

# Israel and Terrorism

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Syllabus v. 1.0

This course is devoted to Israel's experience with terrorism, and especially the evolution of its counterterrorism policies. Israel has had the longest continuous engagement with the dilemmas of counterterrorism of any state in the world. It has tried a multitude of approaches in an effort to defeat or deter terrorism. It has achieved successes and encountered failures, all under a penetrating spotlight of domestic and international scrutiny. There are those in the world who hold up Israel as an exemplar, and others who condemn it as criminal. The purpose of this course is not to pass judgment, but to reach a deeper understanding of how Israel understands its own dilemmas, and has worked toward solving them.

This course assumes a working definition of terrorism. This is not meant to be a thoroughgoing philosophical definition, but a practical one that allows us to reduce the subject to manageable dimensions in a one-semester course. For this narrow purpose, terrorism is defined as the violent actions of substate actors, directed largely against Israeli civilians, with the purpose of impacting Israeli and world opinion for a political purpose. This includes the activities, past and present, of the PLO, other Palestinian "alphabets soup" groups, Hamas and Hezbollah. It can be debated whether these groups meet one or another definition of

“terrorist.” For our purposes, it doesn’t matter: they are so defined by Israel, and it is Israel’s policy toward them that is the focus of this course.

The course is divided into two parts. The first part, up until the midterm break, is meant to familiarize you with the broad lines of historical development in Israel’s encounter with terrorism. Terrorism has not always been Israel’s primary security concern, and in its earlier years it waged a succession of wars with conventional Arab armies. But parallel to these wars, and from a very early point in time, it faced violence by nonstate actors. This was true in the 1930s and the 1950s, but it became much more salient from the late 1960s onward, with the founding of the PLO. Terrorism became an even greater preoccupation in the 1980s, with the rise of Hezbollah and Hamas.

In this first part of the course, the approach is chronological, and the readings come largely from two books which you will be required to buy. They are:

- Daniel Byman, *A High Price: The Triumphs and Failures of Israeli Counterterrorism* (Oxford University Press). Amazon presently has the paper for \$16.47, Kindle \$12.09.
- Ami Pedahzur, *The Israeli Secret Services and the Struggle Against Terrorism* (Columbia University Press). Amazon presently has the paper for \$21.91, Kindle \$13.74, and it can be bought used for even less.

In the second part of the course, we will examine a number of specific counterterror strategies that have been employed by Israel, from targeted killings to Israel’s security barrier to negotiations with terrorist groups. Here the readings are diverse, and the issues are often mired in controversy. Our approach will be to place ourselves in the position of Israeli decision-makers, and to try as best as possible to understand the full range of considerations that come into play in their decisions. You will derive the most benefit from this course if you suspended judgment,

and try to assume an Israeli perspective (of which there are many). The course will conclude with consideration of whether anything in the Israeli experience is relevant to the experience of the United States in its own “war on terror.”

It is important to emphasize that this is not a course on terrorism per se — that is, the rationales and motives that drive terrorism against Israel. Our focus is on Israel’s *response* to terrorism, the choices that Israel has made, and its counterterrorism doctrine. Of course, built into this doctrine are assumptions about the origins of terrorism. We will examine those Israeli assumptions, and how they were formed, but our focus is on Israeli rationales and motives, not those of Israel’s adversaries.

This is also not a course on counterterrorism and the law. There are many legal dimensions to the issues we will discuss, and many of them have been deliberated practically ad infinitum in journals of international law. I myself am not trained in the law, and our ability to weigh the merits of competing arguments is limited. But we are interested in how the State of Israel itself interprets the law, as justifying or limiting its actions. In counterterrorism, Israel obviously weights efficacy against legality, in its dual pursuit of deterrence and legitimacy. Our aim is to understand how Israel incorporates these aspects into its decision-making.

### **Grading:**

- 15 percent of the grade is determined by class and online participation. In addition to active participation in class, students are expected to respond to readings via Blackboard. In the second part of the course, the class will sometimes divide into debating teams, to argue the pros and cons of various Israeli strategies. For this to work well, it will be crucial for you to complete the readings in their entirety.
- 20 percent of the grade is determined by a short mid-term essay, assessing a discrete Israeli counterterror operation and assessing its

impact. This essay, no more than 1500 words in length, will be due on Friday, March 15.

- 65 percent of the grade is determined by a final paper, the topic of which you will choose in consultation with me, and which will be due on the date nominally scheduled for the final exam.

### **Syllabus and Logistics:**

This is a course-in-evolution, so the syllabus will almost certainly be revised as we progress. I have provided URLs for the articles, but you should be able to access these items via electronic reserves or on our Blackboard site. The URL is for future reference, should you want to revisit the readings after the course.

I will hold an office hour in the lunchtime slot on Monday, or you may make an appointment if you have something else in that slot.

*The class scheduled for March 13 must be moved, as I will be out of town. Precise details will be provided as we get closer to that date. I'm looking to move it to Friday, March 15. Please consult your schedules to determine its feasibility.*

## **1. Introduction**

## **2. Border Wars**

*Even prior to Israel's creation in 1948, the Jewish community had to overcome Arab resistance directed against civilians and settlements. What patterns were established at that time, and in the first years of the state, which have carried over to the present?*

Pedahzur, Chap. 1, "The Emergence of Israel's Counterterrorism Doctrine."

Byman, Chap. 1, "Terror Upon Creation (1948-1956)."

Meir Chazan, “The Dispute in Mapai over ‘Self-Restraint’ and ‘Purity of Arms’ During the Arab Revolt,” *Jewish Social Studies*, vol. 15, no. 3 (Summer 2009), pp. 89-113. <http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/jss/summary/v015/15.3.chazan.html>

Simon Anglim, “Orde Wingate and the Special Night Squads: A Feasible Policy for Counter-terrorism?” *Contemporary Security Policy*, vol. 28, no. 1 (2007), pp. 28-41. <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/13523260701240260>

### **3. Hijackings and Hostages**

*The emergence of the PLO in 1960s, and its campaigns of cross-border attacks and international hijackings in the 1970s, constituted a watershed for Israel. For the first time, it faced a serious challenge from a nonstate opponent. What counterterrorism principles did Israel establish, and how well did they serve Israel?*

Pedahzur, Chap. 2, “The Path to the Defensive Model and Back.”

Pedahzur, Chap. 3, “Rescuing Hostages.”

Byman, Chap. 2, “The Rise of the PLO and the Birth of International Terrorism (1956-1970s).”

Byman, Chap. 3, “Debacle in Lebanon (1970s-1993).”

### **4. Islamic Resistance**

*In the 1980s, the emergence of Hezbollah posed a new challenge to Israel. This movement couched their resistance in Islamist terms, and placed a high premium on self-sacrifice. It also introduced suicide bombing to the arena. What adjustments did Israel make in its counterterrorism approach to deal with this new challenge?*

Pedahzur, Chap. 4, “The Lebanon Puzzle.”

Pedahzur, Chap. 6, “The Global Challenge of Iran and Hezbollah.”

Byman, Chap. 14, “The Birth of a Monster: Hizballah’s Creation (1982-1985)”

Byman, Chap. 15, “The Rules of the Game: Limited War with Hizballah (1985-2000)”

## **5. Terror vs. Peace**

*The conclusion of the Oslo accords between Israel and the PLO seemed to open the door to a new era of peace. But the agreements were constantly undermined by acts undertaken by the opponents of the accords. Did terrorism destroy Oslo?*

Pedahzur, Chap. 5, “New Challenges from the West Bank and Gaza.”

Pedahzur, Chap. 7, “New Rivals, Old Responses.”

Byman, Chap. 4, “The False Promise of Oslo (1993-1996).”

Byman, Chap. 5, “Clouds on the Horizon: The Netanyahu Period (1996–1999).”

Byman, Chap. 6, “ Hamas’s Rise and Seeming Fall (1993–2000).”

Justus Reid Weiner, “Israel’s Expulsion of Islamic Militants to Southern Lebanon,” *Columbia Human Rights Law Review*, Vol. 26, No. 2 (1995), pp. 357-402. <http://heinonline.org/HOL/LandingPage?collection=journals&handle=hein.journals/colhr26&div=18&id=&page=>

“Kill Him Silently,” Al-Jazeera documentary about botched assassination attempt against Khaled Mashal [http://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLSNP2VBzgn1vz7OTt5fj\\_XZdE7tzhPOBm](http://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLSNP2VBzgn1vz7OTt5fj_XZdE7tzhPOBm)

## 6. The Suicide War

*The eruption of the second intifada unleashed a wave of assaults against Israel's homefront. Suicide bombings wracked its major cities, and Israel moved to reoccupy the West Bank. At the same time, Israel's actions were subjected to unprecedented international scrutiny. What modifications did Israel make in its counterterror doctrine, and in these achieve their objectives?*

Byman, Chap. 7, "Into the Abyss: The Second Intifada (2000)."

Byman, Chap. 8, "A Million Bullets (2000)."

Byman, Chap. 9 "The 9/11 Ceasefire That Wasn't (2001-Early 2002)."

Byman, Chap. 10, "The Hornet's Next: The Battle of Jenin and Operation Defensive Shield (2002)."

Byman, Chap. 11, "Occupying the West Bank: The Price of Success (2003-Today)."

Pedahzur, Chap. 8, "A War Against an Elusive Enemy."

Zaki Shalom and Yoaz Hendel, "The Unique Features of the Second Intifada," *Military and Strategic Affairs*, Vol. 3, No. 1 (May 2011), pp. 17-27. [http://www.inss.org.il/upload/\(FILE\)1308129480.pdf](http://www.inss.org.il/upload/(FILE)1308129480.pdf)

Daniel Byman, "Curious Victory: Explaining Israel's Suppression of the Second Intifada," *Terrorism and Political Violence*, Vol. 24, No. 5 (2012): 825-52. <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/09546553.2011.652317>

Hillel Frisch, "Motivation or capabilities? Israeli counterterrorism against Palestinian suicide bombings and violence," *The Journal of Strategic Studies*, Vol. 29, No. 5 (2006), pp. 843-69. [http://www.biu.ac.il/Besa/Hillel\\_Frisch/Hillel%20Frisch%20capabilities%20jss%20article.pdf](http://www.biu.ac.il/Besa/Hillel_Frisch/Hillel%20Frisch%20capabilities%20jss%20article.pdf)

Nadav Morag, "Measuring success in coping with terrorism: the Israeli

case,” *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, Vol. 28, No. 4 (2005), pp. 307-20. <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/10576100590950156>

“Dirty War,” Journeyman Pictures documentary, 2002. [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KKma5eW7\\_sw](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KKma5eW7_sw)

## **7. Rockets and Beyond**

*As Hezbollah and Hamas established themselves in territorial enclaves on Israel’s frontiers, and embedded themselves in civilian populations, they built capabilities to allow them to strike Israel from above, by rocket. Israel now faced a different kind of threat, which could not be blunted by traditional methods. How did Israel respond, and have its responses been effective?*

Pedahzur, Chap. 9, “The Second Lebanon War and Beyond.”

Byman, Chap. 16, “The False Promise of Normalcy (2000-2006).”

Byman, Chap. 17, “Hizballah Returns (2006).”

Byman, Chap. 12, “ Hamas Triumphant (2005-2008).”

Byman, Chap. 13, “War Against Hamas (2008-2009).”

Byman, Chap. 24, “Fading Hopes for Peace.”

Inbar, Efraim. "How Israel Bungled the Second Lebanon War." *Middle East Quarterly* (2007). Summer 2007, pp. 57-65. <http://www.meforum.org/1686/how-israel-bungled-the-second-lebanon-war>

Giora Segal, “Trapped Between Maneuver and Firepower: Hamas and Hizbollah,” *Military and Strategic Affairs*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (April 2009), pp. 77-88. [http://www.inss.org.il/upload/\(FILE\)1272780093.pdf](http://www.inss.org.il/upload/(FILE)1272780093.pdf)

Chuck Freilich, *The Armageddon Scenario: Israel and the Threat of Nuclear Terrorism*, Mideast Security and Policy Studies, BESA Center,



Bar-Ilan University, April 2010. <http://biu.ac.il/soc/besa/MSPS84.pdf>

### *Midterm break*

## **8. Deterrence: Is it Working?**

*A key element in Israel's counterterrorism doctrine is retaliatory action to achieve a deterrent effect. Just how much force is necessary to achieve that goal, and how effective has Israel been at accurately predicting the measure force it requires? We pause to read the views of some of Israel's leading military commanders and intelligence heads.*

Gen. Doron Almog, "Cumulative Deterrence and the War on Terrorism," *Parameters*, Vol. 34, No. 4 (Winter 2004-5), pp. 4–19. <http://www.carlisle.army.mil/USAWC/parameters/Articles/04winter/almog.pdf>

Gen. Moshe Yaalon, *Lessons from the Palestinian 'War' against Israel*, Policy Focus No. 64 (Washington: The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, Jan. 2007). <http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/uploads/Documents/pubs/PolicyFocus64.pdf>

Gen. Amos Yadlin, "Ethical dilemmas in fighting terrorism," *Jerusalem Issue Brief* (Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs), Vol. 4, No. 8 (Nov. 2004). <http://jcpa.org/brief/brief004-8.htm>

Gen. Amos Malka, "*The Power of Weakness*" vs. "*The Weakness of Power*": *Asymmetrical Deterrence*, The Eighth Herzilya Conference (Jan. 2008). [http://www.herzliyaconference.org/\\_Uploads/2812AmosMalka.pdf](http://www.herzliyaconference.org/_Uploads/2812AmosMalka.pdf)

Byman, Chap. 21, "Reorganizing for Counter-Terrorism."

Please see the film "The Gatekeepers" by Dror Moreh, commercial release date is February 1, should be in DC fairly soon after that. More

here: <http://www.sonyclassics.com/thegatekeepers/> Trailer: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kpk71yrQUQM>

## 9. Proportionality

Moshe Halbertal, “The Goldstone Illusion,” *The New Republic*, Nov. 6, 2009. <http://www.newrepublic.com/article/world/the-goldstone-illusion#>

Michael Walzer, “Responsibility and Proportionality in State and Nonstate Wars,” *Parameters*, Spring 2009, pp. 40-52. <http://www.carlisle.army.mil/USAWC/Parameters/Articles/09spring/walzer.pdf>

Yagil Levy, “The hierarchy of military death,” *Citizenship Studies*, Vol. 14, No. 4 (2010), pp. 345-61. <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/13621025.2010.490030>

Richard Goldstone and Dore Gold discuss the U.N. Gaza Report at Brandeis University, Nov. 5, 2009 (2 hours). <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DxLa9f1Md34>

## 10. Targeting Killing

*Perhaps the most long-standing method used by Israel to deter terrorism has been the so-called “targeted killing” of perpetrators and leaders. (This approach has been adopted by the United States as well, especially through its drone attacks.) How effective has this method been for Israel, which has probably used it to a greater extent than any other democracy?*

Byman, Chap. 21, “Targeted Killings: Kill or Be Killed?”

Asa Kasher and Amos Yadlin, “Assassination and Preventive Killing,” *SAIS Review*, vol. 25, no. 1 (Winter-Spring 2005), pp. 41-57. [http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/sais\\_review/v025/25.1kasher.pdf](http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/sais_review/v025/25.1kasher.pdf)

Steven R. David, “Israel's Policy of Targeted Killing,” *Ethics & International Affairs*, vol. 1, no. 1 (March 2003), pp. 111–26. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1747-7093.2003.tb00422.x>

Gal Luft, “The Logic of Israel’s Targeted Killing,” *Middle East Quarterly* (Winter 2003), pp. 3-13. <http://www.meforum.org/515/the-logic-of-israels-targeted-killing>

Avi Kober, “Targeted Killing during the Second Intifada: The Quest for Effectiveness,” *Journal of Conflict Studies*, Vol. 27, No. 1 (Summer 2007), pp. 76-93. <http://journals.hil.unb.ca/index.php/JCS/article/view/8292/9875>

## **11. Demolitions, Interrogations, Barriers**

*One of the most unusual approaches — and a controversial one — has been Israel’s construction of a massive separation barrier between itself and the West Bank, and its imposition of a blockade on Hamas controlled Gaza. What have been the costs and benefits of these policies, which do not involve the direct application of deadly force?*

Efraim Benmelech, Claude Berrebi and Esteban Klor, “Counter-Suicide-Terrorism: Evidence from House Demolitions,” *National Bureau of Economic Research Working Paper* (October 2010). <http://www.nber.org/papers/w16493>

Daphna Sharfman and Ephraim Kahana. “Combating Terrorism With Intelligence: The Normative Debate in Israel,” *International Journal of Intelligence and CounterIntelligence*, Vol. 25, No. 3 (2012), pp. 546-70. <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/08850607.2012.652542>

Byman, Chap. 20, “Interrogation Dilemmas.”

Byman, Chap. 22, “Building the Security Barrier.”

Hillel Frisch, “(The) Fence or Offense? Testing the Effectiveness of ‘The

Fence' in Judea and Samaria," *Democracy and Security*, Vol. 3, No. 1 (2007), pp. 1-19. <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/17419160600977582>

Ruth Wedgwood, "The ICJ Advisory Opinion on the Israeli Security Fence and the limits of self-defense," *American journal of international law*, Vol. 99, No. 1 (Jan., 2005), pp. 52-61. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3246089>

Emanuel Gross, "Combating Terrorism: Does Self-Defense Include the Security Barrier? The Answer Depends on Who You Ask," *Cornell International Law Journal*, Vol. 38 (2005), pp. 569-82.

## **12. Negotiating with Terrorists**

*At times, Israel has negotiated with terrorists, in particular in order to bring back abducted soldiers. This is often produced large-scale exchanges of convicted and suspected terrorists, for a handful of Israelis or even for the remains of soldiers. What social norms lie behind this practice, and what has been its long-term effect on Israel's deterrent posture? And what are Israeli views of negotiating with Hamas?*

Yoram Schweitzer, "Israel: Hostage to Its Soldiers' Captors?," *Strategic Survey for Israel 2010*, eds. Shlomo Brom and Anat Kurz (Tel Aviv: INSS, 2011), pp. 25-36. [http://www.inss.org.il/upload/\(FILE\)1283331498.pdf](http://www.inss.org.il/upload/(FILE)1283331498.pdf)

Yoram Schweitzer, "A Mixed Blessing: Hamas, Israel, and the Recent Prisoner Exchange," *Strategic Assessment*, Vol. 14, No. 4 (Jan. 2012), pp. 23-40. [http://www.inss.org.il/upload/\(FILE\)1329720803.pdf](http://www.inss.org.il/upload/(FILE)1329720803.pdf)

"Talking with the Enemy," Al-Jazeera documentary on Israel-Hezbollah negotiations for prisoner exchange. [http://www.youtube.com/playlist?](http://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLSNP2VBzgn1vEHK1_F9ogAflgY_rJqILH&feature=view_all)

[list=PLSNP2VBzgn1vEHK1\\_F9ogAflgY\\_rJqILH&feature=view\\_all](http://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLSNP2VBzgn1vEHK1_F9ogAflgY_rJqILH&feature=view_all)

Efraim Halevy, “Why Not Hamas?,” *The New Republic*, March 26, 2010. <http://www.newrepublic.com/article/politics/why-not-hamas>

Daniel Byman, “How to Handle Hamas: The Perils of Ignoring Gaza’s Leadership,” *Foreign Affairs*, Sept.-Oct. 2010. <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/66541/daniel-byman/how-to-handle-hamas>

### **13. Lessons**

*Are Israel’s lessons applicable to other democracies in their own “wars on terror”? In particular, where are the similarities and differences between Israel’s counterterror doctrine and that of the United States?*

Pedahzur, Chap. 10, “Fighting the Terrorism Plague.”

Byman, Chap. 25, “What Israel Can Teach the World and What the World Should Learn.”

Avi Dichter and Daniel L. Byman, *Israel’s Lessons for Fighting Terrorists and Their Implications for the United States*, Brookings Institution Analysis Paper No. 8 (March 2006). <http://www.brookings.edu/fp/saban/analysis/byman20060324.pdf>