹ an argument has been made to justify suicide attacks as "heroic operations of martyrdom" against the infidels in the defence of Islam. In their review of the history and evolution of suicide attacks, Ali and Post submit that the argument justifying suicide attacks, regardless of the express prohibition in the Quran, began with the spiritual leader of the Hezbollah who argued that suicide attacks were analogous to soldiers who fought in battle knowing that they were certain to die. The argument is that, as there is no moral distinction between the two deaths, both are deaths of a martyr engaged in battle as opposed to a violation of the Quran.²²

In other words, common to Islamic Jihadists (as the name suggests) is a religious foundation justifying the suicide attack. Islam is argued to be threatened by attack and, because of this submitted threat to the religion, suicide bombing becomes a heroic act that will be rewarded in Paradise.

The rewards offered to the Islamic Jihadist suicide bomber are those of Paradise. Paradise is explained as a lovely garden where the martyr will live in a beautiful home and where he/she will be surrounded by family, other martyrs and servants and where the male martyr will wed seventy-two virgins.²³ Although proffered rewards are likely an

²¹ Farhana Ali and Jerrold Post, "The History and Evolution of Martyrdom in the Service of Defensive Jihad: An Analysis of Suicide Bombers in Current Conflicts," 615-616. See also Harvey W. Kushner, "Suicide Bombers: Business as Usual." *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 19, (1996): 330; <http://web.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdf?vid=3&hid=106&sid=866a1277-e53d-429d-9ab3-3d4420750f7c%40sessionmgr103>; Internet, accessed 19 January 2009.

²²Farhana Ali and Jerrold Post, "The History and Evolution of Martyrdom in the Service of Defensive Jihad: An Analysis of Suicide Bombers in Current Conflicts" 624-629.

²³Terri Toles Patkin, "Explosive Baggage: Female Palestinian Suicide Bombers and the Rhetoric of Emotion", 81.

inducement, the Islamic Jihadist suicide attacker's motivation appears to be the sincere dedication to his or her faith.

As mentioned, a common response to motivation for committing a suicide attack, has been a response to a perceived attack on Islam or on the nation in question.

Videotaped messages from suicide bombers usually have words that reflect why they view their attack necessary for the protection of either the religion or the nation. Al-Jazeera, an Arabic television broadcast station, televised messages of two female suicide attackers (one of them was pregnant) alongside the Iraqi flag, the Quran and of an assault weapon; the statements were to the effect that they were martyring themselves in defence against the enemies of God and Iraq.²⁴ Messages of martyrdom often perpetuate the rhetoric that the Muslim world has suffered at the hands of the West and that Muslim governments are now aggravating such past injustices.²⁵

A significant component to this messaging, rather than focusing on a local community, is that the target audience for the message is the world at large. The terrorist group that employs suicide bombing as a tactic does so to disseminate the attack's results, to illustrate their regional significance and to motivate the terrorist's followers for greater effort. The Internet, for example, glorifies past suicide attacks on the insurgent's webpage and provides information on committing terrorist attacks. The Internet also serves as an effective connection within the Islamic Jihadist suicide group as the website

²⁴Katharina Von Knop, "The Female Jihad: Al Qaeda's Women." *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 30, (2007): 402; <http://web.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdf?vid=3&hid=106&sid=866a1277-e53d-429d-9ab3-3d4420750f7c%40sessionmgr103> ; Internet; accessed 19 January 2009.

²⁵ Farhana Ali and Jerrold Post, "The History and Evolution of Martyrdom in the Service of Defensive Jihad: An Analysis of Suicide Bombers in Current Conflicts," 630.

portrayal of suicide attacks illustrates the effects of the attack and generates further supports for the terrorist cause. Such messaging has been sufficiently effective to generate what has been termed “home-grown” terrorism where individuals become radicalized to the Islamic Jihadist ideology over the means of mass media. The Islamic terror cells broken up in Germany, where two of the cell members were German nationals,²⁶ are examples of the terrorist’s messaging efficiency. That Islamic Jihadists are able to effect decentralized execution of distributed groups illustrates the power of messaging through mass media and the Internet.

Consistent with the effective Islamic Jihadist messaging is the charismatic leadership of the Islamic Jihadist terror group that is able to convince and persuade followers. There has been significant literature on the impact of a charismatic leader within suicide terrorism.²⁷ The significance of the Islamic Jihadist leadership likely cannot be understated. Whether Al Qaeda or the insurgencies of Iraq or Afghanistan, the leadership defines the insurgency and, as a result, is the influence behind the use of suicide attacks. The Islamic Jihadist leadership, along with the media in which their messages are spread, creates a community of like-minded individuals who share the same religious interpretations and the same desire to return to the Caliphate. This community becomes the Islamic Jihadists supporting community as opposed to the people of

²⁶ Stephen Fidler, Stephen and Williamson, Hugh. “Increasing knowledge about ‘home-grown’ terror; [London 1st Edition].”” *Financial Times. London (UK)* Sep 7, 2007: 8; <http://web.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdf?vid=3&hid=120&sid=866a1277-e53d-429d-9ab3-3d4420750f7c%40sessionmgr103>; Internet; accessed 12 December 2008.

²⁷See Mia Bloom, Mia Bloom, *Dying to Kill: the Allure of Suicide Terror* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), 88, 114.

Afghanistan or the people of Iraq. It is from this community that suicide attackers are recruited.

Two insurgencies where Islamic Jihadists have not been able to continue to recruit suicide attackers are Chechnya (discussed below) and Morocco. Research into the Moroccan suicide bombers is only just beginning but preliminary findings of community backlash to suicide attacks support the conclusion that the suicide bombing tactic did not become widespread due to lack of community support. What research does exist actually demonstrates the Moroccan community condemned the 2003 suicide attacks.²⁸ Although the leadership was able to generate the support of those who followed the Islamic Jihadist ideology, the community revulsion of the tactic resulted in the cessation of suicide attacks. The significance of this point suggests that even radicalized Islamic Jihadists may be susceptible to the reaction of the wider Muslim community which, in turn, supports the conclusion that psychological operations directed at the supporting community is the defence to suicide terrorism. The importance of community support is a constant theme throughout all studied suicide terror groups and is the target for attack in the defence to suicide bombing.

The Islamic Jihadists do form a varied group but a group held together by the common bond of one interpretation of Islam. There are elements of the interpretation that are shared with other Islamic terror groups that employ suicide terrorism but it would be a mistake to categorize Palestinian terrorists and Islamic Jihadists in the same category. Islamic Jihadists seek the recreation of the Caliphate whereas Palestinian

²⁸ Rogelio Alonso and Marcos Garcia Rey, "The Evolution of Jihadist Terrorism in Morocco," 578.

suicide terrorists seek an independent nation of Palestine. It is this struggle that has defined their use of suicide terrorism.

Palestinian Suicide Bombers

Much of the literature to date has focused upon the use of Palestinian suicide bombers within the conflict with Israel. Such research includes the study of failed suicide bombers, incarcerated in Israeli jail, or the effects of retaliation in response to suicide bombing. There are similarities with the Islamic Jihadists, such as the religious argument supporting suicide terrorism as well as the presence of strong leaders within the organization, but their differences and the existing scholarship warrants their recognition as a separate group for further comparison. One significant aspect of Palestinian terror groups tactics is their use of the media. Although the media is also exploited by Islamic Jihadists, the extent of usage by Palestinians sets them apart.

The Palestinian suicide terror leadership learned the value of the media in spreading their message and refined the manner in which the messages are distributed. The combination of mass media and the simple yet effective tactic of suicide bombing has greatly assisted the spread of the Palestinian terrorists' ideology and cause. Messages of martyrdom are broadcast over Palestinian television. One past television advertisement depicts Israeli Defence Forces shooting a woman in the back and, while visiting her grave, her boyfriend is also killed by the Israeli forces. The commercial then shows him ascending to heaven where he meets his deceased virgin along with other

martyrs and virgins.²⁹ The message of the value and motivation for suicide bombing operations is obvious and is reinforced with imagery of the terrorist's national flag.

To further illustrate the point of the use of the media, Mia Bloom, in furtherance of her point that the use of women in insurgencies is increasing, quoted a female suicide attacker who taped her message of martyrdom to shame males into action as she said “I am going to fight instead of the sleeping Arab armies who are watching Palestinian girls fighting alone.”³⁰ Another such message from one of the Lebanese attackers of the Marine barracks in Beirut seeking to encourage other suicide bombers was:

We have carried out this operation against the fortresses of reactionary imperialism to prove to the world that their naval and artillery firepower does not frighten us. We are soldiers of God and we are fond of death. We are neither Iranians nor Syrians nor Palestinians. We are Lebanese Muslims who follow the principles of the Koran.³¹

Such messages of the technologically weak against the world armed with significant technological firepower is empowering and serves to further the terrorist cause.

The Palestinian terrorist groups also identified that media use has effects limited to the nature of the media itself. Local television and radio only pass the message for the distance of the broadcast and only affects those that listen or view the broadcast. Hezbollah increased the audience to their message to include elements of the Israeli military along with the citizens of Israel. They accomplished this by including elements

²⁹ Hoffman, Bruce and McCormick, Gordon H. “Terrorism, Signaling, and Suicide Attack,” 270.

³⁰Mia Bloom, *Dying to Kill: the Allure of Suicide Terror* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), 145.

³¹Robert A. Pape, *Dying to Win: The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism* (New York: Random House, 2005), 134.

of information within broadcast they knew the Israeli audience would wish to hear³² while, during the same broadcast, continued to send their messages of influence. The terrorist leaders have also generated news interest that appealed to the international audience (and suicide attacks have generated just such interest) and of perhaps greater significance, Palestinian terrorists have also used the Internet as a communications tool.

Other similarities between Palestinian suicide terrorists and with the Islamic Jihadists include that the rewards of Paradise are submitted as being available to those that commit suicide attacks. However, within the Palestinian suicide attackers, and depending upon the specific group employing suicide bombers, other earthly rewards may be available for the suicide attacker's surviving family. Hamas, for example, is reported to pay \$1000 monthly to the attacker's family as well as to resettle the family if their home is destroyed in retaliation.³³ A further similarity between the two Islamist terror groups is the motivation of offence to religion or nation as a reason for terror attacks.³⁴

Unlike the Islamic Jihadists, a significant element of the generation of suicide bombers within Palestinian terrorist groups is the cultural support base of the local community as opposed to only the ideological Islamic Jihadist community. Specifically, the literature studying Palestinian suicide bomb groups report children being

³²Ron Schleifer, "Psychological Operations: A New Variation on an Age Old Art: Hezbollah versus Israel." *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 29, (2006): 13; <http://web.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdf?vid=3&hid=106&sid=866a1277-e53d-429d-9ab3-3d4420750f7c%40sessionmgr103>; Internet; accessed 27 January 2009.

³³ Kushner, Harvey W. "Suicide Bombers: Business as Usual," 333.

³⁴Shaul Kimhi and Shemuel Even, "Who Are the Palestinian Suicide Bombers?" 831.

indoctrinated into the mindset of suicide bombing at home and at elementary school³⁵ and also report parents celebrating their child's suicide attack as if it were a marriage.³⁶ In short, there is celebration of the suicide attack. Palestinian women suicide bombers are also martyred and are seen as symbolic brides of Palestine or, as in the case of one suicide bomber, the female suicide attacker was described as having a fetus "of rare heroism, and gave birth by blowing herself up."³⁷ Mia Bloom's study of Hamas' use of suicide attacks first in 1996 and then in 2000 highlights the significance of community support in the defence against suicide bombing. She concluded that community support for the 1996 attacks was low but suicide attacks since 2000 have increased as "support for suicide attacks increased exponentially."³⁸ The attacker is martyred by the local community and this supporting network for all of the studied suicide attack groups is the common link that is the likely target for suicide defence operations.

³⁵ Terri Toles Patkin, "Explosive Baggage: Female Palestinian Suicide Bombers and the Rhetoric of Emotion," 86

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 83.

³⁷ Dorit Naaman, "Brides of Palestine/Angels of Death: media, Gender, and Performance in the Case of the Palestinian Female Suicide Bombers." *Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 32, no. 4 (2007): 945; <http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?index=0&did=1281873491&SrchMode=1&sid=16&Fmt=2&VInst=PROD&VType=PQD&RQT=309&VName=PQD&TS=1237850781&clientId=1711>; Internet; accessed 19 January 2009.

³⁸ Mia M. Bloom, "Palestinian Suicide Bombing: Public Support, Market Share, and Outbidding," *Political Science Quarterly* 119, no.1, (2004): 66; <http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?index=0&did=663513451&SrchMode=1&sid=8&Fmt=6&VInst=PROD&VType=PQD&RQT=309&VName=PQD&TS=1237765660&clientId=1711>; Internet; accessed 11 February 2009.

Chechen Suicide Bombers

The first Chechen suicide attacks occurred in 2000³⁹ when, according to Kurz and Bartles, Islamic Jihadists from the Middle-East and Afghanistan migrated to the Chechen fight for independence.⁴⁰ The Chechen suicide bombers were motivated by national independence and individual bombers were usually reported as deciding to volunteer for a suicide mission in response to the conduct of the Russians. One woman, for example, strapped explosives to her body and detonated at a Russian military commander's office in retaliation to the Russians' killing of her husband.⁴¹ In other words, although the conduct causing the revenge motivation is more extreme than that arising in other regions where Islamic Jihadists engage suicide bombers, the underlying cause is analogous.

As with the Islamic Jihadists, Chechen suicide attackers were motivated by a desire for national independence or were in response to attacks on their religion or their community. A further similarity between the Chechens and the Islamic Jihadists is that suicide attacks are martyr operations in furtherance of Islam.⁴² The significant difference between these two groups, however, is the response of the Chechen community to such attacks.

³⁹Anne Speckhard and Khapta Ahkmedova, "The Making of a Martyr: Chechen Suicide Terrorism," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 29, (2006): 429; <http://web.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdf?vid=3&hid=106&sid=866a1277-e53d-429d-9ab3-3d4420750f7c%40sessionmgr103> ; Internet; accessed 26 January 2009.

⁴⁰Robert W. Kurz and Charles K. Barles, "Chechen Suicide Bombers," *Journal of Slavic Military Studies* 20 (2007): 536; <http://web.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdf?vid=3&hid=114&sid=f53cb6e8-01fc-4471-b097-5b2d8da63615%40sessionmgr107> ; Internet; accessed 28 January 2009.

⁴¹Anne Speckhard and Khapta Ahkmedova, "The Making of a Martyr: Chechen Suicide Terrorism," 455-456.

The most significant difference between the Chechen suicide bombers and the remaining Islamic Jihadists is the lack of community support.⁴³ Friends and families of suicide attackers that have been interviewed express empathy for the reasons the suicide attacker volunteered but these same interviewed subjects refrain from providing support for the attacks themselves. The community does not overtly martyr the suicide attacker and, perhaps most significantly, the community expresses sorrow for the innocent victims killed in the attack.⁴⁴ Table 1 is a summary of attacks in Chechnya and Russia which illustrates that suicide attacks have largely ceased.

Table 1: Terrorist attacks in Chechnya between May 2004 and May 2007

Type of Attack	Number of Attacks	Success Rate	Insurgents (killed/detained)
Small Arms	48	79%	6/7
Bombing	62	32%	6/3
Suicide Bombing	2	0	1/1

Source: www.terrorisminfo.mipt.org/incidentcalendar.asp

Although not captured in the table, all such attacks have generally targeted military or police. Suicide attacks have not continued in an area where there is no community support cannot be mere coincidence; this also highlights the significance of

⁴²Ibid., 447-450.

⁴³Ibid., 441.

⁴⁴Ibid., 442.

community support in defence to suicide attacks. Table 1 illustrates that small arms attacks have proven successful in that approximately 80% of attacks injured or killed the intended target. Small arms attacks were limited in scale, employing few attackers with the limited objectives of usually an attack on a police car or police checkpoint.

Conversely, almost 70% of bombings, the more spectacular attacks, failed because the explosive device was discovered and disarmed or failed because the explosive device was detonated either too early or too late to attack the intended objective. In other words, the Chechens have demonstrated the willingness to risk an attacker's life in execution of a non-suicide attack with the likely result of less spectacular success. The explanation that a previously successful tactic, suicide attack, is no longer used must be a function of lack of community support as, without such support, recruitment and employment of the tactic ceases. As the Chechen leadership cannot rely on volunteers for suicide attacks and as the leadership recognized that the community support for their efforts weakened, the Chechen terrorists ceased the suicide tactic.

Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK)

Suicide bombing for the PKK were initiated by with their leader Abdullah Ocalan and, interestingly, ended with Ocalan's orders as well.⁴⁵ The Kurdish terrorists followed Abdullah Ocalan as he was seen as "the embodiment of the Kurdish cause" and this

⁴⁵Christoph Reuter, *My Life as a Weapon: A Modern History of Suicide Bombing* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004), 166.

perception continued after Ocalan's arrest.⁴⁶ Perhaps even more significant in illustrating the Kurdish terrorist loyalty to Ocalan, suicide attacks by the PKK ceased after Ocalan asked his followers to stop.⁴⁷

Of significance to the argument that society is a common link of terrorist groups that utilize terrorist bombing, the PKK relied upon a Kurdish cultural tradition that "celebrate and elevate those who deliberately sacrifice themselves for the common good."⁴⁸ Of further note, as with the Chechen terrorists, the PKK did not receive a swell of community support. Individual terrorists joined the PKK as a response to the initial actions of Turkish security forces but there was no general community support for the terrorist's attacks. The PKK's intent was to cause fear within the Kurds in order to divide support for the elements of the Turkish authority within the terrorists' areas⁴⁹ and their tactics included attacking the Kurdish community. Unsurprisingly, that suicide attacks were not supported by the community at large. Pape's analysis of the PKK identified that the PKK's use of suicide terrorism was limited in duration (1996-1999) and that the number of victims killed per attack averaged fewer than two.⁵⁰ Pape argued that the reasoning behind the lack of increasing suicide attacks, after noting that use of suicide

⁴⁶Farhana Ali and Jerrold Post, "The History and Evolution of Martyrdom in the Service of Defensive Jihad: An Analysis of Suicide Bombers in Current Conflicts," 641.

⁴⁷ Robert A. Pape, "The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism." *The American Political Science Review* 97, no. 3 (Aug 2003): 356; ; <http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?index=38&did=1195355231&SrchMode=1&sid=17&Fmt=6&VInst=PROD&VType=PQD&RQT=309&VName=PQD&TS=1237850965&clientId=1711>; Internet; accessed 11 February 2008

⁴⁸ Hoffman, Bruce and McCormick, Gordon H. "Terrorism, Signaling, and Suicide Attack," 254.

⁴⁹Mia Bloom, *Dying to Kill: the Allure of Suicide Terror* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), 106-115.

⁵⁰Robert A. Pape, *Dying to Win: The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism* (New York: Random House, 2005), 162-167.

attacks “[o]nce started... can feed on itself, fomenting a wider rebellion or an escalation of suicide attacks,”⁵¹ was the similarity in religion between the terrorists and the targets of their attacks. Although Pape concluded that the lack of escalation of suicide attacks was due to religious similarity, the more plausible explanation was that the religious similarity contributed to the overall lack of community support. Recruits for suicide attacks would have originated from within the Kurdish community and, regardless of the reason, the community did not support suicide attacks and that effect would have negatively affected recruiting. In other words, although the cessation of suicide attacks is attributable to Ocalan’s request from his prison cell, the effect of the lack of community support for suicide attacks was likely the PKK’s restricted use of the tactic.

Tamil Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE)

The LTTE, a predominantly Hindu Tamil population, have a Marxist/Leninist ideology. The LTTE began utilizing suicide attacks in 1987 in furtherance of their struggle for an independent homeland within Sri Lanka.⁵² Authors have speculated that the use of suicide bombing by the LTTE arose from successes they recognized in the 1983 attacks on the US marine barracks in Beirut⁵³ but no evidence is provided to support this conclusion. Regardless of how the concept of suicide bombing spread to Sri

⁵¹Ibid., 162-163.

⁵²Bruce Hoffman and Gordon H. McCormick, “Terrorism, Signaling, and Suicide Attack,” 260.

⁵³Ibid., 259.

Lanka, what is clear is that, until 2003, the LTTE used suicide bombing more than any other terrorist group. The LTTE appeals to the Hindu traditions of heroic self-sacrifice and obligation that are components of Hindu culture in their justification and recruitment of suicide bombers.⁵⁴ The LTTE created a separate division, the Black Tigers, who only train for suicide attacks. The LTTE's are reported to have perfected the suicide belt⁵⁵ and they initiated suicide attacks by boat that may well have been the model of the boat-born suicide attack on the USS Cole. The Black Tigers most recent method of suicide attack was an airplane that successfully crashed into a Sri Lankan government building.

Unlike the Islamic Jihadists, the Black Tigers are not motivated by religion. There are reports of individual motivations as being based in honour but, ultimately, the attacks are in furtherance of their quest for national independence. The Black Tigers are also led by a strong and charismatic leader (Prabhakaran) and, to illustrate the connection to the leader, Black Tiger members swear an oath to the leader himself as part of their initiation into the suicide attack organization. In other words, common with the other suicide terror groups, the LTTE are commanded by a strong leader.

Another further commonality with the other suicide terror groups, the LTTE foster community support for terror attacks. Prabhakaran's success in developing the suicide attack technique was his ability to create a historic fiction that supported suicide terrorism. Prabhakaran convinced the Tamil people that suicide sacrifices would be necessary to achieve Tamil independence and that the Tamil people were determined and

⁵⁴ Robert A. Pape, *Dying to Win: The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism* (New York: Random House, 2005), 162-163.

⁵⁵Farhana Ali and Jerrold Post, "The History and Evolution of Martyrdom in the Service of Defensive Jihad: An Analysis of Suicide Bombers in Current Conflicts," 641.

invincible and, as such, suicide terrorism was a supportable⁵⁶ tactic. The martyrs, beginning with “Captain Millar” (the first Tamil Tiger suicide bomber), are celebrated each year on 5 July on “Black Tigers Day.”⁵⁷ Hundreds of shrines to martyred Tamil Tigers are located in areas in Northern Sri Lanka and these shrines are treated by the Tamil people with the same reverence they pay to other temples or holy shrines.⁵⁸ Of note, however, Mia Bloom’s initial survey of Tamil people identified a lack of support for suicide attacks on innocent civilians.⁵⁹ Although her survey was admittedly preliminary, it does highlight a difference between communities supporting Islamic Jihadists and the Tamil community in that the Tamil people do not support collateral death and injury. The relevance of this distinction is that it highlights an exploitable vulnerability of the tactic. Such vulnerability cannot be attacked kinetically but can be attacked with psychological operations. The intent behind the suicide terror groups analysis is the identification of commonalities that might be targeted as a weakness but, in this case, it is the distinction of lack of community support for collateral injury that should be exploited in the LTTE tactic.

A further commonality with other suicide terror groups is the LTTE’s use of the media to both communicate their fight for independence but also to martyr those that complete suicide attacks. The videotaped messages that are created to martyr Black Tigers are available as far away as Toronto, Ontario where they are used in support of

⁵⁶Ibid., 259-260.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 254.

⁵⁸Ibid.

⁵⁹ Mia Bloom, *Dying to Kill: the Allure of Suicide Terror* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), 67-68.

fundraising. The LTTE's use of the media is not as elaborate as that of either the Islamic Jihadists or of the Palestinian suicide terror groups but its value remains in recruitment and fundraising.

Suicide Terror Group Summary

Having studied these terrorist organizations that employ the tactic of suicide bombing, the commonalities of the tactic's use become significant in assisting to identify a defence tactic. The commonalities are potential weaknesses that may be exploited or targeted. Further, the groups differ in ideology but the use of suicide terrorism has spread from Hezbollah's 1983 attack in Beirut to attacks by Islamic Jihadists in both continental US as well as in the insurgencies in Afghanistan and Iraq. The nature of how suicide terrorism migrated to differing insurgencies may also assist in providing a further commonality or weakness that can either be targeted or exploited.

SPREAD OF THE WEAPON

An understanding of how the concept and tactic of suicide bombing has spread across insurgencies might assist in identifying a defence. Full understanding of how the concept has spread is not presently available but, from what is known, it is clear that the use of the Internet is a target vulnerable to attack. Although an individual responsible for training might be attacked, that individual is easily replaced by another terrorist operating

within that terrorist group. Unlike modern and technologically advanced militaries, terrorist trainers do not spend years of their professional career learning the intricacies of their explosive craft in a formal academic setting. The terrorists learn by experience and with mentorship by those more experienced. The result of such informal task-specific training being that any one trainer may be replaced by another who has experience in the tactic of suicide terrorism even if that experience is measured in weeks or months as opposed to years.

The recent history of suicide attacks dates back to the 1983 attack on the US barracks in Beirut. Suicide bombing then began in Sri Lanka and it is reasonable to assume that the Tamil Tigers obtained the concept from the media and adapted suicide bombing to their goal of independence. Regardless of exactly how the concept passed, the spread of the concept and technology in more recent attacks likely makes that detail obsolete.

The role of Islamic Jihadists, specifically Al-Qaeda, in the spread of suicide terrorism since 2003 is significant. Suicide bombing is argued to have spread from the Sudan to Afghanistan⁶⁰ as Al-Qaeda terrorists moved their training camps. Islamic Jihadists from either the Middle-East or Afghanistan moved north to Chechnya bringing suicide attack techniques with them but whether the foreign fighters persuaded adoption

⁶⁰David Martin Jones and M.L.R. Smith, "Greetings from the cybercaliphate: some notes on homeland security," *International Affairs* 81, no.5 (2005): 944; ; http://hk3my5sa3k.search.serialssolutions.com/directLink?&atitle=Greetings%20from%20the%20cybercaliphate%3A%20some%20notes%20on%20homeland%20insecurity&author=DAVID%20MARTIN%20JONES%3B%20M.%20L.%20R.%20SMITH&issn=00205850&title=International%20Affairs&volume=81&issue=5&date=20051001&spage=925&id=doi:10.1111%2Fj.1468%2D2346.2005.00495.x&sid=ProQ_ss&genre=article&lang=en; Internet; accessed 9 February 2009.

of the suicide tactic or whether its development was solely Chechen is unknown.⁶¹

Suicide bombers from outside Iraq migrated to Iraq after 2003 and subsequently such attacks have occurred in Afghanistan. Brian Williams reports that his investigation into the Taliban stronghold areas supports the conclusion that Arab Al-Qaeda fighters brought the suicide attack tactic to the Taliban to assist in their attacks against forces supporting the Afghan government.⁶² This report is consistent with reports that the Taliban received training in suicide bombing from Al-Qaeda in Iraq.⁶³

Even though Islamic Jihadists have greatly influenced the spread of suicide terrorism, identification and destruction of specific training cadres would not serve as a defence to suicide terrorism. The Internet, an effective tool of suicide terror groups including Islamic Jihadists, remains a significant mechanism for spreading the tactic and procedure. The ability to spread the techniques and the results of suicide terrorism by the Internet is significant because the information is accessible to any who wish to find the information. As the tactic is not technically difficult, the Internet provides sufficient information to spread the tactic without the need of experienced trainers. Hence, although training cadres have not been identified, any value in targeting them as a defence to suicide terror is limited. The use of the Internet by suicide terror groups is

⁶¹Cerwyn Moore and Paul Tumelty, "Foreign Fighters and the Case of Chechnya; A Critical Assessment," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 31 (2008): 426; <http://web.ebscohost.com/ehost/detail?vid=3&hid=106&sid=866a1277-e53d-429d-9ab3-3d4420750f7c%40sessionmgr103&bdata=JnNpdGU9ZWhvc3QtbGl2ZQ%3d%3d#db=tsh&AN=31656993> ; Internet; accessed 10 February 2009.

⁶² Brian Glyn Williams, "Mullah Omar's Missiles: A Field Report on Suicide Bombers in Afghanistan." *Middle East Policy* XV, no. 4 (Winter 2008): 26-46.

⁶³Zaki Chehab, "Al-Qaeda: still a step ahead." *New Statesman* 135 (July 3, 2006): 37; <http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?index=1&did=1071306841&SrchMode=1&sid=12&Fmt=6&VInst=PRO D&VType=PQD&RQT=309&VName=PQD&TS=1237765764&clientId=1711>; Internet; accessec 10 February 2009.

significant and will have to be a component of any solution intending to defend against suicide bombing. As the Internet cannot be destroyed or restricted significantly, any defence to suicide bombing involving the Internet will have to be non-kinetic and the most effective such tactic is psychological operations.

COMMON TO ALL

Although Lester, Yang and Lindsay perhaps correctly argue that it may be too early to declare that no generic psychological profile of a suicide bomber can be identified, what can be said is that no such profile has emerged. That said, however, commonalities among the suicide groups can be identified. In their review and research into motivations behind suicide bombing, Berko and Erez reported that research has demonstrated suicide terrorist groups need motivated individuals, need an organization that has the desire to use suicide bombing and need a community that “extols perpetrators as heroes and embraces their acts as a noble form of resistance.”⁶⁴ This finding is somewhat simplistic as, aside from community support, the conclusion is, essentially, suicide bombing requires a suicide bomber and a group wanting to use suicide bombing. The conclusion of the need for a supportive community, however, will be further explored but it is important to note that the commonality of a supportive community has already been identified in the literature as a supporting factor for Palestinian suicide

⁶⁴Anat Berko and Edna Erez, ““Ordinary People” and “Death Work.”: Palestinian Suicide Bombers as Victimizers and Victims” *Violence and Victims* 20, no. 6 (December 2005): 605; <http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?index=0&did=981058531&SrchMode=1&sid=6&Fmt=6&VInst=PROD&VType=PQD&RQT=309&VName=PQD&TS=1237765587&clientId=1711>; Internet; accessed 12 December 2008.

terrorism⁶⁵ but the significance has yet to be realized and exploited. Of equally little assistance is the conclusion reached that the purpose of suicide bombing is to force perceived foreign forces from the terrorists' homeland.⁶⁶ That an objective motivates a suicide attack does little to defend against the attack unless the objective is capable of defence or unless the objective can be conceded to the terrorists: neither defence nor such concessions are presently possible even though concessions would result in the cessation of suicide attacks. The significance of identifying any commonalities is the potential exposition of a common weakness of all suicide groups that might be susceptible to attack as a tactic of defence. The likely more difficult secondary step is the identification of a method of attacking that weakness that is effective, adaptable and flexible in execution.

Motivation

Suicide bombers, being an effective and low cost weapon used when over-matched in combat power or military technology, are generally used in operations aimed at national independence. Elements of Islamic Jihadists seek the creation of the

⁶⁵Shaul Kimhi and Shemuel Even, "Who Are the Palestinian Suicide Bombers?" *Terrorism and Political Violence* 16, no. 4 (Winter 2004): 824; ; [http:// web.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdf?vid=3&hid=17&sid=d930e25d-2a39-4a0d-bc42-b25d61f78040%40sessionmgr3](http://web.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdf?vid=3&hid=17&sid=d930e25d-2a39-4a0d-bc42-b25d61f78040%40sessionmgr3); Internet; accessed 19 January 2009.

⁶⁶Robert J Brym, and Bader Araj, "Suicide Bombing as Strategy and Interaction: The Case of the Second Intifada," 1972. See also Lacey Baldwin Smith, Lacey Baldwin. "Can Martyrdom Survive Secularization?" *Social Research* 75, no. 2 (Summer 2008): 457-458; <http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?index=0&did=1580027171&SrchMode=1&sid=26&Fmt=6&VInst=PROD&VType=PQD&RQT=309&VName=PQD&TS=1237851298&clientId=1711>; Internet; accessed 12 December 2008.

Caliphate⁶⁷ but even such a geographic and cultural identity is ultimately a form of national independence. The Hezbollah and Hamas fight for their nationhood as do the Tamil Tigers and the Chechen insurgents. Although an aspect of suicide bombing common to all such groups, the only possible defensive solution would be to grant the insurgents their nationhood. Such a concession is not politically reasonable as, most significantly, success by one terrorist group in attaining statehood will yield other terrorist groups employing similar tactics for a similar aim. Since granting terrorist demands is not a favoured option, it will not be a candidate for suicide attack defence.

The other motivation behind suicide terrorism has been an actual or perceived threat to family or faith. There are reports of Chechen suicide bombers who have attacked in revenge and a common motivator for Islamic Jihadists has been the message that Islam is under attack from the West. Although arguably easy to remove vengeance as a motivator, images of Abu Ghraib exist to convince those susceptible that the West continues to attack fellow Muslims. Further, the Islamic Jihadist message that the West is attacking Islam uses the presence of Western troops in Iraq and Afghanistan to support their argument. Motivation for suicide attacks, as a commonality among suicide terror groups, can be attacked but only by non-violent means as to use violence will only reinforce the motivation of threat to family or faith.

⁶⁷ Farhana Ali and Jerrold Post, "The History and Evolution of Martyrdom in the Service of Defensive Jihad: An Analysis of Suicide Bombers in Current Conflicts," 621-625.

Media

The use of the media, such as the Internet and distributed video recorded messages, is among the methods used to effectively spread terrorist messaging. As demonstrated by the Palestinian suicide terrorist effects on the Israeli Defence Force and the citizens of Israel, the media can be a means of influencing audiences beyond terrorist supporters. Further, by inculcating suicide attacks within their culture by the use of media messaging, suicide attacks are accepted as a heroic act by the Palestinian community such that parents rejoice at their child's successful suicide attack. As discussed, elements of the messages put forward include the fight against those that threaten Islam as well as the religious basis, religious acceptance and the rewards for the successful suicide bomber.

The messages of the suicide attackers recorded immediately prior to their suicide attack are the fodder from which the communities martyr them. The reliance on images that mirror religious symbols and the reliance on the rhetoric of the terrorist group ensures the suicide terror group's message is understood and accepted. Equally important, however, is the effect that such messages cause well beyond the area of conflict. The Internet, as a vehicle for propaganda, is easily accessible worldwide and, as discussed, can assist or radicalize a susceptible individual who has no other connection with the community using suicide attacks.

The Internet serves as a vehicle to spread the suicide terrorists message and is a forum of online discussion or reading where a recruit may be convinced of the legitimacy of the cause as well as the value in committing an act of suicide terror. As the Internet is

accessible world wide, it is not subject to targeting with military force and, as such, any defence to the Internet as a tool of suicide terrorists must rely upon tactics aside from destructive power. As the Internet's strength is the power of persuasion, the counter to such strength is stronger argument.

Strong Leadership

The media is of little value if a terrorist group lacks a strong and charismatic leader to deliver the terrorist group's message. Consistent with the commonality of the use of the media in spreading the terrorist's messaging, terror groups that employ suicide terrorism have a strong and charismatic leader to motivate potential recruits as well as convince the community of the validity of the terrorist's aims. Leaders such as the Islamic Jihadist's bin Laden, the PKK's Ocalan or the Tamil Tigers' Prabhakaran are afforded god-like status such that their cause and messages are "treated as a matter of faith."⁶⁸ The effect of capturing such a leader is illustrated by the cessation of suicide attacks on the direction of Ocalan (once arrested and facing execution) but the inability to locate and detain such leaders is the weakness of such operations as a defence to suicide terror. That said, however, a strong leader is a commonality among terror groups that employ suicide terrorism and, as such, the resulting issue is whether an effective form of attack exists.

⁶⁸ Farhana Ali and Jerrold Post, "The History and Evolution of Martyrdom in the Service of Defensive Jihad: An Analysis of Suicide Bombers in Current Conflicts," 641.

Community Support

The effect of both a strong leader and the use of the media is the creation of community support for the terrorist's cause. A supporting community is the most significant aspect shared by suicide attack groups in that it generates and fosters the suicide bomber. Research into suicide attacks against Israel identified that one major influence was community acceptance as "[e]veryone was joining [the terrorist group]."⁶⁹ Pape argues in his definition of suicide bombing that such attacks are the most aggressive form of terrorism as it attacks the terrorists' own community.⁷⁰ If true, suicide terror would not require community support as support from a targeted group could not be expected. Pape came to this conclusion by assessing broad categories of terrorists. Muslim terrorist groups were an example given (likely the PKK), but no analysis to support the conclusion was provided. Pape's broad conclusion is not supported by either the evidence or by existing scholarship as, for example, there is evidence that Palestinian suicide groups vie for community support.⁷¹ There have no doubt been attacks where members of the terrorists' community suffered collateral damage. In light of the evidence provided, Pape's conclusion is incorrect and the conclusion supported by the evidence is that community support is a commonality shared by terrorist groups that employ suicide attacks.

⁶⁹Jerrold M. Post, "Psychological Operations and Counterterrorism." *Joint Force Quarterly* 37, (Second Quarter 2005): 106;; Internet; accessed 27 January 2009.

⁷⁰ Robert A. Pape, "The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism." 345.

⁷¹ Ami Pedahzur and Arie Perliger, "The Changing Nature of Suicide Attacks: A Social Network Perspective." *Social Forces* 84, no. 4 (Jun 2006): 1994; [http:// proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?index=0&did=](http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?index=0&did=)

The significance of community support is best illustrated by comparing groups that continue to use the attack tactic with the Chechen insurgents who, for the most part, no longer employ suicide attacks. The Islamic Jihadist's community, the Palestinian community and the Tamil community support and martyr suicide attackers. The description of children dressing dolls as suicide attackers and parents celebrating a child's suicide attack, indicate some measure of community support. In contrast, Chechen suicide bomber's families interviewed by Speckhard and Khapta expressed empathy for the attacker and the victim. Even though Chechens are another Muslim culture fighting for independence, the suicide attack tactic simply does not have the same community support.

The Chechen empathy for the suicide attack victim is telling as, unlike the Islamic Jihadist's community or the Palestinian community, the Chechen community sees them as innocent victims. Although the Russian forces have had successful campaigns against terrorist cells, terrorist attacks against Russian police and Russian military continue but suicide terrorism against these same targets has ceased since 2005. Although other factors may have also contributed to decreased Chechen insurgent activity, a suicide attack is an inexpensive and effective weapon which would risk far less combat power (in the form of insurgents put at risk) than the attacks that occurred between 2005 and the present. As seen at Table 1, the attacks that have occurred in Chechnya between 2005 and 2007 have been small sub-unit attacks, improvised explosive device attacks or drive-by attacks. Each of these types of attacks risks insurgent casualties and, as illustrated at Table 1, have been largely ineffective. In other words, although martyr operations exist

as an available Chechen insurgent tactic, the lack of community support inhibits the tactic's use.

The apparent anomaly to the argument that community support is common to all groups is both the Taliban suicide attacks and the four United Kingdom citizens that attacked the London transit system (London Four). The London Four attacked downtown London but the four attackers were all UK citizens. Such home-grown terrorists or “self-starters”⁷² are reported to have become disenfranchised from their parent community and have become radicalized in a manner equating them to Islamic Jihadists.⁷³ Home-grown terrorists cease identifying with their immediate community, which would not support suicide attacks, and fully identify with the *umma*,⁷⁴ the community of believers, which fully supports and fosters suicide attacks. Mohammed Sidique Khan, one of the four London suicide bombers, stated:

Our driving motivation doesn't come from the tangible commodities that this world has to offer...Your democratically elected governments continuously perpetrate atrocities against *my people all over the world*. And your support of them makes you directly responsible...*Until we feel security, you will be our targets*. And until you stop the bombing, gassing, imprisonment and torture *of my people* we will not stop this fight.....⁷⁵ [emphasis added]

Similarly, the suicide bombers in Afghanistan do not obtain their support from the Afghan people but, rather, from the communities into which they are recruited and

⁷² Aidan Kirby, “The London Bombers as “Self-Starters”: A Case Study in Indigenous Radicalization and the Emergence of Autonomous Cliques.” *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 30, (2007): 415; <http://web.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdf?vid=3&hid=106&sid=866a1277-e53d-429d-9ab3-3d4420750f7c%40sessionmgr103>; Internet; accessed 19 January 2009.

⁷³*Ibid.*

⁷⁴*Ibid.*, 420.

⁷⁵*Ibid.*, 422.

trained. In effect, the Taliban suicide bomber is indoctrinated into the Islamic Jihadist community as opposed to the community of the citizens of either Pakistan or Afghanistan. If such community support can be found for home-grown suicide bombers or the Taliban, why can such community support not be found for the Chechen insurgents? The answer is, again, the community. The home-grown attackers develop from within the community but without local community support. The home-grown suicide attacker becomes alienated from the local community and becomes part of the terrorist community. Chechen suicide attackers were not so alienated as their struggle remained that of Chechen independence. Taliban suicide bombers, whether foreign fighters or Afghans, seek power and control over Afghanistan. Unlike the Chechens, the Taliban do not fight on behalf of the Afghan people but, rather, fight for their specific cause. As the Taliban fight for their own goals, support from the Afghan community is not necessary.

Successful and continuing suicide attacks require continued support by the local community. The supporting community must support the tactic by willingly letting their husbands, wives, children or siblings commit the attack. Willingly not in the form of permission but, rather, willingly in not speaking out against suicide bombing as well as continuing to praise as heroes those that commit suicide attacks.

Relevance

The identification of three pillars that support terrorism also identifies the targets for attack. Whether attacking a terrorist group's key leadership, the terrorist's use of the

Internet or the terrorist group's supporting community, the issue becomes a measure of efficiency and susceptibility to attack. Effective dislocation of any one of the three pillars will result in the toppling of the suicide terror campaign. Significantly, however, is that various authors have also reported similar conclusions but little analysis of the relevance of the significance of the three supporting pillars has been initiated.

The relevance of community support to terrorism has been noted before. Authors studying suicide terrorism have also noted community support as a variable present in suicide groups studied but suicide bomber motivation was the identified connection. What these researchers have missed, likely flowing from the attempt to extrapolate conclusions from the study of one group to all suicide groups, is the lack of community support where suicide bombing has effectively ceased. That realization supports the conclusion that the effective defence to suicide terrorism is undermining the terrorist's community support for the tactic.

CHAPTER 3

STRATEGIES TO COUNTER THE WEAPON

In following the analogy of the vaccine, any efforts in defence to suicide bombing should target those areas that are common to all suicide terror groups. The suicide bomber can be targeted and there are efforts presently so expended as a defence to suicide bombing. Further, key leadership involved with the planning and preparation of suicide attacks are presently targeted and there has even been some targeting of the community that supports suicide attacks. Such attempts at defence to suicide bombing demonstrate that none of them is sufficient to defend against suicide attacks. What is necessary, either alone or, more likely, in combination with these present defence initiatives, are psychological operations aimed at the terrorist's supporting community.

LEGAL PROHIBITION

Western society, governed by the Rule of Law, views legislation as the prevention of criminal activity. Domestic or international law is seen as the mechanism to regulate interaction of people or nations. Application of such a legislative regime as a defence to suicide bombing is logical but, unfortunately, ineffective. Terrorists do not follow and are not deterred from suicide attacks by international or domestic legal sanction.

International Prohibition

International prohibition of terrorism exists in the form of United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1373, amongst others, which condemned terrorism as a threat to international peace and security. The United Nations Security Council called upon member states to take actions such as freezing funds involved with terrorism and also urged states to co-operate in the suppression of terrorism. One of the difficulties with international prohibition is that terrorist groups, Islamic Jihadists being an example, “wholly reject our post-Westphalian system of international law.”⁷⁶ The Islamic Jihadists seek the recreation of the Caliphate but overlook the implication of such a concept within the Westphalian construct of nations. Other terrorist groups, Hamas for example, seek statehood yet openly violate international law and the UNSCR. The implication of that lack of recognition of the international system of nationhood and law, or the failure to follow its tenets, is that no Western legislation will impact or deter their suicide attack planning unless the legislation is able to remove terrorist resources, funds or people, from their planning and intent. UNSCR 1383 provides that authority but identification of terrorist funds is extremely difficult and, accordingly, does not impede suicide terrorism.

A second and equally significant difficulty with international prohibition, as identified within UNSCR 1373, is that prosecution of terrorists is a national issue vice an offence that would easily fall within the jurisdiction of either the International Criminal Court or of the International Court of Justice. As such, legislation purporting to suppress

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

terrorism must arise within national jurisdiction and, unfortunately, such legislation and enforcement is not likely to be an effective defence to suicide terrorism in regions controlled by terrorists. Even for nations not controlled by terrorists, national legislation is an ineffective solution.

“Hardening” the Nation

A nation may seek to “harden” their international borders so as to prevent a suicide bomber’s entry into the nation. The primary difficulty in drafting any such legislation is the inability to profile a suicide bomber. Profiling was possible for Israel in the early 1990s as they deduced that suicide bombers tended to be single, in their mid-20s, deeply Islamic and unemployed. The Israelis used that information to prevent such profiled people from entering their nation but, as soon as that tactic was identified, the terrorist groups merely adapted by recruiting more average Palestinians.⁷⁷

Even if suicide bombers could be profiled, it is reasonable to expect terror groups planning suicide attacks to either avoid traditional entry into a nation, such as the entry into Afghanistan by insurgents who bypass border check-points, or of using potential suicide attackers that are unknown to investigative authorities and that do not match the identified profile. Even Australia, surrounded by ocean monitored by Coast Guard and

⁷⁷Robert J. Brym, and Bader Araj, “Suicide Bombing as Strategy and Interaction: The Case of the Second Intifada.” *Social Forces* 84, no. 4 (June 2006): 1971; <http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?index=0&did=1066736511&SrchMode=1&sid=10&Fmt=6&VInst=PROD&VType=PQD&RQT=309&VName=PQD&TS=1237765723&clientId=1711>; Internet; accessed 12 December 2008.

Navy and therefore a nation with better border security, recognizes the difficulty in reliance on controlled immigration as a defence to suicide bombing.⁷⁸

A second failing for reliance on immigration legislation to defend against suicide bombing is what has been labelled as home-grown terrorism. The London Four are examples of individuals that, while residing in the target nation, became radicalized and willing to commit a suicide attack. Closing national borders will not decrease the rise of home-grown suicide attackers as there is sufficient media available to not require the influence of a visiting foreign national. In 2005, Al-Qaida released a video documentary of Al-Qaida suicide bombers in Iraq over the Internet entitled “The Expedition of Omar Hadid.” The video included the statement of a suicide bomber who said:

I ask you ... whoever hears or sees this CD or hears this recording, to come join the jihad ... I wish to say to the brothers, to all of the mujahideen, it is obligatory upon you to continue with these martyrdom operations, because they are –by Allah– the things that affect and massacre the Americans the most, and we ask Allah for guidance in this martyrdom operation. (Al-Qaida’s Committee in Mesopotamia 2005)⁷⁹

The international reach of such messaging renders closing national borders as useless as the same message is passed over the Internet.

Of course the other option would be to close borders to any nation or any person that appears to have originated from a nation where suicide terror has either been used or where terrorists have been recruited but such an attempt would not be politically

⁷⁸James Jupp, “Terrorism, immigration, and multiculturalism: The Australian experience.” *International Journal* 61, no. 3 (Summer 2006): 699-710; <http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?index=0&did=1152609271&SrchMode=1&sid=8&Fmt=3&VInst=PROD&VType=PQD&RQT=309&VName=PQD&TS=1237850087&clientId=1711>; Internet; accessed 10 February 2009.

⁷⁹Evan F. Kohlmann, ““Homegrown” Terrorists: Theory and Cases in the War on Terror’s Newest Front.”, *The Annals of the American Academy* 618, (July 2008): 102; <http://ann.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/618/1/95>; Internet; accessed 29 January 2009.

palatable. Closing national borders would not be an effective defence to suicide bombing as closing borders would adversely affect the nation's need for trade and commerce and, worse, it may actually increase the number of home-grown suicide attackers. Closing national borders to a specific group would exacerbate existing sympathies of susceptible populations within the closed state. In other words, perceptions of attack on a distant state will be exacerbated if that state is then closed from any form of visit or immigration. In such a circumstance, it is likely that already agitated members of the population will become more susceptible to arguments of radicalization and, hence, the risk of further home-grown terrorists increases. In light of its limitations, hardening a nation to possible terrorists is not a defence to suicide terrorism.

Criminal Law

Parallel to initiatives at closing national borders are initiatives to criminalize conduct likely to further or support terrorism. Nations, such as Canada and the United Kingdom, have expressly criminalized terrorist activities within their respective domestic criminal statutes. The criminal law has, as a purpose, the intention of dissuading criminal activity with the threat of prosecution and jail. There are jurisdictions where the most severe crimes warrant that jurisdiction's most severe penalty: execution. Although impossible to interview successful suicide bombers, it is likely that, as their goal was to die during the attack, a threat of jail or execution is unlikely to deter suicide attack as the suicide attacker would not fear the consequences or sanctions of prosecution. To support this point, consider that the Tamil Tigers carry a small glass vial of cyanide and their

intention is to chew the vial to bring on death rather than be captured. The thought of jail might concern a suicide attacker, as it would preclude accomplishment of the suicide mission but incarceration itself would not deter.

There can be debate concerning the value of expressly criminalizing terrorist acts: murder and treason are criminalized so the question becomes why there exists a requirement for criminalizing a different type of murder or treason. Further, especially for Islamic Jihadists who do not recognize secular law as binding but, rather, find secular law to be a violation of their faith,⁸⁰ secular criminalization of terrorism does little to deter. These arguments miss one key issue in that the legislation drafted to suppress terrorism reaches more broadly than traditional criminal law in that it “includes a conspiracy, attempt or threat to commit any...”⁸¹ act defined in the *Criminal Code of Canada* as a terrorist act. Acts of terrorism also extend beyond what would be expected in murder or treason to include financing terrorism (section 83.02), making available property or services to terrorism (section 83.03) or possessing property for terrorist purposes (section 83.04).

The value of criminal law, therefore, is not the deterrence factor but the investigatory assets criminal law can focus upon defending against suicide terrorism. The investigatory assets brought into the defence have the ability of both investigation and, potentially, the use of deadly force against a suicide attacker as a last stance defence.

⁸⁰ Mohammed M. Hafez, *Suicide Bombers of Iraq: The Strategy and Ideology of Martyrdom* (Washington D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 2007), 67-70.

⁸¹ *Criminal Code of Canada*, RSC., 1985, section 83.01, http://laws.justice.gc.ca/en/showdoc/cs/C-46/bo-ga:l_II_1/en#anchorbo-ga:l_II_1; Internet; accessed 24 March 2009.

One aspect of investigative capability is the traditional investigation that results in a conviction and prosecution. As discussed, incarceration is unlikely to deter a suicide bombing, but an arrest, prosecution and incarceration at least foils, even temporarily, one suicide bomber's intent. It is also reasonable to conclude that the arrest of a key leader will result in adverse affects on planning and, at least, a temporary negative effect on the terrorist group. Investigation, arrest and prosecution did lead to the cessation of suicide attacks when the arrested leader of the PKK asked his followers to cease suicide attacks. Although arrest of the leader in that case proved effective, the personality of the captured leader becomes an issue. Had Ocalan called for mass suicide strikes instead of a cessation of suicide attacks, it is likely that his subordinates would have obeyed.

A further difficulty which arises in drafting legislation aimed at criminalizing suicide terrorism is the immediate human rights reaction to any such legislation.⁸² The intent of the legislation might be to criminalize spoken words that are intended to create the desire to commit a suicide attack. The corollary to such legislation is the allegation that the state has breached the human right of free speech. As argued by Kennison and Loumansky in their study of the UK police response to terrorism, "traditional policing styles ... are based on notions of reasonableness, compromise and respect for the individuals' rights."⁸³ Jurisdictions, such as Canada, might be able to preserve the

⁸²For an aspect of British reaction to proposed anti-terrorism legislation see McAllister, J.F.O. and Gibson, Helen. "Closing Down Londonistan Britain wants to crack down on radical imams, but new antiterror laws risk alienating moderate Muslims." *Time International* (Atlantic ed.) 166, no. 8 (August 22, 2005): 16; <http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?index=1&did=894607021&SrchMode=1&sid=15&Fmt=3&VInst=PROD&VType=PQD&RQT=309&VName=PQD&TS=1237850712&clientId=1711> ; Internet; accessed 10 February 2009.

⁸³Peter Kennison and Amanda Loumansky, "Shoot to Kill – understanding police use of force in combating suicide terrorism" *Crime Law Societal Change* 47, (2006): 151; <http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?index=0&did=1366254251&Srch>

legislation on the premise that not all speech is protected but the risk to any such legislation is the judicial declaration that the legislation is of no force and effect. Further, the legislation must be drafted so as not to grant investigatory powers that amount to human right's violations. Although such potential violations might expedite investigation of terrorism, including suicide terrorism, potential violations also undermine a nation's constitutional legal foundation.⁸⁴ Without commenting upon the merits of either argument, what is clear is that legislation drafted to suppress terrorist activity within a nation that respects human rights must be drafted in narrow terms that, resultantly, also narrow the tools and tactics open to investigators.

A key aspect of a government's investigation of suicide terrorism is that the Rule of Law must benefit all. As discussed above, for the government to lose the moral high ground when investigating terrorism will likely result in the loss of its constitutional legal foundation and, likely, such initiatives would not survive judicial review. The court system will strive to maintain the Rule of Law in any society targeted by suicide terrorism that functions on the basis of the Rule of Law. Worse, however, is any government actions that discriminates against a subset of society could result in an increase in home-grown terrorism. Khan's quoted passage above highlights his separation of the UK government from his "people".⁸⁵ Hence, any governmental action that exacerbates such a distinction would only fuel the resentment and desire for

Mode=1&sid=10&Fmt=6&VInst=PROD&VType=PQD&RQT=309&VName=PQD&TS=1237850279
&clientId=1711; Internet; accessed 12 December 2008.

⁸⁴Peter Hostettler, "Human Rights and the "War" Against International Terrorism," in *Terrorism and International Law: Challenges and Responses*, ed. Michael N. Schmitt and Gian Luca Beruto (San Remo: International Institute of Humanitarian Law, 2002), 30.

⁸⁵ Aidan Kirby, "The London Bombers as "Self-Starters": A Case Study in Indigenous Radicalization and the Emergence of Autonomous Cliques," 422.

retaliation by those already proceeding down the decision track of committing a suicide attack.

Unfortunately, investigatory attempts that minimize human rights intrusions have not always been successful as a defence to suicide bombing. The United Kingdom utilize, as an investigatory tool, close circuit television. There are sufficient cameras in London that the average Londoner is photographed three hundred times per day.⁸⁶ The difficulty with this system is the volume of information available to police combined with the lack of manpower to assess it.⁸⁷ In short, a false sense of security arises from the volume of cameras but, the value of the information obtained for defending against suicide attacks is questionable at best. The cameras have existed since the 1990s⁸⁸ but they did not prevent the London Four suicide attack more than a decade later. The close circuit cameras capture evidence that permits reconstruction of the attack but, even if the suicide bomber is carrying equipment identifiable by the trained observer as a suicide bomb, there are insufficient police resources to view all imagery as it is captured. The value of use of such technology is further questioned upon consideration of the damage caused to the population when their sense of security is shattered by a successful suicide

⁸⁶Fred Guterl, William Underhill, William, Adams, Jonathan, Breslau, Karen, Nadeau, Barbie, Schafer, Sarah, Theil, Stefan and Pape, Eric. "Taking a Closer Look; Governments the world over are watching citizens like never before. But are we any safer for it?" *Newsweek (International Edition)* New York, March 8, 2004: 42; <http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?index=0&did=571041141&SrchMode=1&sid=6&Fmt=3&VInst=PROD&VType=PQD&RQT=309&VName=PQD&TS=1237849964&clientId=1711> ; Internet; accessed 12 December 2008.

⁸⁷Ibid.

⁸⁸Ibid.

attack.⁸⁹ In other words, as police cannot use obtrusive investigative measures within the general population, suicide attackers have the ability to move and plan without fear.

A final limiting factor of the efficiency of criminal investigation as a defence to suicide terrorism is the options open to law enforcement once a suicide bomber is identified. In the perfect situation, police uncover sufficient admissible evidence to arrest and successfully prosecute an individual with suicide attack intentions. Such an arrest or threat of arrest, as discussed above, will not specifically or generally deter but the result of one less suicide bomber would be beneficial to the targeted nation.

The limitation of efficiency of such a course of actions is the circumstance when the arrest occurs: is the suicide bomber already wired for the suicide attack? Such a situation faced the United Kingdom police when they shot Jean Charles de Menezes thinking the innocent man was a suicide bomber ready to attack. Worse still, the police in that circumstance had to shoot de Menezes in the head to prevent activation of the suicide bomb device. The general principle of application of force within the Rule of Law is minimum force and, when possible, application of life saving measures to save a suspect shot by a law enforcement agency. The policy guidance of the United Kingdom police in the case of stopping a suicide attacker was “‘flaccid incapacitation of the brain stem’ by shooting the suspect suicide bomber or the bomb trigger in the head a number of times thereby preventing activation of the explosive device.”⁹⁰ The limitation of this tactic is evidenced by the shooting of de Menezes: killing an innocent man.

⁸⁹Ibid., 43.

⁹⁰ Peter Kennison and Amanda Loumansky, “Shoot to Kill – understanding police use of force in combating suicide terrorism,” 154.

The application of such deadly force, and the potential of killing an innocent person, illustrates the limitation of the investigation approach as a defence against suicide attacks. The investigatory branch may be successful in either arresting with sufficient evidence to convict prior to the suicide bomber being prepared to detonate or they may kill the bomber laden with explosives before he/she is able to detonate. The limitation is failure on either account. Whether failure to arrest before attacking or failure in killing an innocent person, the tactic equates with the limitation of total success or total failure. There is no acceptable middle ground. A defence where there is only total success or total failure is the worst form of defence as there are simply too many variables to favour success: total failure may be as equally likely as total success. To further illustrate the point, three Irish Republican Army terrorists were suspected of planning a bomb attack in Gibraltar. United Kingdom security forces, believing the suspects were intending on detonating the bomb once the suspects realized they were about to be apprehended, killed the suspects to prevent the bomb's detonation. Further investigation uncovered that there was no bomb and, eventually a United Kingdom court of law criticized the security forces for the unnecessary deaths.⁹¹ The intentions of the security forces were sound but the operation was a total failure.

International or national domestic legislation seeking to prevent or deter suicide terrorism serves a function. Whether by capturing and prosecuting a key leader such as the PKK's Ocalan which ended the PKK's use of suicide terrorism or whether by permitting government investigations so as to uncover a suicide attack intention, legislation is required. That said, however, because of human rights limitations,

⁹¹Ibid., 161-162.

limitations in the value of deterrence or practical limitations in the application of force, legislation alone is not an efficient defence to suicide attack.

HUMANITARIAN LAW APPLICATION OF DEADLY FORCE

Without commenting on either the term or relevance of the phrase “Global War on Terror,” the application of force within the authority of humanitarian law is an attractive defence to suicide attack. The logic that use of force to either target leaders of terror groups that employ suicide attack tactics, the planners of suicide attacks or, if lawful, retaliatory strikes against those that support suicide attacks deters suicide attacks seems sound. The reality, however, is that use of kinetic force alone does not defend against suicide attacks as such force either kills a leader easily replaced or, worse, creates further martyrs further support for the terrorist cause.

Targeting Key Leadership

Kinetic targeting of key leadership within a suicide attack group logically negatively affects that group’s planning and execution of suicide attacks. This seemingly logical assumption, however, is not supported by the analytical research. Hafez and Hatfield’s analysis of the 2000-2002 attack frequency after targeted assassinations within Palestine yielded the conclusion that “targeted assassinations do not decrease the rate of Palestinian violence.”⁹² Hafez and Hatfield also found such assassinations did not

increase the rates of violence over the time period studied⁹³ but the dramatic escalation in violence resulting from Israel's killing of master bomb maker Yahya Ayyah,⁹⁴ killed before 2000, at least questions whether further analysis of this general conclusion is required.

Hafez and Hatfield's conclusion that targeted killing did not decrease violence is consistent with Pedahzur and Perliger's analysis of terrorist group structure. Pedahzur and Perliger hypothesized that the targetable hierarchy was replaced by a more horizontal network as a consequence of intensive Israeli operations against Palestinian organizations in 2000.⁹⁵ Their analysis concluded that the hierarchical structure did change to a more local network. Further, to support their conclusions and in support of Hafez and Hatfield's conclusions, Pedahzur and Perliger identified that leaders assassinated by the Israelis were replaced by other leaders within that same network. Pedahzur and Perliger's analysis led them to the conclusion that "attacks against [leaders within a cell or hub] have minor influence on the network, and, in most cases, do not affect its continued existence."⁹⁶

⁹²Mohammed M. Hafez, and Joseph M. Hatfield, "Do Targeted Assassinations Work? A Multivariate Analysis of Israel's Controversial Tactic during Al-Aqsa Uprising," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, 29, (2006): 361; <http://web.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdf?vid=3&hid=120&sid=866a1277-e53d-429d-9ab3-3d4420750f7c%40sessionmgr103>; Internet; accessed 26 January 2009.

⁹³Ibid.

⁹⁴ Bruce Hoffman and Gordon H. McCormick, "Terrorism, Signaling, and Suicide Attack," 266.

⁹⁵ Ami Pedahzur and Arie Perliger, "The Changing Nature of Suicide Attacks: A Social Network Perspective," *Social Forces* 84, no. 4 (Jun 2006): 1990; <http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?index=0&did=1066736501&SrchMode=1&sid=20&Fmt=6&VInst=PROD&VType=PQD&RQT=309&VName=PQD&TS=1237851107&clientId=171>; Internet; accessed 11 February 2008.

⁹⁶Ibid., 1999.

Although logical from a western hierarchical perspective, targeted assassinations is not the definitive defence against suicide attacks. Although the arrest of Ocalan, the PKK leader, eventually resulted in cessation of suicide attacks, the increase of attacks in response to his potential execution⁹⁷ question whether assassination of such a charismatic and forceful leader would end suicide attacks. If nothing more, assassination of a key leader has the potential of creating another martyr to the cause and of creating more sentiment against the nation executing the assassination. Such impact in sentiment is one of the reasons Sageman argues that news releases of such “victories” should cease.⁹⁸ So long as there remains another leader to fill the leadership vacuum, targeted assassinations should not be viewed as the panacea of defence to suicide bombings.

Retaliatory Strikes

The concept of kinetic strikes in retaliation to suicide attacks connotes a variety of tactics, some lawful under humanitarian law and some not. The purpose of this analysis is not a commentary or in-depth analysis of the legal basis for a retaliatory strike but, rather, an assessment of whether retaliatory strikes serve as a defence to suicide bombing. For a series of reasons, including how the terrorist groups use such attacks against the community within their propaganda messaging, retaliatory strikes are not a defence to suicide bombing.

⁹⁷ Mia Bloom, *Dying to Kill: the Allure of Suicide Terror*, 102.

⁹⁸ Sageman, Marc. “A Strategy for Fighting International Islamist Terrorists.” *The Annals of the American Academy* 618, (July 2008): 229; <http://ann.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/618/1/223> ; Internet; accessed 27 January 2009.

Retaliation, at its most severe, is not supported in humanitarian law or in human rights law. The counter-insurgency techniques reported to have been committed by the Russians in Chechnya were often not within the bounds of law. The Russian tactics used against innocent civilians included arbitrary detention and murder. Whether out of frustration or out of a campaign of brutal intimidation, they succeeded in creating motivation for further attacks. Speckhard and Ahkmedova interviewed family members or close associates of suicide bombers and found that “in all cases deep personal traumatization, feelings of hopelessness and loss at the hands of the Russians” existed.⁹⁹ Table 2, copied from Speckhard and Ahkmedova’s research, illustrates the 100% correlation between Russian counter-insurgency tactics, whether retaliatory or in frustration, and the generation of suicide bombers.

Table 2 – Of 34 Chechen Suicide Bomber families Interviewed, The Frequency of Russian counter-insurgency tactics to suicide bomber

Traumatic Events	Frequency	Percent
More than one family member killed	16	47
Father or mother killed	5	15
Brother killed	8	23
Husband killed	1	3
Family member disappeared after arrest	3	9
Family member tortured	1	3
Total	34	100

Source: Anne Speckhard and Khapta Ahkmedova, “The Making of a Martyr: Chechen Suicide Terrorism,” 455.

⁹⁹ Anne Speckhard and Khapta Ahkmedova, “The Making of a Martyr: Chechen Suicide Terrorism,” 442-443.

A different form of retaliatory strike has been executed by Israeli security forces. The Israelis have bull-dozed the homes of the family members of a suicide bomber but, for an even greater propaganda victory, the Hamas buy the family a new home.¹⁰⁰ As deduced by Dutter and Seliktar, Israel has retaliated in response to suicide attacks “but attacks have not ceased and show no signs of doing so any time soon.”¹⁰¹

Retaliation may, in fact have an opposite effect. Kinetic retaliatory strikes may further feed a terrorist group’s message, such as the Islamic Jihadist’s message that the world is attacking Islam.¹⁰² Further, retaliation may reinforce a martyr’s message of continuing the fight: the victims of the kinetic retaliatory strike may see such use of force as an attack as opposed to retaliation by victims of a suicide attack.¹⁰³ The purpose behind the retaliatory strike is to demonstrate to the terrorists and to the terrorist supporters of the penalty for suicide attacks. Such retaliatory strikes fail if either the terrorist or their supporters fail to see the intended purpose but, rather, perceives the strike as an initial attack.

In order to avoid fostering resentment by a population and the resulting desire to continue the terrorist fight, only key leaders should be targeted. Following the analysis of the shift to more lateral networks, however, targeting the key leadership will not serve as a defence to suicide bombing but such targeting may be useful if combined with other

¹⁰⁰Kushner, Harvey W. “Suicide Bombers: Business as Usual,” 333.

¹⁰¹Lee E. Dutter and Ofira Seliktar, “To Martyr or Not to Martyr: Jihad is the Question, What Policy is the Answer?” *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 30, (2007): 437; <http://web.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdf?vid=3&hid=120&sid=866a1277-e53d-429d-9ab3-3d4420750f7c%40sessionmgr103>; Internet; accessed 19 January 2009.

¹⁰² Sageman, Marc. “A Strategy for Fighting International Islamist Terrorists,” 225.

¹⁰³ Bruce Hoffman and Gordon H. McCormick, “Terrorism, Signaling, and Suicide Attack,” 225.

tactics such as psychological operations. Use of deadly force within humanitarian law in order to kill a suicide bomber before he/she detonates may prevent the attack on an intended target but this is not a solution. This form of defence is the last stand defence as it relies upon correct identification, analogous to the identification requirements of police forces, and also runs the risk of increased collateral damage as it permits the attacker to approach a target. As targeting key leaders will not disrupt suicide bomber groups and as retaliation against the suicide bomber's community will only foster resentment and create further potential suicide attackers, the use of kinetic force under the authority of humanitarian law is not the best defense to suicide bombing.

TECHNOLOGY

The technologically heavy counter-insurgency fought by Western governments in both Iraq and Afghanistan raises the question as to whether technology will defeat suicide bombing. Strikes against key terrorist leadership have utilized technology for both targeting as well as for reduction in collateral damage but the use of suicide bombing continues unabated. That said, however, there are other technologies available that have effects beyond firepower.

Biometric Measurements

Biometric iris scans have become increasingly important as a tool to enhance border control. The purpose of the scans is to electronically compare potential immigrant

or visitor with a database of known terrorists. Iridian Technologies is a producer of iris scanning equipment and their mission statement is "...to enable a safer world through iris recognition."¹⁰⁴ Their webpage also lists their markets as "[b]y using iris recognition...companies are now assured of who is crossing its border..." and that its target markets include "border control."¹⁰⁵ The webpage is very careful to not state national border control but the implication exists. Ironically, one of the company's founders stated "To confuse identification with antiterrorism is flawed reasoning...It is an illusion to think [iris scans] could prevent terrorism. A suicide bomber is not going to be enrolled on the database."¹⁰⁶ In short, their marketing is far from reality and, as previously mentioned, iris recognition technology is not the defence to suicide attacks.

On a parallel analysis, facial feature recognition biometric has been proposed as a solution for scanning the multitude of images captured by close-circuit television such as that captured in London. The limitation that it is unlikely that a suicide bomber would be in a facial feature recognition database also limits its utility as a defence to suicide bombing.

Following the theme of databases, DNA matching technology is an effective mechanism of identification if the sources of DNA are available. The likelihood that DNA seized at a suicide bomb making facility matches an identified individual is remote. In order to have such a DNA profile within the database, DNA would have to have been

¹⁰⁴ <http://www.iriscan.com/about.php>

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶ Guterl, Fred, Underhill, William, Adams, Jonathan, Breslau, Karen, Nadeau, Barbie, Schafer, Sarah, Theil, Stefan and Pape, Eric. "Taking a Closer Look; Governments the world over are watching citizens like never before. But are we any safer for it?" 42.

collected and such collection only arises from a search warrant or from where a DNA sample is discarded (such as a used bandage, hair samples or, perhaps, a used facial tissue). If the suicide bomber originated from a foreign nation, the chance of having a DNA sample becomes even more remote. Although DNA identification is an effective tool, the likelihood of its use in defence to suicide terrorism is presently remote.

A possible use of all such technology would be the creation of a national database. Such a database would contain the various biometric measurements as well as a DNA profile. The immediate concerns are those of privacy and human rights. Further, in order to make such a database useful, law enforcement agencies would need the authority to compel any suspect to submit to biometric measurement for comparison. Such compulsory invasions of privacy would suffer tremendous criticism from human rights observers, would likely not survive judicial review in nations that follow the Rule of Law and would likely be used within the insurgent's propaganda campaign. Such databases do not presently exist and significant changes to human rights perceptions would be necessary before such an initiative could be executed.

Sensors

A final component of technology is sensors that, by employing x-ray or electromagnetic imagery, are capable of identifying suicide belts. Kaplan and Kress assessed the efficacy of employing such equipment as a defence to suicide bombing but

they found “that even the widespread deployment of such sensors would not reliably reduce expected [suicide bombing] casualties.”¹⁰⁷

Although technology may, at some point, assist or provide a defence to suicide attacks, that technology, or approaches to use of that technology, does not yet exist.

ATTACK THE COMMON LINK

The vaccine analogy has been carried through this argument. Rather than randomly targeting elements of the suicide bomber organization, the vaccine analogy suggests targeting of the common link. Chapter Two of this argument concluded that terror groups shared leadership, desire for national identity, use of the media to express the message of the terrorist group and of the martyr and, where the suicide tactic continues to be used, a supportive community.

The common link that would be the most efficient target for defence against suicide bombing is the community. Other authors have demonstrated that kinetically targeting key leadership does not adversely affect the frequency of terrorist attacks. Simply conceding the terrorist aims would certainly curtail attacks but there is no political appetite for ceding nationhood to the terrorist groups in question. Although the

¹⁰⁷ Kaplan, Edward H. and Kress, Moshe. “Operational effectiveness of suicide-bomber- detector schemes: A best-case analysis” *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America* 102, no. 29 (July 19, 2005): 10402; http://hk3my5sa3k.search.serialssolutions.com/directLink?&atitle=Operational%20effectiveness%20of%20suicide%2Dbomber%2Ddetector%20schemes%3A%20A%20best%2Dcase%20analysis&author=Edward%20H%20Kaplan%3B%20Moshe%20Kress&issn=00278424&title=Proceedings%20of%20the%20National%20Academy%20of%20Sciences%20of%20the%20United%20States%20of%20America&volume=102&issue=29&date=20050719&spage=10399&id=doi:&sid=ProQ_ss&genre=article&lang=en ; Internet; accessed 19 January 2009.

media used could be kinetically targeted, the terrorist cell would simply find another mechanism to spread their message. That said, however, the use of the media to garner community support suggests that non-kinetic targeting of such media would adversely affect community support. The cessation of suicide bombing in Chechnya and with the PKK illustrates the need for community support in the fostering and martyring of suicide attackers and such support suggests its value as a target.

Neither humanitarian law nor human rights law would authorize kinetic attacks on the community that supports suicide terrorism. Further, it is entirely likely that such kinetic attacks would have the counter effect of motivating further suicide attacks. The observation from Chechnya is that where the community empathizes with the victims of suicide bombing or where the community recognizes the victims as the innocent victims that they are, suicide bombing ceases. The strategy that would therefore be the most effective is the non-kinetic attack of the terrorist's supporting community with the end-state of cessation of support for suicide terrorism. Such non-kinetic targeting should be effected by psychological operations.

CHAPTER 4

PSYCHOLOGICAL OPERATIONS

Kinetic targeting of a suicide terrorist's supporting community most often violates international law. There will be elements within that supporting community that will be lawful targets during that time that they actively participate in hostilities in an armed conflict and thereby lose the protections afforded civilians in International Humanitarian Law (IHL); however, to target kinetically the entire community constitutes an IHL violation. To target that same population with non-kinetic tactics will not violate international law and, perhaps of equal importance, such targeting will not risk generating further martyrs and further support, if not further recruits, for the suicide terrorist group.

To target non-kinetically the supporting community is simple. The difficulty is to target the supporting community to achieve the specific end-state of cessation of support for suicide attacks. Psychological operations, as a form of non-kinetic targeting, consist of delivering messages without violence to an audience with the aim of furthering the political or military objective.¹⁰⁸ Psychological operations are “planned operations that convey selected information to foreign audiences to influence their emotions, motives, objective reasoning, and ultimately their behavior.”¹⁰⁹ The term psychological operations might connote use of lies and half-truths but the opposite tactic would be most

¹⁰⁸Ron Schleifer, “Psychological Operations: A New Variation on an Age Old Art: Hezbollah versus Israel.” *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 29, (2006): 2; <http://web.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdf?vid=3&hid=106&sid=866a1277-e53d-429d-9ab3-3d4420750f7c%40sessionmgr103>; Internet; accessed 27 January 2009.

¹⁰⁹James A. Stephenson and Mark A. Staal, “An Ethical Decision-Making Model for Operational Psychology.” *Ethics & Behavior* 17, no. 1 (2007): 62; <http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?index=0&did=>

effective.¹¹⁰ Effective use of psychological operations is the tactic that would help shape the community and that would serve as the defence to suicide bombing. Psychological operations will need to rely upon accurate and verifiable messaging in order to build trust in the supporting community that the messages are, in fact, reliable. One discovered lie or half-truth is likely all that would be necessary to defeat the aim of psychological operations as a defence to suicide bombing. In short, psychological operations, once well understood, well planned and well executed, will be an effective defence to suicide terrorism.

PSYCHOLOGICAL OPERATIONS – A PRIMER

The purpose of psychological operation is to “influence attitudes and behaviour affecting the achievement of political and military objectives.”¹¹¹ Perhaps put more simply, psychological operations help shape a targeted individual or targeted group’s perceptions of an element of the battlespace. Although the concept appears attractive in any form of conflict, modern warfare’s reliance on technology has relegated psychological operations to an afterthought receiving little attention.¹¹² The methods of achieving this shaped perception can range from use of kinetic force (such as a firepower

1283907491&SrchMode=1&sid=30&Fmt=18&VInst=PROD&VType=PQD&RQT=309&VName=PQD&TS=1237851505&clientId=171; Internet; accessed 27 January 2009 citing the US Department of the Army.

¹¹⁰*Ibid.*, 63.

¹¹¹Ryan Clow, “Psychological Operations: The Need to Understand the Psychological Plane of Warfare.” *Canadian Military Journal* 9, no.1: 24.

¹¹²Jerrold M. Post, “Psychological Operations and Counterterrorism.” *Joint Force Quarterly* 37, (Second Quarter 2005): 106; <http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?index=6&did=821988761&SrchMode=1&sid=22&Fmt=6&VInst=PROD&VType=PQD&RQT=309&VName=PQD&TS=1237851168&clientId=1711> ; Internet; accessed 27 January 2009.

capability demonstration) to the dropping of leaflets. Regardless of the tactic used to convey the message, any psychological operation will have as an objective either to weaken the target's will, to gain the support of those in a targeted community that are undecided or to improve the sentiment between the user of psychological operations and the targeted community.¹¹³ Equally, however, psychological operations poorly planned or poorly executed run the risk of reinforcing negative feelings of the target community and that risk is acute in target groups where distrust already exists. Most importantly, however, psychological operations have already proven effective within insurgencies.

PSYCHOLOGICAL OPERATIONS WITHIN AN INSURGENCY

Psychological Operations as a Counter-Insurgency Tool

As kinetic strikes have not proven efficient in the cessation of terrorism in general, and suicide bombing in specific, psychological operations have been argued to be the weapon of choice in fighting any form of terrorism.¹¹⁴ There are lessons to be learned from past uses of psychological operations by counter-insurgency forces. The US government broadcasted Voice of America from Manila into Malaya in 1950. The early days of the broadcast were sufficiently anti-communist to be classified as propaganda.¹¹⁵ The broadcasts were not effective but, rather than ceasing them, the

¹¹³*Ibid.*, 25.

¹¹⁴ Jerrold M. Post, "Psychological Operations and Counterterrorism," 106.

¹¹⁵ Joey S.R. Long, "Winning Hearts and Minds: U.S. Psychological Warfare Operations in Singapore, 1955-1961." *Diplomatic History* 32, no. 5 (November 2008): 909; <http://web.ebscohost.com>

decision was made to make the broadcasts credible. In other words, poorly planned and poorly executed messaging was, at best, ineffective and, at worst, may have weakened the target audience's attitudes towards the American government. A review of Voice of America's broadcasts also highlighted the need for cultural awareness in both content and manner of delivery.¹¹⁶ The product of the analysis and the application of the lessons learned were news broadcasts void of propaganda, accurate in content but "still infused with American-centered topics or subjects accentuating Free World values."¹¹⁷ The messaging became subtle but present. The content of the messaging is not relevant here but the lessons learned of accuracy, the avoidance of propaganda, the framing of the messaging delivery to reflect the culture and sensitivities of the target audience along with the intentional subtle inclusion of the desired messages are worthy of note. The result of the Voice of America's broadcast changes was a much increased listening audience¹¹⁸ and, with the increased audience, increased exposure to the US anti-communist messaging.

As a further lesson of the validity of psychological operations in a counter-insurgency, US anti-communist psychological operations in Malaya were not restricted to Voice of America. The US arranged for local citizens to visit the US, selected prominent individuals were sent to US training programs, Singaporean teenagers were sent to live in the US for one year, artists and athletes visited and met with Malayan citizens, the US

/ehost/detail?vid=3&hid=114&sid=656dee48-5150-49a5-8ff7-b04dad471fd8%40sessionmgr103 ; Internet; accessed 27 January 2009.

¹¹⁶*Ibid.*, 910.

¹¹⁷*Ibid.*, 911.

¹¹⁸*Ibid.*, 913.

sent films to the Malayan people and the US assisted in opening a library replete with books on US history and US scientific achievements. All of these initiatives had, as a subtle message, the benefits of democracy over communism. The lessons to be learned from these efforts are that effective psychological operations must be more than mere leaflet drops or radio broadcasts as there is the need to provide a varied approach to the mechanism of message delivery. Athletes, artists and musicians connected with the Malayan people but, as such forms would likely fail when seeking to influence an Islamic Jihadist community, the nature of message delivery must consider the target audience.

The United States was not alone in developing psychological operations in Malaya. General Sir Gerald Templer, High Commissioner and Director of Operations for the Federation of Malaya (1952-1954), also recognized the value of psychological operations in a counter-insurgency. He created teams that visited remote communities and, during these visits, the teams would entertain the locals with films and skits all containing an anti-communist theme.¹¹⁹ Further, inexpensive radios were distributed to locals so that they could listen to a community broadcast. As with the US, the British initiatives at psychological operations included subtle messaging in a medium culturally acceptable to the target audience. A significant psychological operations victory for General Templer was his use of “white areas” (areas where citizens could live free of counter-insurgency restrictions) once such areas were deemed sufficiently stable. The result was the desire of others to live equally free.¹²⁰

¹¹⁹Kumar Ramakrishna, “‘Transmogrifying’ Malaya: the impact of Sir Gerald Templer 1952-54.” *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 32, no. 1 (February 2001): 86: <http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?index=0&did=74844515&SrchMode=1&sid=24&Fmt=6&VInst=PROD&VType=PQD&RQT=309&VName=PQD&TS=1237851253&clientId=1711>; Internet; accessed 27 January 2009.

¹²⁰*Ibid.*, 88-89.

The lessons from the US and British use of psychological operations in Malaya illustrate the value of such initiatives. Both nations needed to convince the population to reject communism and to side with the West. The use of kinetic force by either nation would certainly have driven the population to supporting the communist movement. What was necessary was to influence those who had not yet decided what form of government to support and, with luck, change the minds of those who had been convinced that communism was a suitable option for Malayan development. The two nations used subtle messaging in a manner acceptable to the target audience and the successes of the psychological operations demonstrate the value of such targeting in a counter-insurgency.

The effectiveness of psychological operations is illustrated by its use by the Malayan counter-insurgency example. Similarly, psychological operations would be effective as a tool to persuade a terrorist's supporting community to cease support for suicide tactics. The value of psychological operations as a defence to suicide bombing also follows from other lessons learned where such tactics were used to:

...quash this bloodthirsty, mechanical state of mind. [Psychological operations] aims at stopping the enemy soldiers from acting like automated killing machines and start them thinking again, about their homes, their family, and life in general. Above all, it encourages them to think in moral terms while, at the same time, prompting strong feelings of guilt, all in order to weaken the enemy soldiers' resolve, diminish their effectiveness as soldiers. Throughout history, the Vietnam War being the obvious example, messages triggering feelings of guilt among the enemy proved especially rewarding.¹²¹

¹²¹ Ron Schleifer, "Psychological Operations: A New Variation on an Age Old Art: Hezbollah versus Israel," 3.

As psychological operations were a tactic used to defend against the spread of communism into Malaya, so too would the tactic defend against suicide bombing.

Psychological Operations as an Insurgent's Tool

Psychological operations have not only been used as a counter-insurgency tactic as insurgents have also recognized the value of psychological operations in increasing support for their cause. Their use of psychological operations is varied. The purpose of the psychological operation may be to unify support for their cause, to recruit further membership, to persuade the enemy of the futility in continuing the aggrieved policy or it may be to simply discount their opponent's message. Suicide attacks are themselves a form of psychological operation: the purposes of suicide bombing included attracting attention to the insurgents cause and altering a target's political position or decision.

Hezbollah have mastered the use of psychological operations and the messages of the battle with Israel are inculcated within the Palestinian culture. As stated by one Palestinian, "[f]or me a Jew is not a problem. But he sits in my country, doing things that are not acceptable. *I grew up with it.*"¹²² Hezbollah recognized the value of imagery as a psychological operations tool in their fight with Israel. Whether still pictures or videos of actual attacks, Hezbollah generates support for its cause and, with support, further recruits follow. Hezbollah also recognizes the inherent danger in psychological operations such that, for example, a video of the Hezbollah's flag being raised in an

¹²²Anat Berko and Edna Erez, "'Ordinary People' and 'Death Work.': Palestinian Suicide Bombers as Victimizers and Victims," 609 [emphasis added].

Israeli compound does not dwell on their subsequently being driven out of the same compound.¹²³ In short, “Hezbollah, as a rule, regarded the video, and above all the symbolic events captured on tape, as an object of operation.”¹²⁴ The logic behind such operations is the value that orchestrated and controlled messaging has in convincing the local population of the significance of the group’s operations and in the value of further recruitment.

Hezbollah’s psychological operations for recruitment are not restricted to filmed imagery. The group also established various support elements targeting the Lebanese Shi’a population such that the minority group would support Hezbollah’s efforts.¹²⁵ Hezbollah have held parades in occupied territories have positioned themselves as a unifier in the Lebanese struggle against Israel and, significantly, have demonized the Israelis.¹²⁶ The product of consolidating support with the home audience while demonizing the enemy has resulted in an increased support base, and consequently, continued recruitment.

Hezbollah's use of psychological operations was effective but Islamic Jihadists have since perfected the art as they have demonstrated the ability to influence and radicalize citizens of foreign nations through the use of mass-media such as the Internet. The London Four adopted the Islamic Jihadist message even though they were, if the

¹²³Ron Schleifer, “Psychological Operations: A New Variation on an Age Old Art: Hezbollah versus Israel.” *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 29, (2006): 6; <http://web.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdf?vid=3&hid=106&sid=866a1277-e53d-429d-9ab3-3d4420750f7c%40sessionmgr103>; Internet; accessed 27 January 2009.

¹²⁴*Ibid.*

¹²⁵*Ibid.*, 7.

¹²⁶*Ibid.*, 8-11.

term may be used, regular citizens living in the United Kingdom. The message that Islam was under threat from the West, including from the United Kingdom, resulted in the four UK citizens being remotely recruited into the Islamic Jihadist campaign. There was much speculation that the London Four had visited and trained in Al Qaeda camps and that it was in these training camps that the four United Kingdom citizens became radicalized to Islamic Jihadists. Recent evidence, however, supports the conclusion that these four western citizens convinced themselves to become radical Islamic Jihadists with the assistance of the Internet.¹²⁷ The importance of psychological operations through the media has likely increased for Al Qaeda as, since the US invasion of Afghanistan and the subsequent kinetic strikes against identified Al Qaeda leadership, Al Qaeda has splintered into small cells and spreads its messaging via Internet chat forums. Training manuals and audio or video recordings have also taken prominence.¹²⁸ To illustrate the point, the Taliban leadership was reportedly persuaded to adopt suicide attack as a technique after viewing a video of successful suicide attacks in Iraq.¹²⁹

Hezbollah and the Islamic Jihadists are not alone in using psychological operations for recruitment. The Tamil Tiger's martyring of suicide bombers results in recruitment as well. The messages of successful suicide attackers calling upon the

¹²⁷ Aidan Kirby, "The London Bombers as "Self-Starters": A Case Study in Indigenous Radicalization and the Emergence of Autonomous Cliques," 425.

¹²⁸ Evan F. Kohlmann, "'Homegrown' Terrorists: Theory and Cases in the War on Terror's Newest Front.," *The Annals of the American Academy* 618, (July 2008): 98; <http://ann.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/618/1/95>; Internet; accessed 29 January 2009.

¹²⁹ Brian Glyn Williams, "Mullah Omar's Missiles: A Field Report on Suicide Bombers in Afghanistan." *Middle East Policy* XV, no. 4 (Winter 2008): 28.

viewers to continue the fight is a strong and effective psychological weapon well used by the insurgents.

The insurgent groups have a common theme in their messaging. Whether the need to fight oppression for an independent state, as conveyed by the Tamil Tigers or Hezbollah, or whether the need to fight oppression of Islam by the West, insurgents' psychological operations portray the opposing government or force as an oppressor with intent on destroying the group purported to be represented by the terrorists. The images of destruction caused by the Israeli Defence Force, of US flags raised over Iraq or of treatment of detainees at Abu Ghraib all seek to convey the message that the insurgents' cause is justified and that fighting the named oppressor is necessary.

Lessons Learned

Psychological operations are an effective weapon in a counter-insurgency. The operations may target a variety of audiences and consideration of the secondary and, possibly, tertiary effects are necessary. Amr and Singer argue that the US, and by affiliation the rest of the West, is losing the "War of Ideas".¹³⁰ If their conclusion is accurate, it is only because the insurgents have recognized the value of psychological operations within the insurgencies presently being fought. In assessing US errors in the application of psychological operations in the struggle in Iraq, Lt. Col. Starunskiy concluded that the US' primary error is "their overestimation of the technological

¹³⁰ Hady Amr and P.W. Singer, "To Win the "War on Terror," We Must First Win the "war of Ideas": Here's How." *The Annals of the American Academy* 618, (July 2008): 212-213; <http://ann.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/618/1/212>Internet; accessed 27 January 2009.

superiority factor to the detriment of sober analysis of the socio-psychological situation and the morale of the target audiences.”¹³¹ In order for psychological operations to be successful as a defence to suicide bombing, messaging and analysis will be required as opposed to reliance on technology.

PSYCHOLOGICAL OPERATIONS AS A DEFENCE TO SUICIDE BOMBING

The purpose of psychological operations as a counter-insurgency tactic is to undermine the terrorist principle that, in the eyes of the terrorist, the ends justify the means.¹³² Unfortunately, “little systematic attention has been paid to the potential role that counterpropaganda may have in redirecting or displacing cognitions and behaviors that might otherwise catalyze involvement in political violence.”¹³³ This research project contends that psychological operations are likely the most successful defence to suicide bombing as, in the words of psychologist Dr. Post, describing counter-terrorism in general, “this is not a war that can be won with smart bombs and missiles. This is a war for people’s minds.”¹³⁴ Psychological operations are effective as they may separate the

¹³¹Lt. Col. A.G. Starunskiy, “Psychological Operations of U.S. Military Services at the Present Stage.” *Military Thought* 12, no. 4 (2003): 171; <http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?index=0&did=525561291&SrchMode=1&sid=28&Fmt=6&VInst=PROD&VType=PQD&RQT=309&VName=PQD&TS=1237851447&clientId=1711> ; Internet; accessed 27 January 2009.

¹³². Lt. Col A.G. Starunskiy, “Psychological Operations of U.S. Military Services at the Present Stage,” 170.

¹³³John Horgan, “From Profiles to Pathways and Roots to Routes: Perspectives from Psychology on Radicalization into Terrorism.” *The Annals of the American Academy* 618, (July 2008): 91; <http://ann.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/618/1/80>; Internet; accessed 27 January 2009.

¹³⁴Bob Edwards, “Interview: Dr. Jerrold Post Discusses The Motivations of Hostile Foreign Leaders and Terrorists.”; *Morning Edition*, Washington, D.C., 21 September 2001: 1; <http://proquest.umi.com>.

terrorists from the supporting community. The 2005 peaceful campaign against violence that forced Sinn Fein to admit terrorist involvement with the murder of a local is an example of the value of psychological operations.¹³⁵ Perhaps eloquently expressed in discussing options available to separate a community from terrorists:

...this brings us to the idea of “psy-ops.” But this has to work two ways, drawing the community closer to the relevant authorities in terms of policies of integration in to the larger community and, second, to make the terrorist look alien in the eyes of the community they come from. In these ways one breaks the social relations that affect the emotional and psychological ties, and one ensures that the metaphor the activist is acting out is not one that will be understood by the mass of the community.¹³⁶

Of significance, the conclusions reached above arose from a study of the response to Irish terrorists involved in a hunger strike. The conclusions to be drawn are two fold: firstly, psychological operations work by separating the terrorist from the supporting community and, secondly, that these experiences are not new and, accordingly, are likely applicable to all terrorist groups. As separation of suicide terrorists from their supporting community removes one critical pillar of support, psychological operations are the most effective defence to suicide attack.

com/pqdweb?index=0&did=352056031 & SrchMode=1&sid=3&Fmt=3&VInst= PROD&VType=PQD&RQT=309&V Name=PQD&TS=1237849805&clientId=1711; Internet; accessed 27 January 2009.

¹³⁵Karin Von Hippel, “A Counter-radicalization Strategy for a New U.S. Administration,” *The Annals of the American Academy* 618, (July 2008): 183; <http://ann.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/618/1/182>; Internet; accessed 29 January 2009.

¹³⁶James Dingley and Marcello Mollica, “The Human Body as a Terrorist Weapon: Hunger Strikes and Suicide Bombers,” 486

Community Support

The commonalities of terrorist groups that employ suicide attacks suggest that suicide attack ability rests upon three pillars of strong leadership, effective use of the media and support of the local community. Damage one pillar and suicide bombing is adversely affected. Remove support of the local community, such as with the Chechen insurgents, use of suicide bombing ceases. In the contrary, increased community support for suicide bombing and the tactic increases as illustrated by Hamas. Hamas increasingly used suicide bombing in 2000 as support for the tactic increased. What needs to be noted, however, is that public support for suicide bombing increased in 2000 from a very low level of support in 1996. The reason for this change in support was that the public perceived hope of an effective peace process in 1996 whereas that peace process failed by 2000.¹³⁷ Key to this observation is the support to the conclusion that community support for suicide terrorism is essential. As a corollary, therefore, such support must be the subject of attack as a defence to suicide bombing and psychological operations are the most effective and lawful form of attack. Psychological operations need to be mounted that attack the supporting community such that suicide attacks are not viewed as an act of sacrifice for the population but, rather, is seen as a criminal attack on innocent people. The lesson learned from studies of Irish hunger strikes was that “the important thing is to break the connection between the individual activist and their community.”¹³⁸ Separation

¹³⁷ Mia M. Bloom, “Palestinian Suicide Bombing: Public Support, Market Share, and Outbidding,” 67-69.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*

of the activist from their community will result in reduced recruitment as well as reduced attacks. Eventually, as with the Chechens, suicide attacks should cease as a viable terror tactic. The community must therefore have perceptions altered of both the nature of the suicide act as well as to the nature of the victims of suicide attacks.

Psychological operations as a defence to suicide bombing cannot be one common message directed to all audiences but, rather, must be tailored to a specific group or community. Lt. Col. Starunskiy identified that the target audience must be assessed on various factors including the sociological and psychological. The lessons learned from the British use of psychological operations in Malaya are that the messages must be developed and delivered with the nature of the target audience in mind. Hezbollah, for example, demonize the Israeli people and psychological operations to counter this messaging must simply portray the Israeli citizen as people merely trying to live and grow old. People previously convinced by Hezbollah of the Israeli's evil have changed their views once illuminated by reality. When interviewed as to why a suicide bomber did not detonate amongst the Israelis she was sent to attack, the imprisoned would-be suicide attacker stated that, for the first time, she recognized the Israeli citizens as being no different than her and that her God would not want such people killed.¹³⁹ In other words, the messages must demonstrate the similarities between the people and, of equal importance, the lack of desire by the Israeli people to eradicate the Muslim community represented by Hezbollah. The tactic will work but will take time. Further, as identified by Christine Fair and Bryan Shepherd, people interviewed that believed Islam was under

¹³⁹ Anat Berko and Edna Erez, ““Ordinary People” and “Death Work.”: Palestinian Suicide Bombers as Victimizers and Victims,” 615.

threat were more likely to support terrorism than people who did not believe the West was a threat to their faith.¹⁴⁰ The rhetoric that the West is attacking Islam is a weakness that can be exploited by psychological operations. The West is not attacking Islam and a credible message of reality will eventually succeed in countering terrorist propaganda and, resultantly, will also serve as a defence to suicide terrorism.

Those who disagree with this line of defence will argue that elements of Hezbollah work with Jews in Israel but yet continue to support Hezbollah and suicide attacks. Unfortunately such evidence is accurate but further supports the need to break the reinforcement of community support. Although living and working with Israelis, such Hezbollah supporters remain convinced that the Hezbollah messages remain valid. The counter to Hezbollah's messaging must consider these differing motivations and, equally, must recognize that changes in perceptions of the community will not be rapid. That said, however, such messaging will be effective.

Strong Terrorist Leadership

Suicide operations require a strong charismatic leader, the use of forms of media to distribute required messaging for support and for recruitment of further martyrs and suicide operations also require community support. Kinetic attack on suicide group leadership, as previously discussed, has not proven an effective defence to suicide bombing as such attacks create further martyrs. Further, targeting key leadership has

¹⁴⁰Christine C. Fair and Bryan Shepherd, "Who Supports Terrorism? Evidence from Fourteen Muslim Countries." *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 29, (2006): 52; <http://web.ebscohost.com/ehost>

become less effective because terrorist cells are less hierarchical and because terror groups rely more upon mass media than personal passage of information. These limitations of attack on suicide terror leadership are not found, however, in psychological operations against the leadership of these same groups or cells. Psychological operations need not attack a leader by name, thereby mitigating one limitation of kinetic strikes, but should attack the ideology motivating the cell's leadership. Again, following the Malayan lessons learned, such psychological operations must be planned to not be propaganda but, rather, messages planned and delivered in a manner that the target audiences will be convinced of the frailties of the terrorist cell leadership.

The weaknesses of leadership may be personal or ideological. Osama bin Laden preaches an interpretation of the Koran that, in turn motivates the Islamic Jihadist. Granted this example is of a specific and identifiable leader but the underlying point remains that the psychological operations may attack the ideology or message and not the person. In this example, bin Laden's message is both the interpretation of the Koran and that the West is attacking Islam:

After the end of the Cold War, America escalated its campaign against the Muslim world in its entirety, aiming to get rid of Islam itself. Its main focus in this was to target the scholars and the reformers who were enlightening the people to the dangers of the Judeo-American alliance; it also targeted the *mujahidin*. ... We are grateful to God Most Exalted in that He has facilitated *jihad* in His cause for us, against the Israeli-American attacks on the Holy Sanctuaries of Islam.¹⁴¹

/pdf?vid=3&hid=120&sid=866a1277-e53d-429d-9ab3-3d4420750f7c%40sessionmgr103; Internet; accessed 27 January 2009.

¹⁴¹Bruce Lawrence, "Messages to the World: The Statements of Osama bin Laden," (London: Verso, 2005), 39.

Psychological operations to counter such messages, and to counter the call for suicide bombers as a holy defence of Islam, must not be mere Western rhetoric but must involve international Islamic scholars who disagree with Islamic Jihadist arguments. Anthony Cordesman argues this same point on the more broad assessment of the “War on Terrorism” when he argues that the West cannot defeat terrorism but, rather, intellectual leaders within the Arab world will be successful.¹⁴² Again referring to the Islamic Jihadist example, there are reports of recent successes of rehabilitating former Jihadists through involvement with moderate Muslim clerics.¹⁴³ Subtlety is necessary in that experts in psychological operations must make use of academic debate on such issues as fodder of broadcasts and messaging. That said, the West does have a role and Marc Sageman argues that the West, for example, needs to stop holding press conferences whenever there is a victory against terrorists.¹⁴⁴ Psychological operations will act as a defence to suicide bombing where kinetic action will not. Kinetic attack of terrorist cell leadership has not proven successful but undermining the very strength of these leaders by attacking their ideological rhetoric by psychological operations will provide a defence to suicide attacks.

¹⁴² Anthony H. Cordesman, “Winning the “War on Terrorism”: A Fundamentally Different Strategy.” *Middle East Policy* 13, no. 3 (Fall 2006): 101, 106; <http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?index=0&did=1130906901&SrchMode=1&sid=1&Fmt=6&VInst=PROD&VType=PQD&RQT=309&VName=PQD&TS=1237848163&clientId=1711>; Internet; accessed 9 February 2009.

¹⁴³ John Horgan, “From Profiles to Pathways and Roots to Routes: Perspectives from Psychology on Radicalization into Terrorism,” 92.

¹⁴⁴ Marc Sageman, “A Strategy for Fighting International Islamist Terrorists.” *The Annals of the American Academy* 618, (July 2008): 229; <http://ann.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/618/1/223>; Internet; accessed 27 January 2009.

Terrorist Use of Mass-Media

The third pillar that supports suicide bombing is the media itself. Kinetic or non-kinetic attacks with the objective of shutting terrorist cell access to media will not operationally succeed or will not be within international law. No nation may shut down the entire World Wide Web. Further, shutting down one Internet web site will merely result in the terrorist's creation of another. To make matters more difficult, as shown by the Taliban's adoption of suicide terrorism, other media such as video discs are equally important and are as impossible to identify and target as the various members of terrorist cells themselves. That said, the same media can be exploited by psychological operations as a defence to suicide bombing.

Hezbollah's victories in the use of media are best illustrated in the manner they enticed Israeli citizens to watch Hezbollah's television broadcasts. By including news they knew the Israelis would watch, Hezbollah succeeded in gaining an Israeli audience to their specific messaging. Television is an easy example as is, for that matter, radio broadcasts. Inexpensive hand-cranked radios have and can be distributed to regions within reach of broadcast of psychological operations but the difficulty will be in all other areas where such technology does not reach. The British solution in Malaya was traveling groups that brought news and performed skits that conveyed the message. An equally eloquent solution will need to be found for those areas with substantial insurgent control. If the spread of Internet accessibility is any indication, and considering the availability of the Internet in Afghanistan and the tribal areas of Pakistan,¹⁴⁵ the Internet

may become the primary tool. Psychological operations will act as a defence to suicide bombing so long as the effective, relevant and perceived to be accurate message is delivered to the target audience. The mass-media used by the terrorists cannot be shut down but its use, as presently exploited by terrorists, are best contested with psychological operations.

Psychological Operations Messaging

The messaging necessary for psychological operations as a defence to suicide bombing has been discussed but further analysis better illustrates the value of such operations. For example, along with messaging highlighting weaknesses in Islamic Jihadist rhetoric, ideally countered by argument from objective Islamic scholars, there is also the need to counter the Islamic Jihadist's exploitation of errors of the West. Western nations must acknowledge errors, such as Abu Ghraib, and must also detail the lessons learned and the actions taken to remediate the mistakes.

Psychological operations cannot be restricted to religious themes if they are to be a defence to suicide bombing. Messaging that counters the demonization of the purported enemy are essential and effective as demonstrated by bombers in Palestine¹⁴⁶ and an Al-Qaeda bomber sent to Tanzania.¹⁴⁷ Both suicide attackers changed their minds

¹⁴⁵Brian Glyn Williams, "Mullah Omar's Missiles: A Field Report on Suicide Bombers in Afghanistan," 32.

¹⁴⁶ Terri Toles Patkin, "Explosive Baggage: Female Palestinian Suicide Bombers and the Rhetoric of Emotion," 84.

¹⁴⁷ Jerrold M. Post, "Psychological Operations and Counterterrorism." *Joint Force Quarterly* 37, (Second Quarter 2005): 109; <http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?index=6&did=821988761&SrchMode>

when they realized the attack would kill innocent civilians little different from them. Psychological operations must also exploit the errors made by the terrorist leaders in planning suicide operations. The reality that most casualties of suicide operations are innocent civilians must be one of the messages. As an example, Jordan was successful in undermining an Al-Qaeda attack on a wedding with messages of the deaths of fellow Muslims.¹⁴⁸ Messages that exploit all of these weaknesses will erode community support for suicide terrorism.

The messaging necessary for suicide operations must be designed to counter and erode the rhetoric of the suicide terrorist. The messaging must accurately portray the effects of suicide terror, must ideologically counter the terrorist's claim for the legitimacy of suicide attacks and must counter demonization of the intended targets. In short, psychological operations will succeed as a defence to suicide bombing by bringing the ideology of suicide terrorism to objective debate. Although not all will adopt rational arguments that counter suicide terrorism, objective assessment of suicide terrorism is what resulted in the Chechen community's rejection of the tactic. The Chechen community suffered from Russian counter-insurgency tactics sufficient to motivate retaliation including suicide bombing. Suicide attacks against the Russian people did occur. The objective assessment of the impact of suicide terrorism by the Chechen community resulted in their understanding the sentiment that resulted in the suicide attacks but, equally, resulted in their not supporting the attacks themselves.

=1&sid=22&Fmt=6&VInst=PROD&VType=PQD&RQT=309&VName=PQD&TS=1237851168&clientId=1711 ; Internet; accessed 27 January 2009.

¹⁴⁸Brian Fishman, "Using the Mistakes of al Qaeda's Franchises to Undermine Its Strategies." *The Annals of the American Academy* 618, (July 2008): 48; <http://ann.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/618/1/46>; Internet; accessed 27 January 2009.

Psychological operations that create the same effect will serve as an effective defence to suicide bombing.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

Review of scholarship to date demonstrates that kinetic targeting of suicide terror groups' key leadership is inefficient as a defence to suicide bombing. Retaliatory strikes may be counter-productive as they do not stop suicide attacks and they may even increase the incidence of suicide bombing. The case of the London Four demonstrates why closing national borders to immigration will also not function as a defence to suicide bombing. Psychological operations, the potentially effective defence against suicide bombing, attack the rhetoric terrorist's use to recruit and motivate potential suicide bombers. Psychological operations can be targeted at recruited suicide bombers but the better target would be the community that supports the terrorist group and is the source of recruits for further suicide attacks.

Suicide bombing research to date has been focused on attempts to profile suicide bombers. Although a profile may exist, no profile has yet been uncovered. More importantly, while fixated on attempting to profile all suicide bombers, researchers have failed to suggest an effective defence to suicide bombing. Authors have critiqued existing suicide defence efforts but there has been little suggestion of a better tactic. Ironically, the value of psychological operations to insurgents and counter-insurgents alike has not been recognized as a tactic to defeat suicide terror. Further, although the literature reports the commonalities among suicide terror groups, the significance of the pillars of support, and specifically the significance of the community that supports suicide bombing, has not been previously recognized.

The scholarship, although often reporting on specific terror groups as opposed to comparing all terror groups that employ suicide terror as a tactic, share commonalities of strong leadership, effective use of the media and support of their local community. Support of the local community has been recognized in the literature but the connection made was that of motivation as opposed to a targetable vulnerability. As the local community cannot be targeted kinetically, non-kinetic targeting, specifically psychological operations, is the effective tactic for degrading this pillar of suicide terrorist support.

The value of psychological operations as the defence to suicide bombing is that the tactic counters the strength of the suicide terror group, its ideology, without running the risk of creating further martyrs or of generating further motivation for suicide attack. The difficulty is that psychological operations do not rely upon intricate technology and, worse, successes are difficult to measure. Psychological operations will require time to be effective and many aspects, such as the ideological argument by non-state actors, are beyond the control of Western governments. As any psychological operation cannot be viewed as propaganda, much of the effort must arise from those outside the sphere of Western government influence. That said, however, tactics used at present have not been effective and there is no indication that their efficiency will somehow improve.

Opportunities for psychological operations do arise. The 2009 application by Al Jazeera for broadcast rights within Canada are an example. That Al Jazeera made the application made the news but little has since been heard. If Canada and other Western states are serious about undertaking psychological operations, granting Al Jazeera a broadcast license would be an effective start. Without controlling Al Jazeera's

broadcasts, it would not be difficult to have Canada portrayed as not waging a war against Islam. Similarly, the US should look for avenues where messaging would objectively portray the real Western sentiment towards Islam.

Psychological operations are not a quick solution to the tactic of suicide bombing. At the very least, however, especially if combined with application of domestic and international law in the capture and prosecution of key terrorist leadership, psychological operations will defend against suicide terror. Too much effort has been placed on expensive technology where the West overmatches the terrorist capabilities. An insurgency cannot usually be defeated by explosive attack as the battle is one of ideology. If concessions cannot be granted to the insurgents then a battle of ideas is necessary such that the insurgents' rhetoric no longer has the present effect. Psychological operations are among the best weapons available to counter such rhetoric.

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