

**The Suicide Bomber Question:
A Predictive Study on the Possible Future
Of the Palestinian Suicide Bomber Phenomenon**

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"Holy war is our path. My death will be martyrdom. I will knock on the gates of Paradise with the skulls of the sons of Zion." --- *Ayman Radi, P.L.O. police force officer, in a written note to his family before he carried out a suicide bombing in Jerusalem*

"We must always remember that our enemy is the Israeli occupation, and it is incumbent upon us to continue to struggle against it through the blessed Intifada... Only the Intifada can carry our nation to a more advanced stage." --- *Farouk Qaddumi, P.L.O. Political Department Head*

Introduction

The issue of suicide bombing has been a part of world history dating back to Japanese Kamikaze pilots in WWII during their "Divine Wind" operations against American warships in the Pacific theater. While use of suicidal tactics can be seen as far back in history during the crusades, only recently has the tactic of using explosives to detonate one's self in order to take the lives of others been used. Since the Kamikazes of WWII, suicide bombing has been used as a tactic by different groups in their quest for a certain goal or ideology. Groups that have embraced the method of suicide bombing include the Tamil Tigers in Sri Lanka, the Iranians during the Iran-Iraq war, Al-Qaeda in the September 11th attacks, Chechen rebels in the former Russian state, the Kurdistan Workers Party against the Turks and Iraqi insurgency against their American occupiers. Historians and researchers have had a difficult time in trying to explain exactly what makes a person want to take their life in order to cause damage and/or to kill others. Concepts of religion, despair, poverty and insanity have all come into play, and have all been used as a basis for what makes a person become a suicide bomber. Yet each of groups mentioned above have

had a completely different goal than the other, and thus a completely different reason (or reasons) was the root cause for suicide bombing to be employed. Likewise, each suicide bomber has a different factor (or factors) that cause them to make the decision to give up their life in order to take others lives in search of a common goal.

However, nowhere else has suicide bombing been a more popular tactic than with Palestinians, who use suicide bombing against Israelis in the occupied territories, and in Israel itself against military and civilian targets. Suicide attacks by Palestinians have become extremely prevalent since the beginning of the second Palestinian “Intifada” (Arabic for “uprising”) in 2000, but began during the first Intifada in 1983 when a suicide bomber detonated himself and a truck laden with explosives destroying the U.S. military barracks in Beirut killing 250 U.S. servicemen, mostly U.S. Marines. The reasons for Palestinian suicide bombing have been researched and debated for years, and once again, factors such as religion, oppression, poverty, despair, and complete insanity/irrationality have been researched and argued as the root cause of this phenomenon. Additionally, because the Muslim religion also plays a large role with Palestinians, the ideas of Jihad and Martyrdom have also been closely regarded as reasons for suicide bombing. However, no one reason seems to be a valid cause for why a Palestinian makes the choice to become a suicide bomber, nor does each Palestinian suicide bomber kill him or herself for the same reason as another. Yet for Palestinian Suicide Bombers, their target is always the same: Israelis.

Suicide bombing has affected so many different people since the Kamikazes of WWII, and Americans have seen it both with the Kamikazes and Al-Qaeda. It is a very dangerous epidemic, and threatens the security of whoever is considered the “target” by those conducting suicide bombing operations. Nowhere else is the threat against national security felt more so than

in Israel, who is witness to numerous attacks every year. Suicide bombing is a tactic that is continually growing in popularity among Palestinians, and has become an epidemic. Suicide bombers are now held in iconic status (martyrs) in Palestine, and blatant encouragement can be seen or heard on a daily basis. However, current literature fails to cover what the future may hold in regards to this phenomenon. It is for this reason that this analysis will be conducted.

Literature Review

Current knowledge of Palestinian Suicide Bombers is abundant, and continually evolves as researchers attempt to explain exactly what makes a Palestinian suicide bomber “tick”. Research on the topic has come from not only the Arab and Israeli sides, but there is also a great deal from institutes based in the western world. Naturally, bias does occur in some of the works, mostly when dealing with Arab or Israeli research articles, but neutral observations do prevail throughout the works where researchers attempt to do their best in order to explain the mindset and reasoning of a Palestinian suicide bomber. Most of these works are dated within the past 5 years, and are all of scholarly origin. While some deal with history of suicide bombing and the Palestinian Intifada, most are theoretical in nature and deal with issues such as nationalism, martyrdom, radicalism and dissociation. However, it is to be noted that the author was not able to find any sort of predictive analyses and/or literature related to the Lockwood Analytical Method for Prediction (LAMP) regarding this phenomenon. The following works are the basis for this study.

The Roots of Suicide Terrorism: A Multi-Causal Approach (Moghadam, 2005)

approaches the issue through a theoretical study and introduces a multi-causal framework for the analysis of suicide attacks. His framework is based on three levels of analysis: the individual level, the organizational level, and the environmental level. Moghadam’s framework lays out the

fact that suicide terrorism is a very complex phenomenon, and that it is a multi-factorial phenomenon. Explanations for suicide terrorism can include personal motives, group motives, environmental conditions, and their marriage as a whole.

Moghadam conducts his research using the realist approach, studying factors that have been documented as reasons/motives for suicide terrorism. Whether an individual becomes a suicide terrorist because of personal trauma, or whether the terrorist group is able to recruit an individual with promises of fame through martyrdom, all facets are covered in this literary work. Additionally, Moghadam's work illustrates the fact that there can be several underlying causes which entice an individual into becoming a suicide bomber.

This work is of extreme value as it focuses on the idea that suicide terrorism is a multi-headed monster; motives for doing so can be simple or complex, but no one single reason can ever be the basis for a suicide bomber's action. Examples of such are abundant in his work.

When Suicide Bombing Reaches The Tipping Point approaches the topic by looking at the broader category of suicide attackers, noting common traits among historical examples. He then introduces us the "The Tipping Point", a pluralist theory, marking suicide terrorism as an epidemic which has spread like a virus among Palestinians. Thus it has become a social epidemic where the appeal to become a suicide bomber is so great that it can effect those that never would have thought of becoming an attacker before. Grier's model uses three agents that explain the tipping point. First, "The Law of the Few", which claims that social epidemics are driven by the actions of a handful of people. Next is "The Stickiness Factor", which notes that the quality of the message must be great enough to entice potential recruits into becoming full-blown suicide bombers. Last is the "Power of Context", which cites a person's environment, and how people are subject to environmental influences. Grier also explains the idea of "Epidemics in Isolation",

and gives the example of highly publicized/glorified deaths of suicide bombers has caused this epidemic to grow in this small region.

This is another valuable piece of literature, as Grier alludes to the idea that reasons for suicide bombing are multi-faceted, but also introduces us to the theory of “The Tipping Point”, which explains suicide bombing not as a tactic, but as a growing epidemic. Grier concludes his work by giving examples of ways to combat suicide terrorism.

The Logic of Suicide Terrorism (Hoffman, 2003) focuses on the fundamentals of suicide bombings: inexpensiveness and effectiveness. He also focuses on debunking some of the myths of suicide terrorism using interviews with victims and attackers (whose attempts had failed). Hoffman’s article, like the works mentioned above, also focuses on the fact that suicide bombing has numerous components, but cites the fact that all is needed is a willingness to kill and a willingness to die. Interviews with Israelis are also a centerpiece of his work, and provide the view of those that have become the target of this phenomenon. Through these interviews, Hoffman illustrates the other side of suicide bombing, and exactly what the opinions of the targets are.

Hoffman then introduces the “Spider-Web Theory” based on realism, which originated within Hezbollah after struggling with the Israeli Defense Forces and their ultimate withdrawal from Southern Lebanon in 2000. The term was coined by Sheikh Hassan Nasrallah, who described Israel as a formidable military power, but whose society has become materialistic, lazy, pampered and soft. The idea behind the “Spider-Web Theory” is that a nation may look strong from the outside, but if you hit it, it will fall apart...much like a spider web. This is paramount to understanding how suicide bombing affects a nation like Israel. Hoffman

concludes his work by mentioning valid ideas by which to defeat suicide bombing through knowing who the bombers are, where to hit them, and how to deter them in the future.

Aside from mentioning the prevalent notion that suicide bombers are the result of several different factors, Hoffman's research into the Israelis' perception of the phenomenon and his introduction of the spider-web theory make this an extremely valuable piece of literature. His work acts to further the understanding of how suicide bombing affects its target examples of how to defeat suicide terrorism.

Suicide Terrorism as Strategy: Case Studies of Hamas and the Kurdistan Workers Party (Wyne, 2005) provides a look into using suicide bombing as a strategy using the realist theory. This piece of literature gives the reader an introduction to two competing explanations for suicide terrorism, one being religious motivations and the other being strategic motivations.

Wyne focuses on strategic motivations for the suicide bomber and discredits religious motivations as they are "not reflective of the Holy Qu'ran, but rather is replete with egregious distortions of select statements contained therein and fallacious renditions of Islamic principles". While Wyne does admit that "Hamas' ultimate objectives are, and always have been religious", he goes on to state that using religion as a basis for suicide terrorism is an "overly simplistic" categorization. Rather, Wyne notes that suicide terrorism is used because of its relatively cheap and effective means against the Israelis. Wyne cites Ramadan Shalah, Hamas' secretary general's rationale for suicide bombing: "Our enemy possesses the most sophisticated weapons in the world and its army is trained to a very high standard... We have nothing with which to repel the killing and thuggery against us except the weapon of martyrdom. It is easy and costs us only our lives... human bombs cannot be defeated, not even by nuclear bombs". Wyne continues with the example of Israel's withdraw from Gaza in 2005 as a result of the "coercive

effectiveness” of suicide terrorism. Simply, suicide terrorism works for the Palestinians and it is why they use it.

Additionally, Wyne, like many other authors explains that there are many motives for suicide terrorism, quoting an Israeli Professor of Philosophy at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem: “While the language used by the bombers and their organizations is always distinctly Islamic, the motives of the bombers are much more complicated, and some mention more than one motive for their act”.

Wyne’s piece is extremely valuable in that it provides a strategic vs. religious look regarding the roots of suicide terrorism in the Palestinian territories. Focusing on the strategic aspect, it provides new insights and ideas to a subject that is rife with rationales such as religion, poverty and despair, and personal causes.

Suicide Terrorism: Rationalizing the Irrational (Madsen, 2004) gives a brief introduction into suicide terrorism, and a short rundown of the history of suicide attacks beginning in the first century A.D. where Jewish sects attacked Roman occupiers of Judea knowing that they would ultimately be killed themselves. Madsen continues through the history of suicide attacks finishing with modern day examples of the Kamikazes of WWII, the Tamil Tigers of Sri Lanka, and Hezbollah to name a few.

Madsen then mentions several factors of the draw of suicide bombing, including their effectiveness vs. cheap cost, the amount of media coverage and its popularization of the phenomenon among Palestinians, legitimization and recruiting, and the role of women in suicide bombing.

All in all, Madsen’s work is nothing more than a brief overview of suicide bombing with nothing of real value that would lend itself towards this research paper. Everything that Madsen

mentions (outside of the role of women) has been covered in much more depth in other works and this really didn't serve as a valuable piece of literature in this research.

Mishandling Suicide Terrorism (Atran, 2004) is another work which provides nothing more than re-iteration of previous works, diving into varying causes of suicide terrorism, giving a brief synopsis of each.

Atran covers such topics such as U.S. perception of suicide bombers and how "current U.S. policies that attempt to address root causes are woefully misguided". Atran also focuses on relative deprivation and religious redemption as causes of Palestinian becoming suicide bombers, and organization of suicide terrorist groups.

Atran's work, while descriptive of varying causes of Palestinian Suicide Bombers, is more of a warning and what "not to do" when dealing with suicide terrorism. However, although most of the information is nothing more than a continuance or re-iteration of other works, Atran does briefly recognize the underlying feeling of hate towards the Israelis as a cause of Palestinian suicide bombing. This is a cause which is generally overlooked in most works, and while Atran's mentioning of hate as a reason for suicide bombing is very brief, this is what makes this article valuable.

In general, there is wealth of knowledge on the subject of Palestinian Suicide Bombers and the accompanying reasons that may compel Palestinians into this role. With the issue of suicide bombing being such a hot topic in today's global media, comprehensive literature on the subject matter is readily available. Such media covers everything from the history of suicide bombing as a tactic, to the history of the Palestinian Intifida, to the tactic of suicide bombing and why it has become so popular. As aforementioned, religious and/or political bias may play a role in some of the research on this subject matter, but most of the works tend to look at all sides of

this phenomenon and give reasons as to why it is happening without having opinions skewed by said biases.

Actors and Perceptions

There are four main actors that will be considered in this study. The first of which is Palestinian society, personified by the suicide bomber. It is from this society that people have come forward to use their bodies as bombs, time and time again. The second actor will encompass the predominant Palestinian militant groups who have made suicide bombing one of their main tactics: Harakat al-Muqawama al-Islamiyya, or “ Hamas”, the Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) and the al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades. All of these groups are militant organizations (and labeled as terrorist groups by Israel and other western countries) whose goal is the destruction of Israel, and who have served as recruiters/enablers of Palestinians to become suicide bombers. The third actor will be the Palestinian National Authority (PNA), personified by Mahmoud Abbas, the recognized President of that government. The fourth actor will be the state of Israel, to encompass their government, military, police and civilians, as they have all been either direct or indirect targets of Palestinian Suicide Bombers

Palestinian Society

While the Palestinian/Israeli conflict’s root cause goes back thousands of years, (and would take another paper in itself to explain), there are two basic premises that are paramount to understanding this struggle. First, both Palestinians and Israelis claim the inherent right to call Jerusalem and the land of Palestine as their own. Both the Jews and the Muslims claim this land as their home, and have done so for thousands of years. The paramount importance to both races that they are able to settle in this land cannot be overstated. Second, the religious fervor that is involved on both sides in the struggle for this land is also of great importance, as the city of

Jerusalem (Al-Quds in Arabic) is seen as the holy center for both races and has been that way as long as both races have called this land their home. While the root cause of the conflict spans several millennia, the more recent struggles began following World War II, when the British withdrew from their mandate of Palestine, and the UN partitioned the area into Arab and Jewish states, an arrangement rejected by the Arabs. It was this rejection of the Arabs that spawned the Six Day War in 1967 and October War in 1973, both of which saw the tiny state of Israel facing insurmountable odds against several Arab aggressor states (both of which Israel won convincingly). Additionally, during the Six Day War Israel advanced into the Arab lands of Gaza, the Golan Heights, and The West Bank territories, two of which they have occupied up until this day (Israel only recently withdrew from Gaza in 2005). It is the West Bank and Israel which have become the epicenter of Palestinian suicide attacks during the first and second Intifada.

Finally, it is important to note the beginnings of the tactic of suicide bombings, which has become a popular tactic for the Palestinians to use against Israel. While suicidal tactics did not gain a foothold with the Palestinians until 1983, its debut came during the Iran-Iraq war when a desperate Iranian leader Ayatollah Khomeini rounded up tens of thousands of children and sent them as human waves against a far superior Iraqi army (Argo, 2006). Soon thereafter, the idea was exported from Iran to Lebanon, where in 1983 a suicide bomber attacked the Marine Barracks in Beirut killing 250 servicemen. This new and powerful tactic resulted in driving out Israel and the United States from Lebanon and in effect became a popular weapon both strategically and ideologically with Muslims in the area, to include Palestinians.

Intifada

The Intifada is an underlying ideology that the reader needs to understand regarding this phenomenon. Now more than ever, Palestinians have begun to embrace the idea of Intifada, and legitimize the use of terror tactics as a response to perceived terror tactics by Israel. The first Intifada lasted from 1987-1991 and the second Intifada (or Al-Aqsa Intifada) which began in September of 2000 and is still going on today. Both Intifada represent a mass Palestinian uprising against their Israeli occupiers, borne of frustration of Israeli repression and a strong sense of Palestinian nationalism aiming to take back their land from Israel. The Oslo Accords gave a brief respite from the battles in 1993, only to see the fighting restart in 2000. In December 2001, more than 94 percent of Palestinians told pollsters that they viewed Israeli incursions into Palestinian territories as acts of terror, while 82 percent refused to characterize the killing of 21 Israeli youths outside a Tel Aviv disco six months earlier that way (Luft, 2002). There are several factors that need to be considered in examining the ideology of the Palestinian Intifada, the first of which is the Israeli Occupation of Palestinian territories and oppression of the Palestinian people.

The Palestinian people feel that the occupation of their land by Israeli forces is unjust and view the Israelis as a threat to their way of life (Argo, 2006). The Israelis are a bigger, better prepared, more protected, and more educated force, and “for Palestinian civilians it means no respite from roadblocks and identity checks, cordon-and-search operations, lightning snatch-and-grabs, bombing raids, helicopter strikes, ground attacks, and other countermeasures that have turned densely populated civilian areas into war zones” (Hoffman, 2003). However “relying on military force only mutates suicide networks and cells to meaner forms” (Atran, 2004). Because of these circumstances, Palestinians see themselves as victims, often traumatized by certain events, which in turn allow emotion guide their actions. “Emotions matter to the creation and

embrace of radical beliefs, especially the beliefs worth dying for” (Argo, 2006). These emotionally driven actions have taken the form of an effort towards “national liberation” (Moghadam, 2005) by way of Intifada against Israel. This Intifada was seen by Yasser Arafat as a “controlled crisis” by which the Palestinians would try to gain sovereign independence over their territories through resistance and struggle (Karmon, 2000). Intifada includes any kind of fight, whether it is with rocks, Molotov cocktails, or suicide bombers, the last of which has proven to be the most effective.

“Our enemy possesses the most sophisticated weapons in the world and its army is trained to a very high standard... We have nothing with which to repel the killing and thuggery against us except the weapon of martyrdom. It is easy and costs us only our lives... human bombs cannot be defeated, not even by nuclear bombs” (Ramadan Shalah, Hamas Secretary General). This way of thinking and methodology of uprising has led to a perceived effectiveness; through employment of suicide bombings, Israeli forces withdrew from Gaza in 1994 and from the West Bank in 1995. “Palestinians know that even though in Israel today there are more security guards than teachers or doctors, the bomber will always get through” (Luft, 2002).

Another underlying factor of Jihad that must be considered is that of revenge. “The tribal mentality which urges individuals to avenge defeat to the bitter end even across generations is essential to understanding suicide attacks in the Arab world”. Furthermore, “people are expected and are obliged to join the struggle according to their Arab tribal code” (Moghadam, 2005).

Palestinians hold many unique cases for revenge due to their history of struggle with Israel, it could be for a family member or loved one hurt or killed by the Israelis, or possibly a feeling by the individual that they have been wronged. Nowhere is the desire for revenge more prevalent than with suicide bombers, whom Palestinians say that suicide bombers are driven by a

priceless thirst for revenge (Grier, 2005). A particular case found a Palestinian female whose motivation to become a suicide bomber began with repeated humiliations at Israeli checkpoints, threatening encounters with security officials, and finally with the death of her boyfriend (Speckhard, 2005).

While direct revenge through suicide attacks is one means of comfort for Palestinians, so is indirect revenge through deriving comfort and satisfaction from the suffering of the Israelis. Through destruction of Israel's tourist trade, the decline of its economy, and demoralization of its people, Palestinians take solace in the fact that even though they are suffering at the hands of the Israelis and that the Israelis are also suffering because of the effects of Palestinian Suicide Bombers. According to a poll during May of 2002, "two-thirds of Palestinians say that the second Intifada's violence has achieved more for them than did the previous years of negotiations" (Luft, 2002).

Jihad

Another underlying concept the reader needs to understand is Jihad, or the Muslim fundamentalist's version of holy war. These fundamentalists' inherent views of absolutism, its believers envisioning themselves as part of a greater struggle, its tendency to demonize the opposition and reaction to said opposition, and the selectiveness of fundamentalists in which part of their religion they choose to stress all play a large role in Jihad. There are a couple of factors to be considered in examining the ideology of Jihad. The first of which are the teachings of Islamic Fundamentalists, who have taken root in Palestinian society and act as prophets who deliver hate speeches and foster extremism, and as recruiters for would-be suicide bombers (Grier, 2005).

Islamic fundamentalists are seen as radicals by outsiders, a small portion of the Muslim population that aim to create a world-wide Islamic state based on Sharia or Islamic Law (Zeidan, 2001). Islamic fundamentalists also aim to purify society by eradicating all non-Islamic teachings or “Jahiliyya”. What Islamic Fundamentalists have done, not only in Palestine but in the rest of the Muslim world, is reinterpret the Qu’ran (the Muslim book of faith), most importantly by manipulating the concept of spiritual battle into holy warfare and legitimize violent struggle excused by an ‘ends justifies a means’ ideology” (Zeidan, 2001). For these militant Jihadists, extreme sacrifice is necessary as long as there are non-believers, or “Kuffar”, in the world (Atran, 2004).

Jihad also serves to define a “David vs. Goliath” or “Good vs. Evil” epic type struggle for the Palestinians vs. the Israelis, where fanatical rhetoric feeds Jihadism’s religious conviction, zeal, and power to recruit (Atran, 2004). ‘Against the Goliaths’, martyrdom says, ‘even one bursting body can make a difference’ (Argo, 2006). Palestinians see Israel as the Goliath, full of military and economic might, as well as a country of non-believers that is to be dealt with through Jihad.

This reinterpretation by Muslim fundamentalists has served to instrumentalize the Muslim religion as the primary framework for recruiting new terrorists. In the case of the Palestinian territories, the two most notable fundamentalist groups (and biggest recruiters) that exist are the Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ), and the Al-Aqsa Martyrs brigade. Both the PIJ and Al-Aqsa have become recruitment experts through different techniques, whether it is coercion by way of threats to a Palestinian’s family or the exploitation of at-risk Palestinians, such as the young or the impoverished. Recruiters have not strayed from using technology as a tool either, terrorist groups like the PIJ or Al-Aqsa have become tech-savvy and use the internet as a

powerful recruitment tool. These recruiters have become salesmen for their cause, and are quite successful in what they do: turning Palestinian recruits into suicide bombers (Grier, 2005).

Another factor to take into consideration when dealing with the Jihad is that of Martyrdom. The idea of Martyrdom deals with great personal sacrifice (in this case, suicide) in order to fight the non-believers on behalf of Allah to create a better future for one's people. Martyrdom promises each individual who carries out this sacrifice a guaranteed place in Heaven, and eventual reunification with one's family. Because of this promised happiness, martyrs are said to have gone to their deaths smiling. An Israeli policeman was quoted as saying "A suicide bomber goes on a bus and finds himself face-to-face with victims and he smiles and activates the bomb—but we learned that only by asking people afterwards who survived". This smile is what is known in the Shia Islamic tradition as the "bassamat al-farah", or "smile of joy"—prompted by one's impending martyrdom (Hoffman, 2003).

This idea of a promised paradise has become so popular that in the Muslim world becoming a martyr is on par with a rock-star, movie-star or professional athlete in America. Popularization and idolization of martyrs are prevalent in Muslim society, such as public posters or murals, but nowhere is it more so than on Arab TV, which capitalizes on media coverage of suicide attacks. Media coverage conveys images of extreme discipline, dedication and skill on part of the suicide bombers (Madsen, 2004).

Palestinian society has embraced and nurtured the idea of martyrdom (Speckhard, 2005). "Families of suicide bombers now receive more than double the financial compensation than do families of those killed by other means" (Luft, 2002). Palestinians glorify the martyr. Martyrs are elevated to the levels of saints and even prophets. Among Palestinian children, there has been an increased tendency to idolize suicide bombers, with a recent poll showing that 25% of boys

from the ages of 12-17 wanting to become suicide bombers. Dr. Eyad Serraj, a psychiatrist in the Gaza Strip, claims that in the children's minds, the life of a martyr is one of power and glory (Madsen, 2004).

Palestinian Militant Groups

Three predominant militant groups exist which have adopted suicide bombing as their preferred method in striking against Israel, all of which have attacked not only Israeli Defense Forces but the civilian population as well. As previously mentioned, those groups are Hamas, the al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigade and the Palestinian Islamic Jihad.

Hamas' origin can be dated back to the Muslim Brotherhood, a religious and political organization founded in Egypt which then branched out throughout the Arab world. Hamas grew out of the Muslim Brotherhood, and was officially founded in the in December 1987 (after the first Intifada), by Sheikh Ahmed Yassin, its spiritual leader. In 1988, Hamas published its official charter, and conducted its first suicide bombing in 1993. Hamas "is believed to have killed more than five hundred people in more than 350 separate terrorist attacks" since then (Council on Foreign Relations, 2007)

Today, Hamas remains the "the largest and most influential Palestinian movement" (Council on Foreign Relations, 2007). In January 2006, Hamas won the Palestinian Authority's general legislative elections, and because of its refusal to recognize the state of Israel, has led to a power struggle versus legislative seats controlled by the Fatah party within the PA ever since.

The al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigade began as an offshoot of the Fatah party in 2000, which served as a secular Palestinian nationalist movement. al-Aqsa consists of a network of militias affiliated with Fatah "and has been one of the driving forces behind the 'Second' Intifada" (Council on Foreign Relations, 2008). al-Aqsa began its terrorist attacks against civilian targets

in Israel in 2002, killing 71 Israeli citizens and wounding hundreds of others through suicide bombings alone.

The Palestinian Islamic Jihad “was formed in 1979 by Islamic fundamentalist Fathi Shaqaqi and other radical Palestinian students in Egypt from the Palestinian Muslim Brotherhood in the Gaza Strip whom they deemed too moderate” (Jewish Virtual Library, 2008). It began its terror campaign against Israel in the 1980s and has been “the dominant terrorist organization in the planning, organization and implementation of suicide bombing attacks” (Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2007). However, because of significant blows inflicted by Israeli Defense Forces, as well as with the existence of Israel’s security fence, the numbers of suicide attacks have decreased. Additionally, more than 1,000 PIJ operatives were arrested in 2006, with 96 of the detainees identified as potential suicide bombers. “Nevertheless, it kept up its attempts to rehabilitate itself...and carry out suicide-bombing attacks in Israel” (Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2007).

Intifada

While it can be argued that all three groups have strong feelings of nationalism, and in fact all three have cooperated in attacks against Israel, only the al-Aqsa Martyrs brigade is a true nationalist movement. al-Aqsa’s ideology is “rooted in Palestinian nationalism, not political Islam” (Council on Foreign Relations, 2008). As mentioned above, al-Aqsa was one of the driving forces behind the second Intifada and it is the brigade’s hope to drive Israel out of the West Bank by force. However, it should be noted that Hamas does combine the ideologies of Palestinian nationalism with Islamic Fundamentalism.

Jihad

Both Hamas and the Palestinian Islamic Jihad are radical Muslim Fundamentalist groups who exist solely to annihilate the state of Israel through Jihad, and who are committed to the establishing an Islamist state once they have done so. Hamas has specifically made mention of raising “the banner of Allah over every inch of Palestine”, and calling their suicide attacks the “F-16 of the Palestinian people” (Council on Foreign Relations, 2008). Neither of the groups is interested in making peace, both being committed to continuing their holy war against Israel. Hamas leader Abdel Aziz al-Rantisi was quoted in 2004 as saying “peace talks will do no good...we do not believe we can live with the enemy”. PIJ representative Abu Imad Al Rifai has made similar statements, being quoted by Reuters as saying “Our position is to continue. We have no other choice. We are not willing to compromise”.

Palestinian National Authority

The Palestinian National Authority was established in 1993 as an interim body to administer Palestinian populated areas of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. It was the result signed by Israel and the PLO known as the Oslo Accords. It is governed by an executive and legislative branch. Its executive authority is led by a president while its legislature is made up of 132 members elected by Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Currently, Mahmoud Abbas is the recognized President of the PNA, winning elections in 2005 after the death of long time leader Yasser Arafat 2004. It was at this time that the PNA, under President Abbas, “agreed to the Sharm el-Sheikh Commitments in an effort to move the peace process forward” (CIA World Fact Book). However, in 2006, Hamas won the majority of the seats in the PNA, placing a strain on the peace process as the international community refused to recognize the Hamas led government, as Hamas’ did not recognize Israel, and called for its ultimate destruction. At this point the United States and European Union, both of which were the main contributors of aid to

the PNA, cut off funding. Armed clashes between Fatah and Hamas occurred soon afterward, (with a short cease-fire in 2007) leading to President Abbas' decision to appoint an emergency caretaker government. This new government excluded the Hamas dominated legislature, gaining official recognition from the United States, European Union and Israel as the caretaker government.

President Abbas maintains a moderate approach towards the peace process with Israel, showing that he is willing to negotiate and reach a peaceful compromise. President Abbas has met several times with both Israel's former and current Prime Ministers (Ariel Sharon and Ehud Olmert, respectively) regarding the Palestinian/Israeli peace process, as well as taking part in the Oslo negotiations in the 1990's.

Intifada/Jihad

Regarding the concepts of Intifada and Jihad, Mahmoud Abbas has called for a shift in ideologies in order to work towards peace. An interview with al-Ayyam newspaper in 1999 sums up his feeling towards both: "...the mentality of the revolution is different to that of the state. The slogans, the banners and the tools we used during the revolution should be adjusted according to the new reality; the reality of the state. Hence, all individuals, organizations, and institutions must change their previous concepts and adopt new ones. It was not possible in the past to drop the armed struggle option. Armed struggle was the theme of our movement. The situation has changed. We have a peace course; the course of negotiations. To achieve what we want, we have to adjust to reality. Hence, the organizations have to reconsider their state. We have to preserve the PLO and the national unity with a new appearance, with renewed powers capable of coping with the different age."

Israel

The effectiveness of these Palestinian suicide attacks has created a general fear among the Israelis. Benny Morris, a professor of history at Ben Gurion University explained this fear: “The Palestinians say they have found a strategic weapon, and suicide bombing is it. The hotel is empty. The streets are empty. They have effectively terrorized Israeli society. My wife won’t use a bus anymore, only a taxi”. Even Israeli police have been affected: “I’m worried...I tell you this as a police officer. I don’t come to Jerusalem with my children anymore. I’d give back the settlements. I’d give over my bank account to live in peace” (Hoffman, 2003). This fear among Israelis only serves to prove that suicide bombing has become an effective tactic when used by the Palestinians. A public opinion study conducted by The Institute For National Security Studies conducted between 2005-2007 shows that 69 percent of Israelis are still concerned they either they or a family member may be a victim of a terrorist attacks. The study goes on to add that “there can be no doubt that terrorism, and specifically the spate of suicide bombings, has left its mark on Israeli society”.

Palestinian Society, Palestinian Militant Groups, The Palestinian National Authority and the State of Israel are the four actors that will likely have the greatest interest on whether or not the phenomenon of Palestinian suicide bombings will continue in the future. The literature available on the subject, as well as the perceptions of the major actors presented in this study, will help direct a predictive analysis on the possible future of the phenomenon in question.

Research Design

In predictive studies, there are several different analytical models which can be used. For this particular study, the LAMP method was chosen based on the author’s opinion that it is best suited for predicting the subject in question, with its political, nationalist and religious

background. This method was developed in the early 1990's by Dr. Jonathan Lockwood and "utilizes a hybrid methodology of predictive analysis that borrows from other analytical and planning methodologies and combines elements of those methodologies in a unique way" (www.lamp-method.org). What makes LAMP different from all those other models is the recognition and inherent importance of "free will". In a case where a study is dealing with the factors such as politics, religion, and nationalism (as this study is), each actor involved in the study possesses their own free will to act individually, at any given time, with the potential to change the perception and/or behavior of all of the other actors involved. Thus, "free will" can change the future of the issue being studied in many different ways, and therefore, it is important to know the perceptions of each actor involved. This way, the analyst can try and gauge what type of decisions/actions each actor may make/take in order to analyze different possible outcomes. Rather than focusing only on one perspective which would in turn expose the analyst to unintentional bias (or invalidate their study because of a lack of information), the LAMP method requires the analyst to consider the perception of each actor, and thus greatly increases the success of the study. For example, if the author of this study only took the perception of Israel into account, the information would be vastly inadequate to try and predict not only the behavior of the other actors, but skew the outcome as a whole regarding Palestinian Suicide Bombers.

The LAMP method consists of 12 steps, focused on relative probability rather than relying on quantitative analysis. The LAMP method continually builds the study with each step, requiring the analyst to review the main subject, as well as all of the preceding steps. The analyst will then utilize each of these steps in furthering their study from which they will eventually try and predict a future for. The twelve steps of the LAMP method are as follows:

1. Determine the issue for which you are trying to predict the most likely future.
2. Specify the national “actors” involved.
3. Perform an in-depth study of how each national actor perceives the issue in question.
4. Specify all *possible* courses of action for each actor.
5. Determine the major scenarios within which you will compare the alternate futures.
6. Calculate the total number of permutations of possible “alternate futures” for each scenario.
7. Perform a “pairwise comparison” of all alternate futures to determine their relative probability.
8. Rank the alternate futures for each scenario from highest relative probability to the lowest based on the number of “votes” received.
9. Assuming that each future occurs, analyze each alternate future in terms of its consequences for the issue in question.
10. State the potential of a given alternate future to “transpose” into another alternate future.
11. Determine the “focal events” that must occur in our present in order to bring about a given alternate future.
12. Develop indicators for the focal events.

Studying the possible responses of Palestinian Society, Palestinian Militant Groups, Palestinian National Authority, and Israel in relation to the phenomenon of Palestinian Suicide Bombers, as well as the Palestinian/Israeli peace process are completely adaptable in the LAMP process because of the various (and widely different) perceptions of each actor involved. Analyzing the potential behavior of all of these actors is extremely important and very relevant, with the PNA’s behavior (more specifically their success or failure in the peace process) being the most likely to prompt responses from each of the other actors involved.

Like any study, concerns arise regarding the LAMP method. While the LAMP method is admittedly infallible, it “gives the analyst a more powerful method for organizing all available information based on the perceptions of the national actors and uses it to make relevant predictions as to which alternate future is most likely to occur at a given moment in time.” (www.lamp-portal.com). With that being said, another cause for concern is the possible bias of the researcher conducting the study. Possible biases can not only negatively affect the way the author perceives an issue in question, but the overall relevancy of their study, unless careful care

is taken to omit said biases. While the author of this study happens to be an American student (and service member) subjected to American media-bias, he also happens to be extremely familiar with Middle Eastern culture, customs, courtesies and history due to his military training on the region as a whole. It is through this experience and familiarity that the author will make every effort to avoid any type of bias that could negatively affect the outcome of this study.

Potential Courses of Action for the Interested Actors

In this analysis, there are three main actors whose potential courses of action deal directly with the phenomenon of Palestinian Suicide Bombers. These actors are Palestinian Society, the Palestinian Militant Groups, and the state of Israel. After identifying these interested actors, the next step to conduct in a LAMP study is to determine all possible courses of action for each actor. However, with the history of the Palestinian/Israeli conflict, and the all of the nationalist and religious factors involved, an infinite amount of potential actions can occur. By simplifying the behaviors involved with this phenomenon, it is possible to reduce such a large amount into a smaller, more general, and much more manageable number for this study. For Palestinian Society, Palestinian Militant Groups, and the state of Israel, there are two possible courses of action for each main actor (with small variations from actor to actor). First, in the case that peace talks were successful between the PNA and Israel, a new era of peace between Palestine and Israel would occur. In this case, Palestinian Society would gradually adopt this new and peaceful way of thinking towards Israel, discontinuing suicide attacks against their neighbor. Additionally, Palestinian Militant Groups would lose their validity in calling for Intifada and/or Jihad, while Israel would be able to enjoy increased national security and an end to the current conflict.

In the case of a complete breakdown (i.e. failure) in peace talks occurring between the Palestine National Authority and Israel, Palestinian Society would continue to produce suicide bombers. In this case, the Palestinian Militant Groups would continue to enjoy their popularity and continue to control the momentum to recruit, train and conduct suicide attacks against Israel. Because of a failure to reach a peaceful agreement, Israel would continue to use its military might to strike back at Palestinians in efforts to avenge successful suicide attacks as well as attempting to eradicate the threat of those attacks.

Major Scenarios

For this analysis, the Palestinian National Authority, headed by President Mahmoud Abbas, is considered the focal point and the catalyst for the behavior for each of the other actors. There are two possible actions the Palestinian National Authority may carry out, which will differ from those of the other actors involved, due to the different position each actor holds in regards to the phenomenon of Palestinian Suicide Bombers. It is because of the PNA's critical role in the peace process with Israel, and as its role as the government of Palestine, that it will directly affect the behaviors in each of the other actors. For the Palestinian National Authority, the two major scenarios which may occur are: The PNA will either successfully negotiate a peaceful settlement with Israel, or the PNA will break off peace talks with Israel resulting in a failed settlement. Because of their capability to change future responses, each of the scenarios posed will determine the future course of action for each of the other actors in this analysis. Following LAMP methodology, the possible courses of action for the Palestinian National Authority will be considered "major scenarios" from which the author will attempt to determine the most likely future. To attempt to effectively predict the most likely future in this study, an

analysis must be performed in order identify all possible permutations of actions by the actors involved related to the two major scenarios regarding the PNA.

Permutations of Behavior

Per the LAMP method of analysis, the basic equation for determining how many possible “alternate futures” exist for the three actors involved (Palestinian Society, Palestinian Militant Groups, and the state of Israel) is $X^Y = Z$. In this equation, X represents the number of actions available to each actor, while Y represents the number of actors involved. Z represents the sum of alternate futures that are to be compared. In this analysis, there are two possible courses of action for the three actors involved. Therefore, the equation for this analysis will appear as such: $2^3 = 8$, meaning there are 8 possible alternate futures to compare for the three actors involved. The next step in the process is to create a table of alternate future permutations, which will be used in order to conduct a “pairwise comparison” for each scenario. Abbreviations will be used to identify the potential courses of action in the tables, and are as follows:

Continued Suicide Attacks = CSA

Discontinued Suicide Attacks = DSA

Table 1 – Alternate Future Permutations

Possible Future #	Palestinian Society	Palestinian Militant Groups	Israel
1	CSA	CSA	CSA
2	CSA	CSA	DSA
3	CSA	DSA	CSA
4	DSA	CSA	CSA
5	CSA	DSA	DSA
6	DSA	CSA	DSA
7	DSA	DSA	CSA
8	DSA	DSA	DSA

Pairwise Comparisons for Each Scenario

Using the data from the Alternate Futures Table (Table 1), it is now possible to conduct a pairwise comparison of all the alternate futures for each scenario. A pairwise comparison is a method of comparing the possibility of each alternate future against each other possible future. As an example, in using the data from Table 1, a comparison between alternate future #1 would be made to alternate future #2. This would then be followed by a determination being made on which is more likely based on the analyst's understanding of each actor's viewpoint. Alternate future #1 would then be compared to alternate future #3 in the same fashion, and this process would continue until all possible alternate futures have been compared to each other. The equation used in order to determine how many pairwise comparisons are to be made is as follows: $X = n(n-1) / 2$. In this equation, n represents the total number of alternate futures to be analyzed while X represents the total number of pairwise comparisons that are to be made. In this analysis, n equals 8, therefore X equals 28 pairwise comparisons that must be made for each scenario. Using the alternate futures permutations table (Table 1) with a fourth column labeled "votes". The numbers in the "votes" column will be weighed against each other allowing for analysis of which possible futures are the most likely in each of the two scenarios.

Table 2 – Alternate Futures Table, Scenario #1: Successful Peace Talks

Possible Future #	Palestinian Society	Palestinian Militant Groups	Israel	Votes
1	CSA	CSA	CSA	2
2	CSA	CSA	DSA	4
3	CSA	DSA	CSA	3
4	DSA	CSA	CSA	6
5	CSA	DSA	DSA	1
6	DSA	CSA	DSA	5
7	DSA	DSA	CSA	0
8	DSA	DSA	DSA	7
				SUM=28

Table 3 – Alternate Futures Table, Scenario #2: Failed Peace Talks

Possible Future #	Palestinian Society	Palestinian Militant Groups	Israel	Votes
1	CSA	CSA	CSA	7
2	CSA	CSA	DSA	5
3	CSA	DSA	CSA	4
4	DSA	CSA	CSA	6
5	CSA	DSA	DSA	2
6	DSA	CSA	DSA	3
7	DSA	DSA	CSA	1
8	DSA	DSA	DSA	0
				SUM=28

Using the voting results from the pairwise comparisons contained in Tables 2 and 3, it is now possible to conduct the next step of the LAMP process and rank the scenarios in order of probability (highest to lowest), and thus determine what is most likely to happen given each specific scenario posed by the Palestinian National Authority.

Ranking the Alternate Futures

Tables 2 and 3 in the previous section show the votes that each alternate future received in the pairwise comparisons conducted. The next step in the process is to rank the probability of each future (based on the votes received) from highest probability to lowest. The following tables (4 and 5) have been arranged in such a manner.

Table 4 – Alternate Futures Table, Scenario #1: Successful Peace Talks

Possible Future #	Palestinian Society	Palestinian Militant Groups	Israel	Votes
4	DSA	CSA	CSA	7
8	DSA	DSA	DSA	6
6	DSA	CSA	DSA	5
1	CSA	CSA	CSA	4
2	CSA	CSA	DSA	3
3	CSA	DSA	CSA	2
5	CSA	DSA	DSA	1
7	DSA	DSA	CSA	0
				SUM=28

Table 5 – Alternate Futures Table, Scenario #2: Failed Peace Talks

Possible Future #	Palestinian Society	Palestinian Militant Groups	Israel	Votes
1	CSA	CSA	CSA	7
2	CSA	CSA	DSA	6
4	DSA	CSA	CSA	5
3	CSA	DSA	CSA	4
6	DSA	CSA	DSA	3
5	CSA	DSA	DSA	2
7	DSA	DSA	CSA	1
8	DSA	DSA	DSA	0
				SUM=28

After looking over tables 4 and 5, patterns of behavior can be noted within each scenario, and complete opposite patterns of behavior can be seen between the two scenarios. The next section of analysis will cover the three alternate futures for each scenario that received the number of votes. These futures will represent the most likely reactions by Palestinian Society, Palestinian Militant groups, and Israel to the result of the peace talks between the PNA and Israel, and the consequences of those alternate futures.

Analysis of Alternate Futures

Scenario #1 – Successful Peace Talks Between the PNA and Israel

Scenario 1, posed by the Palestinian National Authority, would entail the PNA negotiating a peaceful settlement with Israel. This would involve following up the agreement made in November 2007 in Annapolis, Maryland between Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert and Mahmoud Abbas, to have a treaty in place by the end of 2008, and its subsequent and successful implementation. In this case it is assumed that any disputes between the two parties involving land and holy sites will be compromised upon and agreed upon by both parties.

Scenario 1, or “Successful Peace Talks” is one where efforts have been made before (The Oslo Accords), but never enjoyed any continued success. It is the scenario which the Israelis long for, and which the international community hopes for. In analyzing the possible responses to this scenario, seven of the alternate futures all received at least one vote when compared with one another, while one alternate future received no votes at all. It is the three alternate futures that received the most votes (#4, #8, and #6) that will be considered the most likely to occur in relation to Scenario 1, whose consequences will be compared to reveal the most likely outcome for the interested states involved.

Alternate Future #4: *In the wake of peaceful negotiations between the PNA and Israel, Palestinian Society is successfully persuaded by its government to cease suicide bombing attacks against Israel, and promote a state of peace. However, due to their radical foundations, the Palestinian Militant Groups continue to use suicide bombing as a tactic against Israel, and Israelis are still unable to enjoy a sense of true national security.*

Out of all 8 possible alternate futures, alternate future #4 received the most votes (8) and is considered to be the most likely to occur. However, there is one very important factor falling

under this alternate future that requires consideration. That factor concerns the actual ability of the PNA to persuade its own people to cease suicide bombing attacks. While the possibility undoubtedly exists, the fact remains that it would be a daunting task as the PNA is not very popular with Palestinian Society at the moment, let alone trying to reshape the minds of a society that has greatly supported the destruction of Israel since its inception. Regardless, it is considered quite realistic as long as the peace settlement contains legitimate compromises which favor Palestinian concerns (i.e. land and holy sites).

As it can be seen within this alternate future, it would be considered impossible to reform the ideology of the Palestinian Militant Groups, which is why they would continue in their quest for the destruction of Israel. Thus, Israel would continue to feel the effects of suicide attacks against its people, who would not be able to enjoy a sense of security.

Alternate Future #8: *In the wake of peaceful negotiations between the PNA and Israel, Palestinian Society is successfully persuaded by its government to cease suicide bombing attacks against Israel, and promote a state of peace. Because of this new ideology adopted by Palestinian Society, the Palestinian Militant groups lose their remaining power and credibility, and integrate into Palestinian Society. A new era of peace begins in this troubled region.*

Without question, Alternate Future #8 is the most desirable outcome of all three, but less likely as it received fewer votes (7) than Alternate Future #4. Once again, there are several factors that bear consideration for this alternate future to occur. Similar to Alternate Future #4, the PNA would have to successfully accomplish the difficult task of persuading its people to accept a negotiated peace agreement with Israel and to change their mindset toward their neighbor (i.e. accepting peace and putting an end to suicide attacks). What this alternate future also depends on is that the new ideology held by Palestinian Society would in turn affect the

existence of the Palestinian Militant Groups. This would be an incredible task to accomplish to say the least, as a senior Hamas official was quoted as calling the Annapolis peace talks between Abbas and Olmert as “a waste of time”. In the case of this alternate future, it is assumed that if Palestinian Society adopted a peaceful mindset regarding Israel, it would result in a greatly reduced lack of support for the Palestinian Militant Groups, whose power and credibility would eventually decline into a state of nonexistence. At this point, members of those militant groups then eventually have no choice but to adopt said mindset, either through coercion, persuasion or a simply having no other choice, and then integrate back into Palestinian Society. This may seem improbable with the history and ideology behind the conflict (especially on the side of the Palestinians), however it is possible with the proper motivation and/or persuasion.

Alternate Future #6: *In the wake of peaceful negotiations between the PNA and Israel, Palestinian Society is successfully persuaded by its government to cease suicide bombing attacks against Israel, and promote a state of peace. Due to their radical foundations, the Palestinian Militant Groups continue to use suicide bombing as a tactic against Israel. However, because of a lack of support from Palestinian society and beefed up Israeli security measures, these attacks occur at a greatly diminished rate, giving Israelis a new sense of national security.*

Alternate Future #6 was the third less likely future considered to occur, receiving six votes. This alternate future is similar to both those which preceded it, in that it requires the PNA to change Palestinian Society’s mindset, and the Palestinian Militant Groups would continue their struggle to wipe Israel off the face of the planet, they would do so with a great lack of support. However, what is different in this alternate future, are the efforts of the Israelis to further their security measures to counter any attacks from militant groups, reducing said threat to a very negligible one. While it may be somewhat of an exaggeration (or heartless) to use the

word “negligible” when regarding suicide attacks that may still occur (albeit rarely), the comparison between nearly nonexistent attacks versus the carnage that was felt in the past, which the author believes warrants this term. It is also important to note that increased and intense security measure are assumed to keep suicide bombers outside of populated civilian centers, instead being relegated to attacking the boundary separating the two, and Israeli military members who are better equipped to deter/sustain/counter such an attack.

Scenario #2 – Failed Peace Talks Between the PNA and Israel

Scenario 2 accurately represents the history of the Palestinian/Israeli conflict over the past 5 decades, with several failed attempts at achieving a peaceful settlement between the two parties. As mentioned before, both parties claim the same land as their own, and have for thousands of years. With this longstanding tradition of what each side considers their “home”, coupled with highly intense religious ideologies, it has been impossible to reach any kind of peaceful settlement that ever lasted. In the case of Scenario 2, it is assumed that the failure would be a direct result of a complete lack of compromise between the PNA and Israel, leading to a breaking off of the talks. This is the most detrimental scenario between the two, as the result would undoubtedly lead to further violence in the area, and further frustration amongst the international community regarding the issue.

In analyzing the possible responses to this scenario, seven of the alternate futures all received at least one vote when compared with one another, while one alternate future received no votes at all. It is the three alternate futures that received the most votes (#1, #2, and #4) that will be considered the most likely to occur in relation to Scenario 2, whose consequences will be compared to reveal the most likely outcome for the interested states involved.

Alternate Future #1: *In the wake of failed negotiations between the PNA and Israel, Palestinian Society sees no other course of action but to condone the use of suicide bombing, giving the Palestinian Militant Groups complete credibility and ability in recruiting new suicide bombers. Israel would continue to be the target of suicide attacks and a lack of faith amongst its citizens regarding its own national security.*

This alternate future was not only voted as the most probable for Scenario 2, but is considered a continuance of the current status quo for the Palestinian/Israeli conflict. As was previously mentioned, suicide attacks have occurred since the first Intifada, and no peace agreement between the two parties has ever really come to fruition. This alternate future is the one which most closely resembles the history and trends of the conflict, and thus received the most votes (8) of the three alternate futures being considered. With a failed negotiation between the two countries, suicide bombings would only continue, and possibly increase. This would lead Israelis to only further doubt their own security, and bring the overall mood even lower. This alternate future would undoubtedly be the most detrimental, continuing decades-long conflict and bloodshed, much to the disappointment of the international community.

Alternate Future #2: *In the wake of failed negotiations between the PNA and Israel, Palestinian Society sees no other course of action but to support the use of suicide bombing, giving the Palestinian Militant Groups complete credibility and ability in recruiting new suicide bombers. However, with improved security measures, Israel is able to reduce the amount of suicide attacks, but whose citizens never feel completely safe.*

Alternate Future #2 was the second most likely to occur in this scenario, receiving seven votes. While it is extremely similar to Alternate Future #1, this alternate future takes the possibility of Israel successfully increasing security in an attempt to deter and greatly minimize

suicide attacks, and thus lead to a greater (yet incomplete) sense of national security amongst its people. While the suicide bombing phenomenon, as well as actual attacks would continue to occur, they would be a rarity, and lead to said sense of increased security.

Alternate Future #4: *In the wake of failed negotiations between the PNA and Israel, Palestinian Militant Groups retain their credibility and ability in recruiting new suicide bombers. However, because of aggressive security measures and retaliatory strikes against Palestinian targets by the Israelis, Palestinian Society loses faith in using suicide bombing as a tactic.*

Alternate Future #4 received six votes, and is the least likely to occur of the top three futures, with good reason. This alternate future bears similarities to the two before it, in regards to the continued Jihad/Intifada by Palestinian Militant Groups and increased Israeli security. However, its only (and most important) difference assumes that Palestinians would eventually lose faith in the tactic of suicide bombing, succumbing to frustration caused by increased security measures and anti-militant strikes by the Israelis. While this kind of thing might occur, it is considered highly unlikely based on the attitude and ideology of Palestinian Society over the past several decades. However, as this alternate future received as many votes as it did, it still bears consideration with the top three considered most likely to occur.

With the three most likely alternate futures for each scenario having been discussed, the possibility of further Palestinian suicide attacks has become apparent, regardless of scale or severity. While Palestinian Society can be seen as mostly discontinuing suicide attacks when analyzing all of the most likely alternate futures, Palestinian Militant groups are mostly seen as continuing their Intifada/Jihad against Israel. It can also be seen that in all cases that Israel is the target, and will most likely still feel the effects of these suicide bomber attacks, even in the case that they become a rarity. All in all, further conflict appears to be the theme of the future, mostly

in the form of suicide bomber attacks, as they are the most detrimental to Israel's national security, and the overall mood of the people of Israel.

The next step in the LAMP method is to determine whether or not any of the most probable alternate futures that were covered in this section are likely to "transpose" into one another. The probability of transposition will be covered in the following section.

Transposition of Alternate Futures

A "transposition" of one alternate future into another can occur when the actions of one actor changes the perception of one or more actors. This change in perception provides the ability of one alternate future to change, or "transpose" into another, which then directly affects the possible futures of the other actors, as well as the overall outcome of the subject in question. The three most probable futures identified from the two major scenarios will be analyzed, and their probability of transposing into one another will be covered in this section.

Scenario #1 -- Successful Peace Talks

The three alternate futures in Scenario #1 that were ranked most probable to occur were 4, 8 and 6. Because of the direct relation between Palestinian Society, Palestinian Militant Groups, and an indirect relation of the actions of both to Israel, these three alternate futures all possess the capability to transpose into one another. The fundamental factor to deciding whether they can transpose into one another are the desires/actions of Palestinian Society and the Palestinian Militant Groups following a peaceful settlement with Israel.

In alternate futures 4 and 8, Palestinian Society is seen as discontinuing suicide attacks while Palestinian Militant Groups continue suicide attacks in alternate future 4 and discontinue their use in alternate future 8. In terms of the Israeli response, they are seen to feel the continuing use of suicide attacks in alternate future 4 but not in alternate future 8. With a strong relationship

between Palestinian Society and Palestinian Militant Groups, alternate future 4 could transpose into alternate future 8, with the proper coercion, persuasion, motivation as previously mentioned. Alternate future 4 could also transpose into alternate future 6 (or vice versa), depending on the Israeli reaction (positive or negative), to continued suicide bombings by Palestinian Militant Groups, with Palestinian Society taking a peaceful role in both.

Finally, as alternate future 6 is very similar to alternate future 8 (except for Palestinian Militant Groups continuing suicide attacks in alternate future 6), alternate future 6 could transpose into alternate future 8 depending on coercion, persuasion, motivation from Palestinian Society.

Scenario #2 -- Failed Peace Talks

The three alternate futures in Scenario #2 that were ranked most probable to occur were 1, 2 and 4. Just as in the first scenario, the direct relation between Palestinian Society, Palestinian Militant Groups, and an indirect relation of the actions of both to Israel, these three alternate futures all possess the capability to transpose into one another. However, unlike the first scenario, the fundamental factor to deciding whether they can transpose into one another is not only based on the desires/actions of Palestinian Society and the Palestinian Militant Groups, but also heavily hinges on the actions of the Israelis.

Alternate future 1 sees all actors as either continuing suicide attacks (or the Israelis continuing to feel their effects). Alternate future two is very similar to alternate future 1, with its only difference being that the Israelis would no longer feel the effects of suicide bombing with an aggressively increased security posture versus suicide attacks. If this were to happen, alternate future 1 could transpose into alternate future 2, with the Israelis feeling increasingly safe, although not by much.

With alternate future 4 and alternate future 1 being close to identical, it can be said that alternate future 4 could transpose into alternate future 1. While only Palestinian Society is seen as discontinuing suicide attacks in alternate future 4, eventual frustration of Palestinian Society could lead to the transposition into alternate future 1, where all actors are continuing (or continuing to feel the effects of) suicide attacks.

Alternate future 4 also has the potential to transpose into alternate future 2, if the ideology of Palestinian Society were to once again condone the use of suicide bombers against Israel, coupled with the Israeli's increasing security posture versus those attacks.

These potential transpositions lead us to the final two steps of the LAMP method, which require presenting the focal events which must occur in our present in order to bring about a transposition. Additionally, indicators must be provided for any possible transposition, which support the focal events by foretelling actor behavior. Both will be covered in the next section.

Focal Events and Indicators

In this section, the final two steps of the LAMP method will be conducted: determining the focal events required for an alternate future to occur, and developing indicators for the focal events. "For each focal event associated with an alternate future, it should be possible to develop a list of indicators that such an event either has occurred or is about to occur." (www.lamp-portal.com). Focal events and indicators will now be provided for the three most probable alternate futures for each scenario.

Scenario #1 -- Successful Peace Talks

Alternate Future #4: *In the wake of peaceful negotiations between the PNA and Israel, Palestinian Society is successfully persuaded by its government to cease suicide bombing attacks against Israel, and promote a state of peace. However, due to their radical foundations, the*

Palestinian Militant Groups continue to use suicide bombing as a tactic against Israel, and Israelis are still unable to enjoy a sense of true national security.

Focal Events:

- Palestinian Society discontinues its support of Palestinian Militant Groups.
- Palestinian Militant Groups are enraged by the thought of peaceful co-existence with Israel, and aggressively increase their suicide attacks even without the support of Palestinian Society.
- Israelis feel the effects of a heightened suicide bombing campaign while the sense of national security deteriorates as does overall mood.

Indicators:

- Palestinian Society agrees with a peaceful solution with Israel.
- Palestinian Militant Groups refuse any peaceful solution made between the PNA and Israel, even without the support of Palestinian Society.
- Palestinian Militant Groups continue the call for complete annihilation of Israel and its replacement with an Islamic state.
- Israelis accept the peace agreement and are momentarily distracted with the thought of peace in the region.

Alternate Future #8: *In the wake of peaceful negotiations between the PNA and Israel, Palestinian Society is successfully persuaded by its government to cease suicide bombing attacks against Israel, and promote a state of peace. Because of this new ideology adopted by Palestinian Society, the Palestinian Militant groups lose their remaining power and credibility, and integrate into Palestinian Society. A new era of peace begins in this troubled region.*

Focal Events:

- Palestinian Society coerces members of Palestinian Militant Groups towards the peaceful solution between Palestine and Israel.
- Infrastructure of Palestinian Militant Groups greatly deteriorates and they eventually dissolve.
- Suicide attacks become non-existent.
- Israelis begin to enjoy a true sense of national security and overall mood improves exponentially.
- Peace is seen in the region for the first time in decades.

Indicators:

- Palestinian society shuns the ideologies of the Palestinian Militant Groups in favor of peace.
- Palestinian Militant Groups begin to feel the effects of a lack of support from Palestinian Society.
- Israel aggressively and successfully increases security measures and the hunt for remaining Palestinian Militants.

Alternate Future #6: *In the wake of peaceful negotiations between the PNA and Israel, Palestinian Society is successfully persuaded by its government to cease suicide bombing attacks against Israel, and promote a state of peace. Due to their radical foundations, the Palestinian Militant Groups continue to use suicide bombing as a tactic against Israel. However, because of a lack of support from Palestinian society and beefed up Israeli security measures, these attacks occur at a greatly diminished rate, giving Israelis a new sense of national security.*

Focal Events:

- Palestinian Society discontinues its support of Palestinian Militant Groups.
- Palestinian Militant Groups are enraged by the thought of peaceful co-existence with Israel, and aggressively increase their suicide attacks even without the support of Palestinian Society.
- Israelis begin to enjoy a truer sense of national security and overall mood improves.

Indicators:

- Palestinian Society agrees with a peaceful solution with Israel.
- Palestinian Militant Groups refuse any peaceful solution made between the PNA and Israel, even without the support of Palestinian Society.
- Palestinian Militant Groups continue the call for complete annihilation of Israel and its replacement with an Islamic state.
- Israel aggressively and successfully increases security measures and the hunt for Palestinian Militants.

Scenario #2 -- Failed Peace Talks

Alternate Future #1: In the wake of failed negotiations between the PNA and Israel, Palestinian Society sees no other course of action but to condone the use of suicide bombing, giving the Palestinian Militant Groups complete credibility and ability in recruiting new suicide bombers. Israel would continue to be the target of suicide attacks and a lack of faith amongst its citizens regarding its own national security.

Focal Events:

- Palestinian Militant Groups with full support of Palestinian Society, are able to successfully recruit and continue their suicide attacks against Israel.

- Israelis feel the effects of a continued suicide bomber campaign while the sense of national security further deteriorates as does overall mood.
- Conflict and bloodshed continue in the region.

Indicators:

- Palestinian Society popularly endorses the tactic of suicide bombings as it is felt that no other alternative exists.
- Palestinian Militant Groups continue the call for complete annihilation of Israel and its replacement with an Islamic state.
- Israel continues strategic/tactical/retaliatory strikes against Palestinian and Palestinian Militant Group targets.

Alternate Future #2: *In the wake of failed negotiations between the PNA and Israel, Palestinian Society sees no other course of action but to support the use of suicide bombing, giving the Palestinian Militant Groups complete credibility and ability in recruiting new suicide bombers. However, with improved security measures, Israel is able to reduce the amount of suicide attacks, but whose citizens never feel completely safe.*

Focal Events:

- Palestinian Militant Groups, with the full support of Palestinian Society are able to successfully recruit and continue their suicide attacks against Israel.
- Israel is convincingly successful in aggressively increasing its security measures and its hunt for Palestinian Militants.
- Suicide attacks sharply decrease.
- While the threat of suicide attacks still exists, Israelis begin to enjoy a truer sense of national security and overall mood improves.

Indicators:

- Palestinian Society popularly endorses the tactic of suicide bombings as it is felt that no other alternative exists.
- Palestinian Militant Groups continue the call for complete annihilation of Israel and its replacement with an Islamic state.
- Israel recognizes the need for more intense security measures as well as the elimination of Palestinian Militant Groups.

Alternate Future #4: *In the wake of failed negotiations between the PNA and Israel, Palestinian Militant Groups retain their credibility and ability in recruiting new suicide bombers. However, because of aggressive security measures and retaliatory strikes against Palestinian targets by the Israelis, Palestinian Society loses faith in using suicide bombing as a tactic.*

Focal Events:

- Palestinian Militant Groups continue with their tactic of suicide bombing against Israel.
- Israelis feel the effects of a continued terror campaign while the sense of national security further deteriorates as does overall mood.
- Conflict and bloodshed continue in the region.

Indicators:

- Out of frustration, Palestinian Society abandons the tactic of suicide bombings leaving the Palestinian Militant Groups on their own.
- Palestinian Militant Groups continue the call for complete annihilation of Israel and its replacement with an Islamic state.
- Israel continues strategic/tactical/retaliatory strikes against Palestinian and Palestinian Militant Group targets.

While all of these alternate futures certainly have solid footing concerning their likelihood, it is the belief of this author that suicide bombings by the Palestinians (whether it be member of society or militant groups) are likely to continue whether a peaceful settlement is arranged or not. Not only has the tactic become wildly popular among Palestinian Society and Palestinian Militant Groups, but there is far too much bad blood between the two sides (especially with the Palestinians), that thinking a peaceful utopia could exist would be quite unrealistic. There is definitely no quick fix to this phenomenon, and there may not be a fix at all. Historically, it is a conflict that has continued for over five decades, and has outlasted any kind of peaceful agreement that has been proposed, or even agreed on. Only time will tell what happens with this phenomenon, but based on over fifty years of history, it is this author's opinion that continued violence (mostly through suicide bombings) is inevitable.

Conclusion

The purpose of this research paper was to provide a predictive analysis on Palestinian Suicide Bombers. While most research on the subject gets caught up in so many different causes as to why Palestinians become suicide bombers, the aim of this paper was to shed light as to what the future may hold for a deadly phenomenon that has become so popular in such a small region, and has taken the lives of so many people. Although this paper was on a single case study of Palestinian Suicide Bombers, it is the hope of this author that it could lead to further investigation on the general question and phenomena of suicide bombers as a whole. Only with the continuous monitoring of historical trends and varying perceptions, coupled with in-depth analysis, will valid predictions be able to be made. In turn, these predictions could possibly serve to deter such actions and hopefully rid society of this epidemic. It is interesting to ponder whether this phenomenon would have ever gained such popularity if Israel had never existed, or

had never been an occupying force. In either case, the threat of Palestinian suicide bombers may have never existed, and thus would never have been the subject of a predictive analysis such as this.

If this kind of predictive analysis were to be taken to the next step as part of a larger project, it would be necessary to gain first-hand knowledge of Palestinian suicide bombers through cultural immersion, more specifically, having researchers that either are part of the culture or researchers that would be accepted into the culture in order to gain first hand experience and a better understanding of this phenomena. It is without a doubt that this type of venture would involve a great deal of risk to the researcher, but it is this kind of cultural immersion that would be needed for data collection and analysis that would undoubtedly expand further knowledge into this phenomena.

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