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THE IMPACT OF PALESTINIAN TERRORISM
ON THE ARAB/ISRAELI CONFLICT

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CHAPTER I

POLITICAL TERRORISM: A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Terrorism is not a new phenomenon. It has been utilized throughout history by criminals, military forces, political dissidents and governments. While terrorism for political purposes is nothing new, its applications and goals have changed and evolved to reflect the political, social, and technological climate of the post-World War II world. The utilization of political terrorism increased dramatically throughout the world during the past decade. Increasingly revolutionary groups have turned to terrorism as a means of achieving a particular goal. The primary reason for the proliferation of terrorism in recent years is simple, recognition. By employing terrorism any small group of individuals can gain worldwide publicity for itself and its cause. A revolutionary group is not a force to be reckoned with until it is recognized as such by the people and the government of the country against whom its actions are directed. A group which lacks either a strong base of support among
the population or a popular cause to mobilize the population must resort to spectacular acts of violence in order to gain recognition.

The belief that spectacular acts of violence will alienate the population is not always valid. One must remember that one man's terrorist is another man's freedom fighter.\footnote{An act of extreme violence, such as the murder of Israeli athletes at the Munich Olympics by Palestinian terrorists, may be condemned in the Western world; however, such acts are justifiable in the eyes of many Arab governments which support the Palestinian cause. The "terrorists" are regarded as heroes and martyrs by millions of supporters in the Arab world. The same is true of other groups, such as the supporters of the IRA or SWAPO causes, and supporters of the Iranian revolution. The "terrorists" are freedom fighters and their actions are justifiable acts of liberation.}

In the past decade terrorists have been able to exert influence over nations and world leaders by confronting them with terrorism or the threat of terrorism. By perpetuating acts such as the kidnapping of former Italian Prime Minister Aldo Moro and the seizure of the American Embassy in Iran, terrorists are able to hold hostage not only the individuals actually under their control, but also the headlines throughout the world. By employing terrorism little known groups, such as the South Moluccans, are able
to gain instant recognition for themselves and their cause.

Advanced technology has played an important role in the increase of political terrorism. Due to the increased sophistication of the communication equipment employed by the mass media it is possible to see the actions of terrorists as they are being played out. Bringing the actions of terrorists into the living room every evening on the television set increases the impact of their actions. The actions are shown repeatedly for television audiences and photographed extensively by the print media. Extensive research is conducted on the terrorist group, its members, its grievances, and its objectives. Thus, millions of dollars of free publicity are given to terrorists every time they carry out a spectacular act of violence. Additionally, the instant publicity affects the governmental decision-maker by arousing the emotions of the public as the act is being played out. The government leaders may find their options limited by public sentiment and they may be forced into certain courses of action by public opinion.

Advanced technology has also greatly improved the terrorist's arsenal. Such weapons as the Soviet SA-7 Grail, a man-portable surface-to-air heat-seeking missile, makes it possible for a lone terrorist to shoot down an airliner from a distance of up to two miles. In recent years PLO members have been apprehended twice, once in Rome and once in Kenya, with SA-7's and plans to shoot down El Al airliners
during takeoffs or landings. In Rhodesia two civilian airliners have been shot down by members of the Patriotic Front utilizing SA-7's. The terrorist arsenal also contains the latest in plastic explosives, time-delay devices, and "booby-trapping" techniques.

Another reason for the increase in terrorism is the cost/benefit ratio of terrorism compared to other types of military operations. In terms of men and equipment expended, terrorism is much more economical than full-scale guerrilla warfare. By investing a very small number of personnel in a terrorist operation a terrorist group can receive worldwide attention. The publicity not only gains recognition for its cause, but also serves to attract new recruits to its movement.

The word "terrorism" is currently used to define a variety of distinct and different actions, from the coercion of a criminal organization operating for profit, to the revolutionary organization operating to promote its ideals. This study is concerned with contemporary "political terrorism." Political terrorism is "an action designed to influence political behavior by extranormal means, entailing the use or threat of violence." The key to this definition is the emphasis on political gain by the use or threat of violence.

Types of Terrorism

For the purpose of this study two general types and
three distinct categories of political terrorism have been identified. The two types refer to the method of employment and the targets of political terrorism, and the three categories deal with who employs the political terrorism and its purposes. The first type, selective terrorism, is used primarily on government officials or other opponents of the terrorist group, such as political leaders, police officials, and the military. The Viet-Cong employed selective terrorism extensively in order to gain control of rural villages. Between 1959 and 1964 more than 6000 Vietnamese officials and landlords were killed by the Viet-Cong in acts of selective terrorism. Both the Italian Red Brigades and the Irish Republican Army have utilized selective terrorism against the police, military, and other government representatives. The Red Brigades have copied the IRA's tactic of "knee-capping" opponents as a type of implicit warning.

The purpose of selective terrorism is to demonstrate the strength of the terrorist group, disrupt government control of the population, suppress cooperation with the government, and to embarrass the government by making it appear inept. By employing selective terrorism the terrorist group attempts to divorce the people from the government by eliminating the government representatives and demonstrating the penalties for cooperating with the government. To underscore the unprofitability of being or becoming a government representative, terrorist groups often employ