

Human Weapons: Terrorism Also Numbs the Senses

August 23, 2003

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Terrorism does not only murder, maim and terrify people; it also numbs the senses. As we "learn to live" with crime so we do with terrorism. If only a couple of people are murdered by terrorists that somehow does not register on our mental radar screen. The world was "stunned" by the bombing of the United Nations headquarters in Baghdad and the death of two dozen employees and the injuries suffered by tens of others. This was NEWS. It overshadowed the bus bombing in Jerusalem that killed more than 20 people and injured over 100. In Israel it was called the "children's bus" because of the many children hurt in this atrocity but one had to look hard to find out that five of the murdered passengers were also Americans ("5 of 19 killed in Israel bus bombing were Americans," World Tribune.com, 21 August 2003) as American media barely mentioned this.

They dedicated a great deal of coverage to the loss suffered by the U.N. and watching the news this week one might have arrived at the conclusion that this is a charitable pro-American and pro-Israel world body. But the bus bombing was reported probably because it surpassed the threshold of numbness. Since the beginning of the violent truce, the so-called "hudna" that aimed at hitting after (and while) re-grouping, Palestinian Arab terrorists stabbed, shot, bombed, tried to kidnap Israelis (and likely succeeded in at least two cases), launched missiles, continued with incitement, vilification and hate but because it was at a lower level than the media - and politicians (including in Israel) - were accustomed to, it acquired less saliency than it should have. That is exactly where terrorism numbed the senses: if it is not "mega-terror" we tend to absorb, tolerate, almost accept it and say that it could have been worse.

A common thread is observable with regards to terrorism in Indonesia, Iraq, Israel, Kenya or the United States and that is the use of humans as weapons. The sui-genocidal terrorists - homicidal maniacs - and their handlers have created - with the full support of states that sponsor them - an exponentially growing field where volunteers line up to meet virgins in heaven and kill as many [people on Earth] in the process. When it was directed against Israel the world ignored it. Now terror has raised its ugly head and it has metastasized to all parts of the world. It needs more than chemotherapy to ensure that the patient - er victim - will not die in the process ("Baghdad and Jerusalem," Editorial, *The Jerusalem Post*, 20 August 2003).

Not all terror activity is crude killing. Some of it may be sophisticated penetration of the vulnerable infrastructure. Indeed whether true or not, al-Qaeda claims the recent power outage in the northeast part of the U.S. was caused by them ("[Al-Qa'ida Claims Responsibility for Last Week's Blackout](#)," MEMRI, Special Dispatch - Jihad and Terrorism Studies, 19 August 2003, No. 553). While there is still no indication that the latest computer virus - "[SoBig](#)" - is the work of terrorists it certainly remains a possibility. At the very least, these two events are illustrative of how vulnerable our infrastructure is.

During the period immediately following the 1993 Oslo Accord it was understandable that many

Jewish organizations supported it because the Israeli government supported it and bought into its promise. When Oslo failed to deliver on its promise (Faisal Husseini declared it a Trojan Horse) Israel sobered up, and is now under (a three-year) relentless attack. Yet, not only have most Jewish organizations remained fairly silent during these three years (with the exception of a few perfunctory solidarity gatherings and the usage of the slogan "We Stand With Israel") many are supporting the new Palestinian "prime minister" despite the growing evidence that the only difference between him and Arafat is a suit. Unlike Arafat who lies when he says he will dismantle terror, Abbas refuses to do so - he prefers 'talks'. Jewish leaders are supporting pressure on Israel to offer more and more concessions, yet very little is done publicly to demonstrate solidarity and offer support. It appears the Oslo syndrome is still alive and not so well ("Are U.S. Jewish Leaders Wrong Again?" Morton A. Klein, *The Jerusalem Post*, 16 August 2003).

Indeed, the fact that Abbas is full of talk but no action is evident in the growing disillusionment with him from corners other than Israel ("Just Another Arafat? Abbas Has to Choose Between Terror and Respectability," 21 August 2003) recognizing his statements that he will not dismantle terrorism by force render him useless to the process outlined in the Roadmap: "Mr. Abbas has a chance to turn Palestinians away from terror and lead his people to statehood in peace with Israel. To do that, however, he must forcibly disarm these terrorists. If he does not, Israel has a responsibility to its citizens to do it instead."

Yet the Palestinians are working very hard to prove they are not a reliable partner for peace. They continue with incitement and glorification of terror ("[Incitement in the Palestinian Authority After the Aqaba Summit](#)," Y. Yehoshua and B. Tchernitzky, MEMRI, Special Report - Palestinian Authority, 22 August 2003, No. 20), they demand that Israel release Palestinian terrorists from Israeli prisons and when it is done they complain the numbers are too small. They stage counter-terror raids that are as genuine as their traditional revolving door 'arrests of their operatives ("Israel Accuses Palestinians of Staging Counter-Terror Raids," *World Tribune.com*, 19 August 2003). This way they play the good cop / bad cop and are winning. In short, they are a pure enemy to humanity, decency and civilization, not just to Israel.

This kind of terrorism cannot take place unless it is state-sponsored. The countries pulling the strings of terror are well-known and many benefit from lavish U.S. financial support or cozy political relationships such as Egypt and Saudi Arabia. But Syria, Lebanon, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Yemen and particularly Iran are also known quantities. Researchers point out that when proper effort and coordination is initiated, arch-terrorists will be captured and a blow to terrorists groups is possible ("State Sponsors of Terror Remain Key," Yoram Schweitzer, *The Jerusalem Post*, 17 August 2003).

The Palestinians continue the war on Israel on all fronts covering the full spectrum from propaganda to violence, from demanding to murdering, from lying to bombing, from promising to stabbing, from complaining to shooting and rocket launching. Last week they claimed that their "right of return" - which means the destruction of Israel - is not relinquished. The Palestinian "foreign minister" Nabil Sha'ath lied without flinching when he claimed the "right of return" is part of the Roadmap. Speaking in the Lebanese capital he said that "No condition has been set for a return (only) to an independent Palestinian state. The right of return is no longer an

illusion. It is an integral part of the Arab peace initiative, which is one of the reference points in the Roadmap...I want to be clear: This right includes returning to an independent state and to Palestinian cities in the Jewish state. Whether a person returns to Haifa (Israel) or to Nablus ("West Bank"), their return is guaranteed." ("Sha'ath: Palestinian Right of Return Guaranteed by 'Roadmap'" Palestine Media Center- (PMC), 16 August 2003).

Thus, this past week illustrated in one of the worst ways possible what the Palestinians are capable of - committing sui-genocide on (mostly) children by using a human weapon, then screaming they need to have revenge when one of their leaders was taken out because of that exact attack for which Hamas and Islamic Jihad claimed responsibility. When Israelis re-entered Palestinian cities in Judea and Samaria, the Palestinians said if the Israelis will get out of the cities they will "act to dismantle" the terrorist groups. One only remains wondering how the Israelis have buddied up with the Palestinian leadership, giving them control over some cities despite the fact their leadership has not adhered to nor complied with a single item in the Roadmap. The Palestinians are masters of murder, deceit, propaganda, manipulation and playing the victim. At the same time, they also claim the **right to do so** as if committing crime is an inalienable virtue. Last week, prior to the killing of one of their leaders they were even brazen enough to declare right after the sui-genocide on the Jerusalem bus that the "hudna" was still in effect. How conveniently devious: one can murder, claim responsibility and yet declare that "truce" is actually was still on. With a "truce" like this who needs war? Perhaps the victim who needs to realize this and fight the enemy.

No one should blame the Arabs for lack of originality when it comes to antisemitism. The latest ploy is to sue world Jewry for the gold that apparently was reported to have been taken out of Egypt during the exodus following centuries of slavery ("[Egyptian Jurists to Sue 'The Jews' for Compensation for 'Trillions' of Tons of Gold Allegedly Stolen During Exodus from Egypt](#)," MEMRI, Special Dispatch - Egypt, 22 August 2003, No. 556). As classical antisemitic canards go this one has no grounds, no facts and no logical reasoning. It certainly has no legal grounds. After all, even if the biblical account is to be taken at face value one still remains wondering how come the Egyptian claimants do not offer reparations for slave labor during all those centuries the Jews were enslaved in Egypt. What is even more disturbing is the current-day antisemitic language which portrays Jews as thieves, liars and manipulators, which seems to be the real purpose behind this frivolous canard.

Yet the international reaction to this week's atrocities by the Palestinians surprisingly focused again on the "irrelevant" Arafat. The German foreign minister called him, the U.S. Secretary of State suggested that his influence is needed to support Abbas' "efforts" and a special presidential envoy from Egypt (who in 1997 promised to "[expect Arab-Israeli peace in two years](#)") met with him and suddenly this Humpty-Dumpty shows the world that he is still a power to reckon with (as if it was even in doubt; doesn't Abbas report to him?). Israel still refuses to deport or eliminate him as if doing that would make all the difference. Frankly, Arafat and the others in the Palestinian leadership differ only in the symbolism they have for the Palestinians but not in the willingness - or lack of - to have peace with Israel. They have to be vanquished like the Taliban and al-Qaeda - not negotiated with. Anything short of that will backfire (pun fully intended) time and again.

The American administration this week seems to have tried to satisfy both Israel and the Palestinians. The White House spokesperson said that it is understandable Israel wants to defend itself against terror yet it needs to "carefully weigh the consequences" of its action. Then Powell declared at the U.N. that the Roadmap "is not dead" as the parties have no choice other than "falling off the cliff" if they "get to the end of the road." This kind of language gives Israel very little leeway to fight terrorism and it actually ties its hand in vanquishing it.

At home, the President did the right thing: taking advantage of the congressional recess he appointed Dr. Daniel Pipes to the U.S. Institute of Peace (to last until the end of next congressional session in the fall of 2004). This is a very good sign and it is hoped that with the new Congress his appointment will receive approval ("[Pipes Makes No Apologies for Muslim Remarks](#)," Kelley Beaucar Vlahos, FOX News, 20 August 2003). What is disturbing about the process is the vehement objection to his appointment by some leading democratic senators (Harkin, Kennedy) as well as Arab Muslim advocacy groups who couch their rhetoric in "objectivity" by slick and articulate opponents such as James Zogby who should have actually welcomed Pipes' appointment. Not doing so, places both Zogby and the Arab advocacy groups on par with terrorism sponsorship.

The war on terrorism cannot be won overnight. There are too many who are committed to it and obsessed by it. But without showing the terrorists that their crime does NOT pay, they actually have the incentive to continue with their vile actions and they have the option of winning. It may matter to the victim very little to define these as cowardly acts. Of course they are. Being nice to terrorists and to states that support them has not worked. If we truly intend to eliminate this menace, it will take far greater efforts and commitment than was involved in the capture of Hambali. It will take an unwavering war at the end of which only one remains alive and it cannot be the terrorist. Alternatively, we can talk ourselves to death.