

THE BROOKINGS INSTITUTION

Saban Center for Middle East Policy

FIGHTING ISLAMIST TERRORISTS

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P R O C E E D I N G S

MR. INDYK: Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen, welcome to the Saban Center at Brookings. Please begin your lunch. A special pleasure today to bring you a double feature, double attraction, in Avi Dicter and Dan Byman.

Daniel Byman, I think many of you know, is somewhat of a Washington fixture already. He is our counterterrorism expert at the Saban Center where he's a nonresident senior fellow. His day job is professor at Georgetown University where he is the director of their security studies program.

The author of several books on counterterrorism, including the most recent one, *Deadly Connections*, which looks at state-sponsored terrorism.

Daniel, before he became a professor and joined up with us, worked in various positions, first of all, in the Central Intelligence Agency on terrorism issues, and then for various of the commissions that looked into intelligence failures after 9/11.

When we had the opportunity of getting Avi Dicter to come here as a visiting fellow at the Saban Center, we

thought it would be a good idea to marry the practical experience that Avi developed over 30 years of fighting terrorists, most recently as the head of the Shin Bet, Israel's general security services, where he was responsible for counterterrorism during the five years of the intifada violence and terror.

And so when Avi agreed to join us as a visiting fellow, we decided to pair him up with Dan and put together his practical experience with Dan's analytical experience and historical knowledge, and to get them to write a paper for us on counterterrorism strategy.

And that is what they're going to speak about today. This paper will subsequently be published by the Saban Center in our monograph series.

But we wanted to take advantage of the fact that a lot of their work is now completed and Avi will soon be returning to Israel, to have them speak together to you.

Avi is going to begin and then Dan will follow, and then we'll have the discussion.

MR. DICTER: I'll stand, although I know the procedure, I ought to sit, but for me it's easier. I hope Hayden you'll tell me if you hear my voice, if it's okay.

Many years ago, I think it's about, if I'm not wrong, 1992 or 1993, when we cracked down on the huge infrastructure of Hamas in the Gaza Strip, I think we arrested about 200 or 250 terrorists. Part of them were murderers and the other were assistants. And after they confessed and they gave us the whole story, which normally, after such an event, you get an informal discussions with the detainees. And in those days I was the head of Southern Division and we got into an open session with part of the arch terrorists of Hamas in Gaza Strip.

And I asked them the question, "So what's now?" You're going to be sentenced for a few life imprisonment. Part of them were husbands, fathers. And that's it.

And one of them said, Avi--or under the name he knew me--Avi, we, the terrorists, this infrastructure, this cell that was captured, we see ourselves like a candle.

We give lights to other but we know that we are burning ourselves. A few days later, I enjoyed--I joined a meeting with one of the sources that assisted us to gather the information before cracking down on this infrastructure and he was very worried about what will happen if someone knows that he was the one to assist us with the information.

And he said Avi, you know, I feel myself like a candle that gives lights to others and burn itself. And I think that around one event, to see both sides, how they view the situation, quite similar, gives us an opportunity to deal with this phenomena of terrorists, of terror attacks, and especially counterterrorism in a very specific way.

First of all, I think that when we deal with terrorists, and I mentioned it in my first talk here in Brookings, I do believe that the barrel of terrorists has a bottom, and those who think that it's a bottomless barrel, from my point of view they have a mistake; a huge mistake.

It's not only a philosophical mistake, or a theoretical mistake. It's an operational mistake. Because if you believe that there is no bottom to this barrel, you'll never reach it.

Countries, especially democratic countries, they need more than power, and sometimes even more than extra power, in order to crack down against terrorists--against terrorism; sorry. But against terrorists, I think that almost the only way is to use all your power that you have within your democratic system. And I'm not speaking about

non-democratic countries because over there, the rules are completely different.

And if we take just an example, the barrel of hijackers of airplanes from the '60s to the '80s--I think the last prominent hijacking was in 1989, which wasn't a hijacking. It was the 103 flight that exploded above Lockerbie.

But I think that from the '60s to the '80s, we had many terror attacks that ended with an airplane that was hijacked. But this barrel was stopped. This barrel was taken out of its terrorists due to a tough pressure by the super powers, by countries, and every country, including Libya, knew that it's impossible to support, to host terrorists, enabling them to launch the terror attack from the same country and to remain safe.

If we take another example in Israel, after the Six Day War in 1967, when we started to govern the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, we suffered about seven, eight years of very heavy terror attacks, but these terror attacks were brought to an end around 1974 for a long time. So this barrel was closed for a while.

In 1979, another barrel was opened. It was right after the Camp David peace process between Israel and Egypt under the United States umbrella. In 1979, a new barrel of terrorism, of terror attacks was opened, lasted until 1996, even after Oslo agreement. In 1996 this barrel was closed by the Palestinian Authority, by the Palestinian Authority security apparatus, that after, if you remember the very horrible terror attacks, the suicide bombing phenomena that started among Palestinians in 1993, and increased the number of Israeli losses and casualties. In 1996 the Palestinian Authority succeeded in closing this barrel of terrorists by putting in jail close to 400 terrorists during one month in the Gaza Strip.

And this barrel or a new barrel of terrorists was opened in September 2000.

So if we may compare, I would say that terrorism is comparable to the fields of oil, which means it's impossible to close this or to block those fields of oil.

But terrorists should be compared to the barrels of oil and these barrels have a bottom for sure.

Going to the second statement or the basic assumption--or let me finish with one sentence about the former case.

Sometimes we believe that the goal should be to capture or to kill the last terrorist in the barrel in order to reach a target.

I think that's not the goal. The goal is, first of all, to crack down on the generators of terror, on the arch terrorists, and even then, you don't have to catch the last terrorist, the last generator of terror who is in this barrel. It's enough if you reach a critical mass of terrorists, of arch terrorists within this barrel, in order to close this barrel.

Just to remind you, Carlos [the Jackal], who was behind many terror attacks, he was arrested many years after he became ineffective anymore, which means that after you succeed in cracking down on the generators of terror, if here and there remain one or two , that's not, that doesn't contain the meaning that the continuation of terror attacks is still effective.

When we speak about governments, it's very essential to understand from my point of view, that any

government, never mind what kind of government, is by definition stronger than any terror organization within its borders.

And such a statement I think has a very operational meaning, because sometimes some governments, some regimes, they are trying to use some kind of weakness that they succeed to express in order to gain some sympathy from other countries and especially from the super powers, or from the United Nations.

I think it's an excuse because we saw it and we see it in Lebanon, we saw it in Kenya for many years, and we see it of course within the Palestinian Authority.

But I wouldn't agree, but I say it's some kind of the game rules, that you can fake a weakness for a short time in order to use it as an excuse. But that's a small problem because the government, the regime still remains strong.

But the problem starts when you fake a weakness for a long time, which brings you at the end of the day, or the end of the year, to become weak. That's from my point of view what happened to the PA after the last years.

Because when you feel yourself weak, and in Arabic there's a very interesting saying, that says [speaks Arabic] which means "Me and my brother against the cousin or the uncle, and me and my uncle against the stranger, against the enemy."

What happens when you are, when you become a weak government or weak regime, you first of all take care of how to protect your family, how to protect your tribe, how to protect yourself, and the country, how to protect the country, that's a question that comes at the end.

Once it becomes at the end, and you prioritize it in the wrong way, you are down the slope and that's what happened to many countries including the Palestinian Authority from my point of view today.

But there's no doubt that domestic services, domestic security apparatuses, they will always be stronger and more effective than external forces from other countries coming to assist in fighting terrorism within the mother country.

And in order to make them effective, or to have this force to be a multiplier force, you need to obey two basic conditions.

First of all, that the domestic services will be determined in fighting terrorism and second, that they are agreeing to accept you as an external force to assist them within their own state.

It's a question that I'm sure we share about what will happen in Iraq. Are the domestic services going to be effective enough in order to obey the first condition, and are they going to accept the external truth, the United States and the others, within Iraq?

I think if you take just an example in Jordan, 1970, when the late King Hussein decided to crack down on the Palestinian terrorists within Jordan, but he knew that there is a threat coming from Lebanon to Syria, and from Syria to Jordan, that might change the balance, and they agreed to accept Israeli assistance by blocking terrorists from flowing from Syria into Jordan.

It wasn't an involvement within Jordan then but it was some kind of assistance. I think that whenever we speak about, to use in the right way, and to make it effective, such kind of assistance by another, or an external forces, we should make sure that these two conditions are really exist on the ground. Otherwise, it's like to bring another

force, an external force, and to, I think maybe can come from mathematics, you know, to bring it into the power of zero, which we get one.

So I think that if we speak about the terrorists, one of the basic assumptions that I think it's probably the best one that I can support it with my own experience from 34 years, Martin, I know we are four years, have to discuss, to be discussed between us-- think that terrorists are not wizards--neither magicians. They are barely human.

And they're making a lot of mistakes. And these mistakes must be used by the countries, by the security apparatus, in order to gain a huge advantage in the battle against terrorists.

Because country controls--any country controls the crossing points, which is one of the main weaknesses of terrorists.

And whenever you catch a group of terrorists, or a single terrorist, and you question with him, so you hear the most difficult issue is how to cross crossing points, that along international crossing points, over there he is by himself.

Any country controls all kind of communications within its borders. Its electronic communications and signal intelligence--in communications and computer communications, and so on, which gives the state a huge advantage, and I know that there is another option to go back to the old system with pigeons to send the mail, pigeon mails, or to use messengers.

But in our business, whenever you use more people, so it makes it easier to the counterterrorism security apparatus. And our mathematics said that one plus one means eleven, because if you talk to your best friend, so he has another best friend, and another best friend, and so on and so on. It gives you a huge advantage.

And terrorists knows it, know it, better than me. Therefore, I think that when we speak about cooperation between countries, sharing information between countries, between allies, it's probably one of the most important issues in cracking down globally on terrorists.

I think it's much more easier to unite countries against terrorists than to unite terrorists against countries.

And I'm speaking of course about allies, because when we tried to share some kind of information with our, used to be so-called allies, the Palestinian Authority apparatus, we handed over information and it was used in order to burn the sources and not in order to crack down on terrorists, so we had to stop it for a while. I hope not for long.

There is of course a huge advantage--and I discussed it in my first talk in Brookings--in having those terrorists in interrogation section in order to get the information out of them, and therefore in our terminology, we think that the order should be if it's a fugitive, it should be captured "alive or dead." That's the right order. I know it's different than used to be in the States.

And the last point is probably very essential, it's last just because something has to come at the end. But I think it's not because it's less important than the other statements or the other basic assumptions.

Transparency is a tool in our tool bar, when we speak about counterterrorism, because counterterrorism normally, among the citizens, and among countries, is

automatically referred to a grey zone, to something that you can do almost everything in order to achieve your goals.

I think that the principles in the way you work against terrorists, these principles must be transparent to your citizens, must be transparent to the legal authorities within the country, and therefore it's transparent to the entire world, to other countries to the United Nations, to the Red Cross.

And it's very essential because otherwise rumors, bad rumors normally are being spread about how this country is cracking down on terrorists, and we've made huge mistakes in it, about it, in Israel from many years ago. Thank God, I think that during the last years, we are trying to improve it and to be transparent, not only to our citizens but even toward some other international organizations, including the Red Cross.

It doesn't mean that we share the systems, it doesn't mean that we share the tools, it doesn't mean that we share the methods how we do it, but the principles should be shared, and from my point of view, to be transparent doesn't mean to be naked.

You are not losing your capabilities while being transparent in your principles. Just to finish my talk and to hand over the microphone to Dan, my good friend, that I think we had very heated debates along the time that we are trying to write a common paper, but it assisted me a lot. I hope it assisted Dan as well. Just to close this, my talk, to mention that the whole infrastructure of terrorists that was captured in 1992, as I said, close to 200 of them, almost all of them are still in jail.

The source that gave us the information is about a 60 year old, a grandfather, a happy grandfather, still living, which means that in this battle against terrorists, you may be sometimes a winner, and in case that you obey what I tried to mention over my talk. Thank you very much.

MR. BYMAN: If my wife were here, she could vouch for this, that the amount I don't know is voluminous and at times legendary. But what really struck me in my conversations with Avi was simply the amount of information, whether it's on procedures or substance, that was really beyond what I knew about.

I think I would usually learn more in a 20-minute hallway conversation with Avi than I would with several

months of study back at Georgetown. So it was a remarkable experience for me to be able to work with him collaboratively.

What I'm going to do today is to review some of the lessons that I've drawn from the Israeli experience and then discuss some of their implications for the United States.

As everyone here knows, in the last ten years, going back before the second intifada, Israel has tried to use various means to fight terrorism. Some of the leading ones include direct action, and particularly targeted killings, building defenses, checkpoints, the fence, different parts of the fence, the wall, and also pressure on the Palestinian Authority and trying to get the Palestinian Authority to act.

For Israel, the great problem has been the failure of the Palestinian Authority to act, whether it was before the second intifada broke out in full scope, or immediately afterward, in the years afterward, and Avi has described this.

For the United States--and part of what my remarks are going to focus on--the United States doesn't have that

dilemma to the same degree. That many of the problems that Avi knows that Israel faces, the United States does not face.

Most of the regimes where the global jihad is present are actually allies, to many degrees. Many of them are actively fighting the jihadists.

In many of these cases, arrests will work rather in targeted killings, and as Avi noted, they're almost always preferable, if possible.

So while I think there are a tremendous number of lessons from the Israeli experience, I don't think that you can import them wholesale without adapting them for the particulars of the U.S.

Israel, as Avi mentioned, faced a dilemma as he had no partner to work with, and when that became very clear after the second intifada broke out completely, there were a combination of efforts, military operations, the wall and the fence, and targeted killings.

For the United States I think targeted killings is the most appropriate thing to focus on for my remarks. They have many disadvantages, that I think are clear to anyone who's taken even a cursory look.

Obviously you kill innocent people. You can do the most carefully planned operation but a number of things can go wrong, and whenever you're talking about the employment of military force, especially in areas that have many civilians, you have to accept a certain risk of civilian death, no matter how hard you try to minimize it.

Also, as Avi noted, it's much better to interrogate someone for counterterrorism purposes than it is to kill them. So what you're doing often is killing someone you'd much rather have in a jail cell, talking to.

There are diplomatic costs. Even the United States was often critical of what Israel was doing, and especially before September 11th, and other countries were as well, and of course the targeted killings won't end a conflict by themselves. They're simply an instrument as part of a broader set of tools.

But there are a couple objections, I think if you look at the data, are actually overstated.

One is the terrorist retaliation idea. There is an assumption that the vast majority of terrorist groups are not trying as hard as they can to kill, and at times that's

true. I would actually say that's probably true with Hezbollah today.

But it was certainly not true with Palestinian groups, especially during the height of the intifada, and I would say even until the recent truce, where they're going flat out, and the level of retaliation they can do, in addition to the operations they were conducting, there was almost no difference.

So that criticism, to me, falls by the wayside.

Also, and I think even more important, as Avi talked about, you talked about the barrel of terrorists not being bottomless.

I'll add to that by saying, in particular, the number of skilled operatives, whether these are people who manage operations, whether these are political leaders, cell leaders, it is relatively limited.

You can have an exceptionally large number of individuals who are untrained and undirected, who are essentially cannon fodder, and without the direction, I don't want to say they're useless, but their utility is limited from a terrorist group's point of view, and although a particular attack may generate more recruits, if those

recruits cannot be trained, cannot be indoctrinated, cannot be directed, they're not that useful.

Another issue that was overstated, to my surprise, was the martyrdom issue. One thing that I assumed was a logical criticism is, you know, take, for example, Sheikh Yasin. You kill him, he becomes a martyr. And bin Laden has said this, you know. If I'm dead, there will be a thousand Osamas tomorrow. And, you know, everyone raises this as the danger of killing.

But in Yasin's case, there are actually surprisingly few attacks after his death. There were some attempts but the number of attacks was quite limited, and this was true after you had killings of his successor, and we really didn't see the retaliation to the degree I think most people expected. Okay.

That said, though, there are still some serious disadvantages, but a thing to point out from the Israeli experience is targeted killings work. There was a dramatic decline in the number of Israeli deaths, and there are other factors that go into this, including the wall, but nevertheless, a dramatic decline.

And as a social scientist, the data actually are what you would expect to see, which is you see a huge surge in the number of attacks, so people are angrier, you have lots of recruits, but the number of deaths falls precipitously because the people who are angry can't actually do anything, and this is something that is often missed, that not all terrorists are equal. Very good terrorists are able to do much more damage, and that was a dramatic change in Israel, over time, and in part, this worked very neatly with something like the wall, where you needed a very good terrorist to overcome the checkpoints, to get through the wall, and there were fewer and fewer of them over time.

It's also worth pointing out, in defense of targeted killings, that other forms of counter-terrorism are also quite bloody. That the alternative to targeted killing for any government is not simply laying down its arms, but usually some other form of operating, whether it's economic pressure, military pressure, all of which are exacting on a day to day basis.

You don't keep tabs in the same way of people who die because they don't go see doctors, because there are

onerous checkpoints. But those people, over time, that becomes a large number of people, and when compared to targeted killings, the actual number of innocents, in particular, is worth pointing out.

Also, when you're talking about killing leaders, in particular political leaders, it is very hard to inspire your followers when you are only out in the darkness and you cannot be seen.

An example to me is, you know, after the killing of Rantissi, after Yasin's death, the third Hamas leader refused to announce who he was, and that person can still lead in an operational sense, he could still get the phone call in, but you can't inspire the masses, and you're not very heroic if you are always seen as fleeing from attack to attack.

The last thing to point out is that there are political rewards to this. We have to think not only in policy terms but in political terms, and, again, politicians must act, they must do something, and when you're talking about counterterrorism, you have to think hard about what the alternatives are for them, and also, how they can sustain popular morale. That anyone who looks at terrorism,

in particular anti-U.S. terrorism, usually the first thing that strikes you with the statistics is how few people die.

You know, the example from--you know, in almost any year, your chances of being hit by lightning are far, far greater than your chances of dying from international terrorism. Yet for psychological reasons, people worry much more about terrorism. You need the psychological counter as well and politicians have to think about that.

That said, even though there are tremendous advantages, in practice, many of these advantages don't apply to be offered against the jihadists at present. One of them is that Israel has some advantages in doing this in an operational sense.

Israel is operating in a very small geographic area, particularly the Gaza Strip for this. It has a remarkable intelligence network developed by the man next to me.

There is tremendous expertise at a local level, at a neighborhood level, and this is all something that is I think perhaps unique today in intelligence circles, and as a result you have that combination of two things.

You have intelligence that is almost instantaneous and you have rapid strike. You have the ability to act very quickly in a military sense, once you get information, and there is a line that Avi has, that I'm quoting from a newspaper, not from our personal conversations, which is that no Palestinian child draws a picture of the sky without a helicopter in it, and that's a reflection of the near constant strike capacity you can have in a relatively small area like the Gaza Strip.

For the United States, that's impossible, when you're talking about the global jihad. You cannot have a constant strike presence everywhere. You cannot even have a constant strike presence in a relatively small country like Pakistan, compared to the global array, what Israel has done in Gaza.

And when you put the intelligence requirements in there at the local level, it becomes almost impossible, that the neighborhood by neighborhood intelligence, you want to do this on a systematic basis, is exceptionally difficult and it's frankly unrealistic to expect in all but a few key areas.

You can do one-off attacks but you cannot do a sustained campaign. An exception to this, worth pointing out, is there may come a time when the United States may want this equivalent in the Anbar Province of Iraq, where you want fairly constant surveillance because of similar difficulties to what Israel faced, where there is no authority who can do arrests, you have relatively few options for doing attacks.

But the biggest difference is the United States can work with governments. The vast majority of the countries where the global jihad is active are allies of the United States and the governments, usually for their own selfish reasons, are fighting the adversary.

This is not the Palestinian Authority under Arafat, whether you're talking Saudi Arabia or Egypt and so on. These are countries that are, for the most part, trying quite hard against the Jihad.

There are a couple possible exceptions. Yemen, Afghanistan, come to mind; but these are cases of government weakness, not really will-power. It's governments that have capacity problems but not the question of do they want to fight terrorism. The big exception I would say to all this

is Pakistan, where, to me, it is still an open question of how committed the Musharraf government is to fighting this, where you see evidence on both sides, and our colleague, Dr. Cohen, at the Brookings Institution, talks about Pakistan as a "satisficing" power, where it does just enough to get the United States off its back and no more.

And in terrorism terms, as Avi talked about, that's a real problem, if you do not want gray areas. Pakistan I think is in the center of the gray.

But in most of these cases, the question is really helping governments build their own capacity, not acting on behalf of them.

Another difference is that the United States also, as a global power, cares more about international opinion. It has interests that include counterterrorism but include proliferation, include trade, that are quite deep, and thus even though these operations work, they're often quite criticized and the United States has to care about that, regardless of the validity of the criticism.

But this is very important in counterterrorism terms because as you need the cooperation of governments around the world, their good opinion matters.

Israel can fight Palestinian Islamic Jihad without full cooperation from Germany. It's very hard for the United States to fight the global jihad without full cooperation from Germany, and the problem with a global adversary is you need global allies, and it makes this much more difficult.

Some lessons for the United States. One of them is operational, which is you're always striving for more intelligence, and, in particular, precision strike capabilities in key areas. I would name Pakistan and Anbar as two to focus on.

The other is what Avi concluded his remarks with, which is the need for robust debate on all forms of counterterrorism, and related to this, the need for a transparent process.

The United States is finding this out right now with both its renditions program and the secret prisons in Eastern Europe program, which is there are day to day reasons to keep these efforts secret, but the problem is when they're suddenly revealed, and if there are any abuses, it is inevitably revealed in the worst possible light, and what is good about these programs, and I am someone who is a

guarded fan of, say, the renditions program--what's good about these programs is often swept away because people are seeing them only in one light.

They are seeing them in the most negative light, and you need to have the public debate beforehand, even though it can be nasty, even though it can lead to criticism, even though it might even lead to restrictions, because if you don't have that when there are problems, when there are abuses, people will blame the whole instrument, not simply part of the problem, and that's something Israel has done much more successfully on things like course of interrogation, and also on the targeted killing policy, is there is a public debate and understanding.

It doesn't mean public agreement, but it means when there are difficulties, no one is shocked or surprised that a particular individual or a particular criteria happened, and that's I think much more healthy for democracy, in a broader sense, when you're dealing with such weighty issues, and I'll stop there. Thank you.

MR. INDYK: Thank you, Dan.

Avi, I wonder, first of all, if we could just go back to 1996. I have an interest in that for historical

reasons. We have Melissa here, who was around in those days.

What was the difference? I mean, Arafat was in control of the Palestinian Authority. Why was it possible to get him, in those days, to crack down, effectively, and to stop the terrorism that was emanating from areas under his control versus four years later in the year 2000?

Prime Minister Netanyahu subsequently claimed it was because of his insistence on performance first, before any political concessions were made, as the explanation. You, actually both of you avoided any reference to the political context for the war on terrorism.

So from your judgment of that particular case, what led to Yasser Arafat's decision to act and the success of that action?

MR. DICTER: Well, 1996, I was in the same position as the head of Southern Division, and responsible for counterterrorism in Gaza, and I'm not sure it was a decision taken by Yasser Arafat. It was a decision taken by the commanders of the security apparatus within the Gaza Strip but especially between the head of the PSO, the Preventive Security Organization, which is the equivalent to

the FBI here, and the leader of the military intelligence, Moussa Arafat, that was assassinated a few months ago by Palestinians, by Hamas, and those two organizations, in addition to the other apparatus, but these main two organizations, they decided that if they are not going to crack down on Hamas, and it was less than three years after Oslo agreement, it was right after the assassination of Prime Minister Rabin, and they understood that everything is shaken within the Middle East. The Israelis were just before elections. And I remember one of the meetings, that I personally attended it. We went, the prime minister, Shimon Peres, in those days, and Boogie [Moshe] Yaalon, it's hard to remember the name because everybody calls him "Boogie"—

later on the chief of staff [of the IDF], in those days he was the intelligence commander in the IDF, and myself, went to meet with Yasser Arafat, and Mohammad Dahlan and Abdul Zakaleti [ph], one of the assistants at the PA [Palestinian Authority].

And I briefed Yasser Arafat] and I told them, for me, it's very strange to see that one arch terrorist under the name Mohammed Hamadef [ph] is going to decide what kind

of future you are going to have in the PA, because Hamadef was an arch terrorist who launched many of the suicide bombings in 1996.

And the answer was, by Yasser Arafat, "Mohammed who?" It's like to ask President Bush about Al Capone, and he'll say, "Al who?"

So I think that what happened in Gaza, what happened in Gaza is the security apparatus, they took responsibility because they knew that if they are not going to do it, Israel is going to penetrate the Gaza Strip, and that was for sure the step, the next step was done by Israel if the PA wouldn't have done anything.

So I think that deterrence and the threat was above and beyond anything else. I don't remember that Chairman Arafat called his commanders for a meeting, they discussed the issue and they decided how to do it.

When they started to do it, when they started to crack down on terrorists, it was so easy for them, that it encouraged them, and I think that that's probably the most important issue that happened in 1996.

The first week was so successful, that the second and the third was just inevitable, and that's how they

reached the number of 400 detainees. By the way, I am sure that even in the beginning of the intifada, and even in Gaza Strip, 'til 2003, they could do it with no problems.

The only thing that blocked them from doing it is a lack of cooperation and trust between the security agencies. Without a blessing from Chairman Arafat, nothing would have worked.

MR. INDYK: Melissa, you wanted to comment on this?

MS. MAHLE: Melissa Mahle. Actually, no, I'm not going to comment but I have a question, and only one. Actually, I have a lot of questions. It was very interesting, Avi, what you said about transparency, and the need for transparency on principles but not on methods, and I'd like, if you can, to elaborate a little bit more on that because certainly this is where we, in the U.S., this is what we're struggling with right now, of how much transparency and on what, and we're still all over the game, so to speak, talking about principles and some methods as well.

And in the Israeli context, I mean there was quite a big debate, as I recall, in the late 1990's, specifically

on the issue of torture and within the court systems it was, I mean, it went all the way up to the high court and there was discussion on what was torture, what methods Shin Bet was using, what was permissible, and ultimately what was decided that wasn't permission and what was in whatever context.

And can you maybe elaborate on the process by which the intelligence organizations went through to decide where they were going to draw that line of what was, what really needed to be open and transparent to the Israeli public for debate and what needed to be kept secret.

MR. DICTER: First of all, I'm fully aware of what's going on here in the States and I watch TV, and Senator McCain, and some other discussions about the question, whether it's torture, and here in Brookings, I think a month or two months ago, we attended a conference about interrogating or, interrogation, I'm not sure about the subject, but it was around interrogation and, of course, torture was put on the table.

Further, I think that here in the States, what is really being discussed is not interrogation. It's a lack of discipline by some people, whether it's in Abu Ghraib or in

Guantanamo, it has nothing, from my point of view, as far as I know, it has nothing to do with interrogation.

It was pure humiliation, it was some kind of treatment that, from my point of view, it has nothing to do with interrogation. I don't know what kind of benefits in terms of intelligence those people got. I believe it's zero or close to zero.

In Israel, for many years, it used to be under what was called the grey zone, until, as you mentioned, Melissa, until September 1999, when the supreme court in Israel gave a decision, a very sharp and clear decision.

Now interrogating, interrogation in Israel is held only by--in security affairs, is only held by Shin Bet. And Shin Bet works very close with the Attorney General because the Attorney General in Israel is the only authorized person to translate the decision by Supreme Court into operational steps. And because we, Shin Bet, we cannot go to the Supreme Court judges, and ask them what do they mean. We can ask; nobody will give an answer. They judge it in retrospective. So all we have to do is to try between Shin Bet and the Attorney General to discuss what does it mean.

What is allowed to do; what is not allowed to do; when it's allowed to do. And if we focus on the very, very small program or small point, I think that we should focus about the ticking time bombs.

If you take out all the levels from the main subject, you remain with those, with the core of the ticking time bombs, and I suggested, when we had the conference here in Brookings, I suggested to open the conference with the question that we are now, on September 10th, capturing the 20th terrorist from the 9/11 event, having very accurate and detailed information that something horrible is going to happen within 24, 48 hours, and this man knows the whole plot. And now what? And now what are the interrogators allowed to do, and what not.

And with this question to open the conference, because to deal with lack of discipline, I think it's a waste of time, for professional people. It's relevant for other people but not for security professional people.

So if we speak about the two levels, one is interrogations, and the second was then mentioned, the targeted killings. Targeted killings in Israel has to be confirmed one by one by the prime minister. It goes bottom

up, from the security level, army, Shin Bet, minister of defense, up to the political level.

Every single targeted killing. And because the prime minister of Israel has plenty of time, so where the country has no problem, so thank God he has something to deal with. So every single targeted killing has to be confirmed by the prime minister. And it's not to be confirmed and that's it. Every time, if it's been delayed, in a few days we go back to the prime minister to make sure that the confirmation is still in power.

Interrogation is a different issue. We attended, I think, a very interesting panel in Jerusalem at the Saban Forum, with Justice Breyer from the United States, and he was honest enough to say that he prefers to deal with ticking time bombs afterwards, in retrospective. He doesn't want to take my place to decide whether this man is a ticking time bomb or not.

And in Israel, the only person to decide whether he is a ticking time bomb or not is head of Shin Bet. Head of Shin Bet, not the Attorney General, not the prime minister, not the member of Knesset who's the chairman of,

in charge of the security and foreign affairs committee.
It's head of Shin Bet.

Although according to the Israeli criminal law, if a citizen, anyone, if he sees any event that someone is trying, is pulling a pistol and trying to open fire towards someone--don't take it personally--and is trying to open fire, he's allowed to use all force and power needed in order to stop it, including killing the one who pulled the pistol.

But then you have to give answers, later. And one of the main problems is when you deal with an event, it's usually weeks, months, sometimes year after, in a different mood, the peace flourished, and, you know, it's a different mood, and the people who deal with it, whether they are judges or other people from the Knesset, or from any justice offices, they deal with it in a completely different mood.

Therefore, in Shin Bet we decided that the one to authorize that someone is a ticking time bomb is only head of Shin Bet.

So if something happens, he's going to give the answers, and not the interrogator that has used what he's allowed to do in order to get the information. It's fully

transparent to the Attorney General, it's fully transparent to the committee of ministers headed by the prime minister. It's fully transparent to the committee of the Knesset and it's fully transparent to Red Cross.

Although they don't deal with ticking bombs. They deal with interrogations or with the post results of interrogation. And I think that I feel that here, in the States, those who deal with this subject, I'm sorry to say, I think they are missing the point. Thank you.

MR. INDYK: I have a lot of people who want to ask questions, so I'm going to take them in groups of three, if you gentlemen would take the questions down. The next three are George Hishmeh, Judith Kipper and Ken Pollack.

MR. HISHMEH: I bet, Mr. Dicter, you must feel very sympathetic to Condoleezza Rice, what she is going through now. I was wondering whether you would like to comment on the subject of the U.S. Government maintaining secret detention centers in Europe, kidnapping people, and all the interrogations they've been doing.

How come Israel got away with this, like what they did in Tunisia, in Lebanon and Malta? Has times changed?

What is your thinking? I'm just curious to know what you, how you look at this situation.

MR. DICTER: That's the only advantage of having very less friends. You cannot-- MR. INDYCK: [inaudible] not to answer yet. We're going to take two [inaudible].

MR. DICTER: Just I see he's intense, so just to relax--

[Laughter.]

MR. HISHMEH: I am a typical [inaudible].

[Laughter.]

MS. KIPPER: Judith Kipper, the Council on Foreign Relations. I didn't hear either, it was mentioned but only in extreme passing. Obviously, between torture and targeted killings, things like in the counterterrorism field, like looking at root causes, diplomacy and what the public message are don't compare, soft, you know, maybe feminine, I don't know what you would call them, but it seems to me there must be a place for those things, some place, because as democracies, killing, torture, and et cetera should not be the first thing on the list.

Now what I would like to ask Dan is you talked about global jihad. What, my friend, is that? We just

heard that it's very hard to get the terrorists together. It's easier to get the governments together. I believe Avi Dicter said that.

If we're going to talk in this country, war on terrorism, global jihad, Islamic this, that, we're never going to understand, it seems to me, the threats that really are in front of us. What is global jihad? There are few people in a variety of countries who are lethal killers; no doubt about it. What's global jihad? I don't get it. And I travel to all those countries.

MR. POLLACK: Avi, Dan, you concentrated principally on kind of offensive operations as part of counterterrorism, in large measure because they're the most visible, they're the most controversial, they're the ones that we talk about most.

But as both of you noted in passing, there's also a very important defensive component, and I think that in point of fact Israel probably has spent far more on defensive components of counterterrorism than offensive.

Avi, I'd love it if you could talk a little bit about some of those defensive components and which you think have been the most important, and Dan, I'd love it if you

would comment on which of those defensive components you think are more relevant to the United States and our efforts at homeland defense and what we can do better.

MR. DICTER: Well, as I started to answer, we have no subcontractors for interrogation. We, I mean the state of Israel. But let's say that we decide to hand over a detainee to the United States to interrogate with. It's still our responsibility. According to the Israeli law, you cannot expel someone, extradite someone to another country for interrogation without making sure that the law within this country is not going to create any kind of torture or, which is similar to torture.

So I don't know what the States did, if at all, about handing over detainees or about enabling some other countries to detain with detainees. So for me it's very hard to answer about it.

Anyway, as I said before, Israel has very good relations with many countries but we are not at that level to hand over detainees to be questioned in other countries. Thank God we know how to do it by ourselves.

If I may, Judith, to share an answer with Dan about the global jihad. It's a very good question because

when we try to draw the, you know, the security agencies, the first issue to do every time is to draw the pyramid of how it works, where is the headquarters and where are the field offices. That's how we work. That's how FBI works. That's how CIA works. That's how Israeli agencies work.

And when we tried to draw this kind of a monster, and to say where, if at all, there is a headquarters, I'm not sure that the information exists today in the hands of the entire security agencies or intelligence agencies. I'm not sure it can enable you, drawing a very accurate and sharp picture.

But doesn't mean that we don't have a picture about the local cells, the local infrastructures. And by the way, sometimes, when, after so many years, you cannot draw a very accurate structure, it's probably not an accurate structure.

And maybe they assist each one another, same as it used to be between the Japanese army, the Bader-Meinhoff in Germany, and the PFLP from the Palestinian terror organization during the '70s and the '80s.

About Ken's question, and here it's a talk of an hour but I try to shrink it into a few minutes. You are

completely right. In fighting against terrorists, you have to use both, offensive and defensive. It's the same, I think in many fields, including sports.

But when you are going to deal with defensive systems, we know that the first issue is intelligence. The first ring, and I mentioned it in the first talk I ever gave at Brookings--the first ring is intelligence. If you have intelligence, it's okay. If intelligence fails to assist you with information in order to foil the plot, then you have the second ring, and the second ring is all the security guards that we are facing everywhere--airports, the detection machine and the people themselves. Body guards of VIPs. Secret Service is a defensive system. Whenever CIA and FBI fails, fail to give the information, and so on and so on.

By the way, the terror attack three days ago in Netanya mall, that was a pure improvement of the system of defense, because if this suicide bomber would have exploded himself within the mall, I'm sure we could have counted 20 fatalities. There's only one area that you need a third ring, and that's airplanes.

Whenever you go into airplanes, that's another platform. Over there you cannot assist with additional troops from the ground. Once the airplane took off, that's it. As I said before, it's only in the movies, Air Force One, that an external power can come into the airplane and solve the problem. It doesn't work in reality.

So in security, the third ring within airplanes, within passenger airplanes, is needed in order to foil any plot like 9/11 or like many other events that happened before. That's the reason why Israel, after the first Israeli airplane to be kidnapped--to be hijacked--in 1968 to Algeria, put air marshals on board, and since then they foiled several attempts to hijack a plane.

I'm sure that it's going to be in the States sooner or later, I hope sooner, and not randomly, but permanent.

I suggested to someone that asked me the same question in a different event, I urged him to ask the American passengers, if you are going to be asked to pay five bucks more on each ticket, knowing that on each flight you are going to get an air marshal, are you going to pay

it? Well, try to do it and I'm sure that the answer is well known from the question.

There are some more elements that we use, which is relevant for Israel. The fence, the fence along the West Bank, and we had it along the Gaza Strip.

I'm sure that Russia, sooner or later, will build a fence between Russia and the former Islamic countries, the former Soviet Union Islamic countries, although it's thousands of kilometers. But as it was well said, every 10,000 kilometers starts with the first kilometer.

MR. BYMAN: To add a bit to Avi's remarks, and first address Judith's question about what I mean by the global jihad. My intention in using that phrase was to distinguish from al-Qa'ida, which is by many interpretations, historically, a relative small group, individuals who had sworn loyalty to bin Laden, and had a number of very unusual characteristics. Very skilled, they played nice in the sandbox which for many terrorist organizations is not true.

Separating that out from the range of groups, whether they are large insurgencies numbering tens of thousands of fighters, or collections of four or five people

in a mosque who share part of an agenda that is not simply local, focused on the grievance within a town or within a country, but share an anti-U.S. agenda, or parts of it, or, more broadly, an anti-Western agenda, and are willing to act on it in a violent way.

What is remarkable about what bin Laden has accomplished is to me—in my amateur historian mode—the great lessons of the last 200 years are don't mess with nationalism, that, inevitably, nationalist differences are incredibly strong and incredibly bloody.

Bin Laden, over the last decade, has successfully taken a discourse that was quite fractured in the Muslim world and turned it more against the United States. There's still a thousand voices speaking. We still speak about many different issues. But the idea, ten year ago even, that the United States was a source of many problems of the Muslim world was something people would say yes, but it's the Mubarak government, really, that we should focus on. Increasingly, you're seeing a sense that well, the United States really should come first, and there are a lot of reasons for that but part of it is the success of this organization and the means, in my judgment, that what

happens in London, what happens in Madrid, what happens in Kashmir matters for the United States beyond our geopolitical interests in these countries but in terms of the security of U.S. citizens.

Negotiations. You're absolutely right that things we've talked about are not all of the strategy. But an important question is, when do terrorist groups come to the table? And the answer, I've looked at this extensively, is for a lot of reasons, and there isn't a simple one.

But part of it involves a change in their relative position, in their relative strength, and that can be because suddenly, they lose support, their cause becomes discredited. It can be because of change of a state sponsor. But often it's the change within the organization. Their skilled cadre are being depleted or they have a leadership change. And targeted assassinations affect both of those. They affect the group's overall strength and they affect the nature of its leadership and what it wants to do.

And that's not the only way to bring groups to a table, but when you do not want to compromise with the group on principles, and a group--to me, like Palestine Islamic Jihad is one group you just don't compromise with. You can

talk to the IRA but not PIJ. Then you have to look for other ways to drive them out of the terrorism business.

Briefly, on Ken's point, my short answer is build a big fence around Pakistan. But assuming the United States is not going to do that, realistically, what you would focus on, from my reading of the Israeli experience, would be intense attention to checkpoints, and especially international checkpoints, both with regard to the quality of the personnel who work there and making these people, in some ways, an élite, and the other is real attention to documents and what you can do with documents.

I'm generally someone quite skeptical of a technological answer to any difficult problem but biometrics really help. One of the weaknesses of terrorist groups is that they often use forged documents, and if you can use biometrics, you can know a person is who they say they are.

Now if you have no idea who that individual is in the first place, it doesn't do you much good. You could say yes, you are Mohammed Atta, welcome to this country, and it doesn't really mean much. But many terrorists are known, and, again, this does not solve the problem but it helps.

To just end with Avi's point, defense and offense obviously go together, and much of what the United States has done overseas has changed the defense needs of the United States. That the organizations we are fighting are different than they were five years ago, in part for many reasons, but in part due to U.S. counterterrorism strategy, and that has to shape the defenses as well.

But it's silly to think of the two in isolation because any good policy is designed to have the two work together.

MR. INDYK: Next on my list, Barry Schweid, Tamara Wittes, and Rafi Danziger.

MR. SCHWEID: Mr. Dicter, I was hoping you'd talk a little bit about today for the contemporary journalists who are here, specifically--I mean, the history's very interesting. I've learned a lot. But I wondered if you could tell us what you think Mr. Abbas is doing, if anything, about terror groups.

It was interesting, especially, to hear you talk about targeted killings. Let me fold in a quick second.

Has there ever been an instance where a prime minister did not approve a recommended targeted killing, or

even sat on the request of what maybe Shin Bet would consider an unduly long time?

MS. WITTES: Both of you, in your comments, seem to indicate that targeted killings and other methods of eliminating what one might call the élite layer, what Avi calls the arch terrorist layer, is most important to reducing the overall effectiveness and motivation of a terrorist group. That you don't have to get every member of a group, that you just need a critical mass of that élite. It seems to me the implication of that is that you don't need as much to worry about, what Judith called root causes, or those things that generate recruits, or that create a congenial environment within which terrorist groups can operate.

I wanted to ask you if that's really what you conclude from this, and, in particular, because of what you just said Dan about terrorist groups turning away from the business or considering negotiations, when their environment, when their situation changes, shouldn't we think about the idea side of creating that hostile environment for them? Thank you.

MR. DANZIGER: Do you think that Hamas participation in the legislative elections would, as some people say, domesticate Hamas and also make it easier for Mahmoud Abbas to then delegitimize it through an empowered parliament or do you think it would actually strengthen Hamas even further, make it even more difficult to deal with Hamas?

MR. DICTER: Mahmoud Abbas--to the first question by Barry--Mahmoud Abbas, as a matter of fact today, I think he's doing nothing in terms of operational steps, he's doing a lot in terms of statements, and that's probably the main problem.

I think that we face this problem, we've been facing it for the last five years, whether it's Yasser Arafat or Mahmoud Abbas. The difference is in the style. Mahmoud Abbas is really believing that without cracking down on terrorists, the PA, the Palestinian Authority is not going to improve itself, to make better life within PA, Gaza or West Bank, and he's not going to achieve any successes in his negotiations or arguments or meetings with Israelis, or probably with other countries.

Now the question is not whether he wants to do something or not. He wants to. The problem is what he's doing with his security apparatus that without them, these are the fingers in his palm. Without anything serious done by them, nothing's going to be achieved.

The culture, what we call it in Israel, the culture that they adopted, we call it the IBM culture, which is initials for I, "*insh'allah*," God will, B, "*bukra*" which means *mañana*, and M, "*ma'lesh*," never mind. So that's a culture that cannot continue.

[Laughter.]

MR. DICTER: To the second question about the role of the prime minister or the political level, there's no question about the people who deserve a targeted killing, because we know exactly the frame that we are working in and I think that maybe once or twice we got questions about it, and when we brought back the details, I think it was clear enough. What worries me is those terrorists that we decided that they are not *élite* enough, or shall we say, they don't belong to the "*crème de la crème*," or should I say to the "*crime de la crime*" of what is needed to be targeted down.

And those people continued to carry out terror attacks, and nobody counted the Israelis that got killed and injured due to our wrong decision or wrong recommendation.

Fighting against generators of terror, Tammy, is essential, because as I said before, this barrel contains a lot of terrorists. The real terrorists, the generators of terror, they are to decide what kind of pace it's going to have, how tough the terror attack is going to be, what efficiency of bombs they are going to build, and so on and so on. And we know for sure that when they stated in January, the period of calm, Hamas, when they stated the period of calm, it was when they saw the infrastructure in the West Bank is getting destroyed from day to day, and the leaders in Gaza Strip are disappearing from day to day.

And it's not regular leaders. It's just to--to mention some names that you all are familiar with. Sheikh Yasin, Rantissi, Hamadef that got injured very bad, Adnan Al Nur [ph] which was a very essential, probably one of the main terrorists that was trained in Lebanon, Salah Shehada, and so on, and so on.

And there's no other reason why they decided to state a period of calm in January except this reason.

Elections to the legislative council in, on January 25th. The question is not whether they are going to participate or not. Israel cannot destroy the whole infrastructure of elections just because Hamas is taking part.

But not even one Hamas person, or any other person that is going to become a member in the legislative council, in the Palestinian parliament, he's not going to enjoy any immunity just because he's a member of the parliament.

Marwan Barghouti was the best proof that when someone becomes a terrorist, an arch terrorist, he has no immunity. And just to remind you, Marwan Barghouti was sentenced [to] five life [sentences of] imprisonment by Israeli court.

Hamas' agenda that was written, the charter of Hamas that was written in August 1988, if you squeeze it you'll get a lot of Israeli blood. That's the charter, which is in power even today.

So I don't think that any Hamas terrorist is going to feel safe, just because he was elected a member in the legislative council.

MR. INDYK: The question is will they, in the legislative council, moderate Hamas?

MR. DICTER: It's, I think that it's going to moderate Hamas, just because once you become a political person, and you're obliged to more than your own community, it must bring you a little bit to a more moderate situation or to more moderate thoughts or opinions.

But that's if you analyze it here in the laboratory. In the field, Hamas is not any more an independent terror organization. Hamas became, over the last four years, a terror organization dependent on Iran, more and more from year to year. Therefore, the Hamas strategy, whether it was in the PA legislative council, or not, is going to be influenced by Iran, and as I mentioned many times here in Brookings, and some other places, Iran is sure that the first country that they succeeded to export the Islamic revolution was Lebanon, and in the long run, they are sure they are going to succeed over there.

The second country that they believe that they're going to succeed in exporting the Islamic revolution [to] is the Palestinian Authority. Hamas is the main and the most prominent tool in this expectation of Iran.

MR. BYMAN: I'll briefly address Tammy's question, in particular.

I think that many of the things that Avi and I have discussed, independent of negotiations, and political settlements, more broadly, are the distinction between solving and managing the problem. A lot of what we are talking about are managing a problem, and as Avi mentioned, the attack in Israel, recently, is an example of both. Far fewer people died due to intelligent defensive measures. But people died, and that's not the same as having solved a problem.

Add to that, in addition to lives lost, the tremendous cost, both economically and psychologically to Israel, even a relative low level of violence, and you'll see that this is not enough. To me, to solve it, you move into the political realm, that the goal there is you drive recruits, you drive money and logistical support.

But the big changes, you have a change in the attitude of the local regime you're dealing with, in this case the Palestinian Authority, becomes aggressive. We go back to those brief months in 1996.

Also what changes with a settlement is intelligence collection, where you have people much more willing to pass information on because they see the people

using violence as acting against their interests rather than representing them, and a political settlement can help achieve all of that.

If you believe that the person on the other end is not going to come to a political settlement, which I think was the Israeli consensus, 2002-2003, certainly, then you have to go to management, rather than solving it.

MR. INDYK: Well, we're almost at the witching hour and we have three more people to ask questions, so I'll ask them each to be very brief. If you need to leave because it's 2:00 o'clock, please, don't be embarrassed to do so.

The next is Ori Nir, then Moufac Harb and then David Pollack.

MR. NIR: Hi. I'd like to challenge you on the assumption that assassinations work. If the proof is in the reduction of terrorist attacks, then I think that the fence is much more of a proof for that, taking into consideration the fence in Gaza which has basically prevented any terrorist attacks being launched from Gaza; almost any.

If the proof is the Hudna, then I'm not so sure. I mean, Hamas also has political consideration, and has, in

the past, reduced terrorism because of political considerations having to do with Palestinian public opinion, and so on.

Where is the proof, the actual proof that assassinations work? That they do really work?

MR. HARB: I'll make my question very brief. You know, terror campaigns come in waves. There is sometimes a major event in the Middle East, you know, could be the Iranian revolution, the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, that would trigger a major campaign of terrorism.

However, there is a major factor in shaping Middle Eastern politics, which is oil, oil prices. Do you see any correlation between high oil prices and the intensity or spread of terrorism in the Middle East?

MR. POLLOCK: Thank you. Avi, you referred to the IMB strategy of the Palestinian Authority. I'd like to ask about what we used to call the "WHAM" strategy, winnings hearts and minds.

Does this have any importance for either of you? That is to say, public diplomacy, public opinion, whether there's some way to affect that?

And I want to give the specific, to bring this very down to earth. The issue of house demolitions and the issue of work permits for Palestinians.

Is it of any practical value to take a softer approach in order to mitigate anger among the Palestinian population and reduce popular support for and recruiting for terrorists?

And is there an analogue for the United States somewhere out there? Thank you.

MR. BYMAN: I'll begin simply by addressing the oil. There's no correlation, I mean if you look at the dates, where oil money is flush, versus those where it's not. You don't really see that link. When al-Qa'ida was establishing itself and growing in the mid 1990's, was a time of, you know, an oil price depression by most standards, the question would come are certain individuals who are enriched by oil wealth, are they more likely to give to terrorist organizations?

And then you're often getting to a relatively idiosyncratic question, it's not necessarily linked to oil, but the question of, you know, sudden wealth flows to a few individuals.

Since Saudi Arabia has been very clearly identified as the main source of finance for many organizations that are considered jihadist, clearly there is a link. If you had no money in Saudi Arabia, you would have less money flowing to these.

But it's not simply that neat. You don't see the same level of financial flows from individuals in other countries where the oil wealth is.

So I would say that I would rather look at almost the individual by individual basis in terms of élites in different countries, see what resources are available to them, and see the patterns of giving. That would be the way I'd tackle that.

MR. DICTER: The question whether targeted killings works effective[ly]. In counterterrorism, there is no one switch that you work with it. You switch it off. No terrorism anymore. You switch it on, there is terror attacks. You have a panel of switches, that you have to take care of all of them.

And it's the fence and it's offensive systems, whether targeted killings or others. And it's some other

aspect like local or domestic counterterrorism, and so on and so on.

Practically, we could see that whenever an arch terrorist is getting killed or injured, never mind who did it. Whether it's from Allah--I mean, an accident--or what we say, from Abdullah, from another special operation.

But at the end of it, when he is missing, you see, for sure, that the terror organization is in a trouble, if they don't have any alternative. If they have an alternative, an immediate alternative, so you can see a continuation, if there is no alternative, you can gain few days, weeks or months, until they bring another one, and in our business, days, weeks, months, it means people are surviving. People are not getting injured or killed.

The fence, as you mentioned the Gaza Strip, not even one suicide bomber--and suicide bombing, I think that's the main phenomenon, it caused us 60 percent of our casualties, while it's less than half percent from the pie of terror attacks--and from Gaza Strip, not even one suicide bomber crossed through the fence. Two events, they crossed through the crossing points and we failed to detect them, which is a failure, an operational failure.

But I think that if you gather altogether those features of counterterrorism, and you make sure that all of them, or almost all of them are effective, you really crack down on terrorists.

If public opinion works or not, for sure, it works. If you take the route of the fence that was supposed to be in the West Bank, at the original thought, and how it looks today, it's completely different. Just because the public opinion, worldwide, and within Israel, reflected-- including the Supreme Court--Supreme Court is not a computer; it's people.

And when you think about demolishing houses, so it depends--if it's lack of discipline, I mean, just demolishing houses just because someone decided that the house is not in the appropriate place, so that's a lack of discipline. But if you, you're about to arrest terrorists, something that happened last week, or ten days ago, a very arch terrorist that was supposed to be detained, and he fought from the house, I think it was six or seven floors, and finally, he gave up and he surrendered.

It couldn't happen four years ago. But after we suffered casualties from the IDF soldiers, that got killed

and injured, due to trying to enter these houses, and to do it within the house, now the strategy has been changed or the system has been changed, and we evacuate all--

MR. DICTER: [in progress] to surrender. Otherwise, we destroy the house on this terrorist, with the terrorist or more than them. And it's the third or the fourth case, that the very arch terrorist is surrendering just in order to prevent, from the Israeli forces, destroy the house and to kill him inside.

So I don't know what's more important--his life or 60 people who live in this building. But he took those 60 people as human shields. And that's the main problem. Terrorists will always try to hide within densely [inhabited] neighborhoods, because that's--they're human shields.

MR. INDYK: I think, as a matter of fact, Israel stopped house demolitions. Didn't it?

[Simultaneous conversation.]

MR. INDYK: Yeah.

MS. WITTES: As a matter of policy...

MR. INDYK: Dan, Avi, thank you both very much. It's been a very interesting discussion. Thank you, all of you, for joining us. This is, I think, Avi's last appearance, public appearance, for the Saban Center before he goes home to other things.

We wish you the best of luck, Avi, it's been a pleasure to have you here, and I think all of us at the Saban Center have enjoyed interacting with you, and Dan and Avi, we look forward to your paper with great interest. Thank you both very much.