

ISRAEL'S TERROR FIGHTING EXPERIENCE

Ever since its founding in 1948, the state of Israel has faced the threat of terror attacks from rejectionist organizations such as the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, Hamas, Palestinian Islamic Jihad, and Hizbollah [1]. Because these groups cannot defeat the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) on the battlefield, they target Israeli citizens in an attempt to subvert the national will.

Over the past 50 years, the Israeli government has developed a variety of measures to prevent terrorist attacks or mitigate their effects. Israel has also made a virtue of necessity by creating a cutting-edge security industry that markets counterterrorism technologies, products, and services throughout the world [2]. The primary goals of Israeli counterterrorism strategy are to prevent terrorists from influencing the national agenda and preserve the psychological resilience of the civilian population.

According to Maj. Gen. Uzi Dayan, chairman of the Israel National Security Council, the government's campaign against terror involves striking back against terrorist cells to protect the homeland, expanding the campaign against terrorist organizations and their state sponsors, and delegitimizing terrorism in internationally.

Because Israel and the United States both face threats from Islamic extremists who are prepared to sacrifice their lives in carrying out attacks, many of the lessons learned by Israeli counterterrorism experts over the past 50 years are relevant to the current U.S. campaign against al-Qaeda. At the same time, the two countries face distinct security challenges. Whereas Israel's psychological and even physical survival is at stake in its war on terrorism, the risks for the United States are substantial but not existential. Moreover, whereas Palestinian terrorists narrowly focus on nationalist-separatist objectives, al-Qaeda is a global network with broader political and ideological ambitions.

Israel has learned over the years that terrorism is a stubborn phenomenon and that, in contrast to conventional warfare, decisive victory over terrorism is rare. When countermeasures block one avenue of attack, terrorists often improvise some new means of inflicting damage. After a series of aircraft hijackings in the 1960s forced Israel to improve aviation security, terrorists began to target Israeli embassies overseas. When security at embassies was strengthened, terrorists responded by attacking markets, buses, and pedestrians in Israeli cities [3]. Accordingly, counterterrorism strategies must continually adapt to—and preferably anticipate—changing terrorist tactics. General Meir Dagan, head of the Bureau for Counterterrorism in the Israeli Prime Minister's Office, observes that “fighting terrorism is like boxing—you usually win by points”.

Palestinian terrorism against Israel has escalated dramatically since the second intifada (“uprising”) began in September 2000; it has included the use of mortars and Qassam II rockets (with a range of 4 to 6 miles) against Jewish settlements and military bases in the Gaza Strip. Particularly damaging to the morale of the Israeli population has been a wave of suicide bombings by Palestinian terrorists in crowded buses, markets, restaurants, and nightclubs. These attacks, which occur essentially at random, pose a serious threat to the psychological and economic well-being of Israeli society.

At first, suicide terrorists were all religious, militant young men recruited from Palestinian universities or mosques. In early 2002, however, the profile began to change as secular Palestinians, women, and even teenage girls volunteered for suicide missions. On 29 March 2002, Ayat Akhras, an 18-year-old Palestinian girl from Bethlehem who looked European and spoke Hebrew, blew herself up in a West Jerusalem supermarket, killing two Israelis. Suicide bombers have also sought to foil profiling efforts by shaving their beards, dyeing their hair blond, and wearing Israeli uniforms or even the traditional clothing of orthodox Jews [4].

Given the high motivation of suicide bombers and the relative simplicity and low cost of the explosives they use, deterrence is impossible and prevention is far from certain. Although Israeli counterterrorism authorities interdict more than 85% of attempted suicide attacks, the small number of bombers who penetrate the security net can still wreak considerable death and destruction. The arguable “success” of suicide terrorism in derailing the Oslo peace process and inflicting serious wounds on Israeli society may inspire other militant groups to adopt this tactic [5]. Indeed, FBI director Robert S. Mueller III warned in May 2002 that suicide bombings like the ones that have terrorized Israeli civilians are “inevitable” in the United States.¹⁴ Any insights that Israel can provide into combating suicide terrorism are therefore of great interest to American officials. Israeli counterterrorism strategy comprises five elements:

- Intelligence collection and analysis.
- Military and paramilitary operations to disrupt terrorist infrastructure.
- Commercial aviation security.
- Defense against chemical and biological attacks.
- Efforts to strengthen the psychological endurance of the civilian population.

Список використаних джерел

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