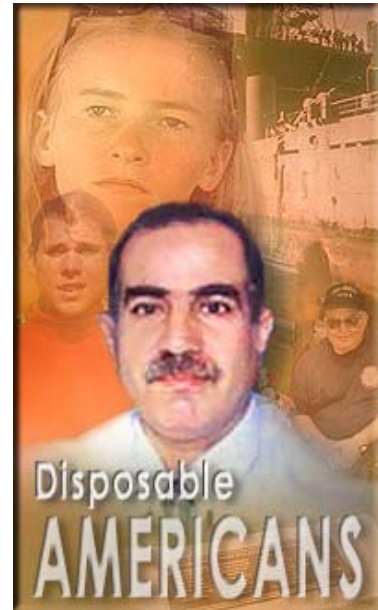


OPEN SEASON: DISPOSABLE AMERICANS

DEATH OF AN AMERICAN FATHER & SON

By Laura Dawn Lewis

When Americans travel abroad we feel pretty safe, especially when visiting the countries of our allies and friends. After all, as citizens of the most powerful country in the world, most governments take extraordinary measures to avoid disrupting their relationship with us. Killing one of our citizens with its military sullies diplomatic relations resulting in international condemnation, sanctions or worse. Recently one country emerged where killing an American civilian or our military personnel receives vague notice, a cursory condemnation and usually no investigation. In fact, our government goes to extraordinary lengths to protect this country when it kills American citizens. Its reputation supercedes American lives.



The country of course, Israel. When confronted with the hypocrisy of America's treatment of all other nations by one set of rules and Israel's exemption of such, our government and media immediately cite our "special relationship". Special is right, the United States now represents the epitome of a battered wife. Lie, cheat, steal or kill, we forgive, forget and beg for more. The rest of the world refers to us a whipped, with reason. This emergence of American citizens as ducks in an Israeli shooting gallery involves more than the most recent murders and extends to American soil with origins dating to 1967. Through decades of US government acquiescence and media self-censorship a pattern emerged, supplanting the value of an American life and labeling us as disposable citizens to protect Israel's reputation. Both the US Government and the US media share responsibility for the disposable nature of American lives.

MURDER MISSED BY OUR MEDIA

Two weeks ago an American father and son were murdered in their home at 3 AM in front of the mother and two siblings in Gaza by Israeli Defense Forces, (IDF). You're right. You didn't hear about it; they were not terrorists, agitators or militia. They were simply an American family trying to improve life under the world's most brutal ongoing occupation. The reason for the media blackout will become apparent later in this article. We became aware of it July 8th when the following e-mail from a source in Palestine dropped into our inbox:

"In a press conference for the sorrowing mother and her daughter and son, the mother said that when she called the American embassy, they told her that her family's name is not listed in their files as residents in the West Bank. The woman then told them that could not be true because during the Gulf War, the embassy called them and offered help in leaving the territories, or providing masks against gas, in case they do not want to leave the West Bank.

The woman said 'How come we were American citizens then, and we are not American citizens now?'"

Dr. Salah and his son were murdered July 6, 2004.

This e-mail represented our first indication Americans had been murdered in Palestine. The 'not listed' issue is irrelevant and scary. If the US Embassy somehow lost track of US Citizens in a war zone kind of makes you wonder how many of us they lose track of regularly. Rather incompetent of our country, don't you think? However, the Salahs identified themselves as American citizens *before* being shot and with a son studying in America, the excuse shows its transparency. Further investigation led to scant details. Over the following days we scanned the US media trying to find a mention. We found nothing. As usual, the foreign press covered the story. The American press ignored it. Murdered Americans are news everywhere but America.

The writer of the above e-mail is the neighbor of the slain American citizens living in the West Bank, Dr. Khaled Salah, 51 and his son Mohammed Salah, 16. Dr. Salah and his wife Salam are the parents of four: Diana, 23, Mohammed and Ali, 11 and their oldest son currently attends college in Boston, working on his degree in electrical engineering. An American citizen, Dr. Salah received his PhD from UC Davis.

Choosing to return to Palestine where he could do the most good, Dr. Salah established the Department of Electrical Engineering at An-Najah University in Nablus. The University put out the following statement, *"An-Najah National University condemns the killing of its Professor, Prof. Khalid Salah, of the Faculty of Engineering, early this morning. He was 54 years old. His sixteen-year old son, Muhammad, was also killed. Prof. Khalid Salah was killed in cold blood by the Israeli Occupation Forces in his flat where he lived with his family. Both were left bleeding for four hours until they died. Medical teams were not allowed to offer their urgent first aid to them. Prof. Khalid Salah was born in 1950 and started his work at the university in 1979. Prof. Khalid Salah was an American citizen. He was awarded his PhD in the Electrical Engineering from California University (Davis) in 1985. He received his MSc in Electronic Engineering from Wales in the United Kingdom in 1980."*

Two weeks after the incident, this gut-wrenching article detailing the murder of Dr. Salah and his son appeared Ha'aretz Daily, the Israeli newspaper:

"They heard the windows shattering, the water streaming from pipes that had burst and the perfumes flowing out of bottles that broke one after the other, their scents wafting through the apartment. From above they heard the sound of a helicopter. The battle for the house was at its height. "We phoned and phoned but everyone was helpless. It was war, and my feeling was that none of us would survive it." It went on that way for an hour and a quarter, until 3 A.M.

When quiet fell, Salam shouted, "Please, please, we are a family of peace. My name is Salam, shalom." The quiet continued for a bit, and then the shooting resumed. Immediately afterward, the Israeli force ordered everyone to leave the building, because it was going to be blown up. The order was given through a loudspeaker, in Arabic. "Anyone who doesn't come out will have the building blown up with him inside," the soldiers threatened.

(This threat is serious. Dozens of Palestinian civilians have been crushed to death or blown up in their homes by the IDF, usually because they are elderly, handicap or deaf and cannot move fast enough to escape. The majority of the raids like this the Salahs fell victim to happen at night. The presence of human life is inconsequential and homes are destroyed as a measure of imparting terror on the population, not as defense. Gush Shalom, an Israeli peace group, Amnesty International, the United Nations and the Red Crescent Society regularly document these atrocities. The US Media rarely reports them and the US Government ignores them, even when Americans are killed.)

Khaled got up first. "We're all right, everyone is all right," he whispered. He walked toward the corridor and turned on a light. Salam told the children to wait until he could see what was happening. But the shooting started again and Khaled hurried back to the living room. When the shooting died down he again made his way toward the front door and tried to open it. However, the door had been bent out of shape by the gunfire and the key didn't work.

Unable to open the door, and taking seriously the soldiers' threat to blow up the house with them inside, Khaled went to the bedroom, opened the window, raised his hands and shouted to the soldiers, in English, "Sir, sir, we need help. Please come and open the door. I am a professor. We are people of peace. WE HAVE AMERICAN PASSPORTS." There was no response. Khaled tried again, this time in Arabic: "Help, help, we need help."

A split second later, Salam heard three shots. Khaled fell silent. She would never hear his voice again. Inside the room, the terrifying red laser ray pranced across the walls.

Salam crawled over to her husband and found him lying on the floor, between the bed and the window. At first she saw no blood, but he was no

longer breathing. Then she saw the hole in his neck. "Diana, Diana," she screamed, "They have killed your father."

Read the full article: [DEATH IN A CEMETERY](#),
07/23/2004, Ha'aretz Daily, Israel

A PATTERN OF TERROR AGAINST AMERICANS

The Salahs are not the first American citizens targeted by Israeli terror. A year ago IDF soldiers barged into the home of another American family living in Palestine. At gunpoint they forced the fourteen-year-old boy to dress in suicide bomber clothing for a "terrorist" propaganda picture. In this case, the terrified young boy began screaming he is an American citizen and produced his passport. Confused, after some time the IDF soldiers simply left. Unfortunately for Dr. Salah and Mohammed, the Israelis have learned Americans do not care if Israelis kill American citizens. This time an American passport could not save two of our citizens. This time, being an American did not matter and that fact alone should alarm every American here and abroad. In Israel or under its occupation, we are disposable citizens. Our country abandons us by ignoring our deaths.

Americans should also note in addition to dressing fourteen-year-old boys up as terrorists for propaganda and American television distribution, in June 2004 a Mossad cell was busted in Gaza masquerading and operating as Al Qaeda terrorists in an attempt to bring America into the Israel/Palestinian conflict as more than underwriters and UN saviors. Mossad and the Israeli army have a long history of false flag operations posing as Arabs, beginning with the bombing of King David Hotel by Menachem Begin and his Irgun terrorists in 1946.

THE ROAD TO DISPOSABLE AMERICANS

When did American lives in Israel become disposable? For every action, a suitable reaction exists thou at times, the lack of reaction becomes the coffin's nail. The diminishing of American life finds its origin in 1967 but reached fruition with the murder of American [Rachel Corrie](#) and shooting of Brian Avery in March 2003. The current administration by virtue of apathy holds the responsible for our new status as "throw-away citizens". Its actions in 2003 sealed our fate.

What looked to be a public relations nightmare for Israel, killing twenty-three year old blond hair blue-eyed college student Rachel Corrie by crushing her under a giant D-9 bulldozer as she attempted to prevent the destruction of another Palestinian's home, turned into a declaration of open season on Americans living and working in the Occupied Territories. Rather than show its outrage, the US Media and our government vilified Rachel and made her death the butt of late night jokes. This sent a message to Israel, "Americans do not care if you kill our citizens". Worse, the US continues to reward Israel with more money, more weapons and the continuation of covering up its crimes via veto after veto. A Christian Palestinian and US citizen friend of mine commented after seeing the smear campaign and lack of accountability over Rachel's murder, "*If America doesn't hold Israel accountable for killing someone like Rachel with*

her blue eyes, blond hair and youth, and a female no less. Arab Americans like me don't have a chance."

The murders of Dr. Salah and his son Mohammed, Arab Americans make the above statement chillingly real. Apathy and blind support have a price: American blood, our blood via the devaluation of American life through the actions of our own government. If Israel kills, we are not protected.

SACRIFICIAL SOLDIERS

America's lack of protection for our own when Israel murders extends to our military. We wave our flags and chant; "We support our Troops". The hypocrisy of this statement will become apparent.

Sailing in international waters, the lightly armed intelligence ship [USS Liberty](#), on June 8, 1967 found itself on the wrong end of Israeli torpedo boats and napalm, bomb and bullet spraying Israeli jets, only they didn't know they were Israeli jets. Israel used unmarked planes, (something in violation of the rules of war and a definite indication of pre-meditation). Thirty-four sailors died and 171 received injuries during the (70) seventy-minute, assault. Seven minutes is a mistake. Seventy is purposeful.

Does America protect its heroes? Not if Israel is involved. America protects Israel. The average American does not even know about the USS Liberty. From the beginning, our government sacrificed our sailors. Robert McNamara the Secretary of Defense in 1967 canceled the rescue squad mid air, leaving the Liberty crew to die. Miraculously, the ship with a torpedo hole in its side and most of its crew incapacitated managed to get away and reach Malta. The US media went into blackout after a few days to prevent embarrassment to Israel. Gag orders were placed on the crew. Though the USS Liberty remains the most decorated ship in US History, for thirty-eight years congress refuses to investigate; to this day our government and media treat the survivors and their families with contempt, a way of saying 'How dare you survive to remind us'. This treatment of our sailors alone should disgust any American.

Medals were awarded in secret, again as not to embarrass Israel. Meanwhile the sailors were vilified and referred to as anti-Semitic for not letting this rest, including several Jewish sailors. When a top Hollywood actor approached Hollywood studios in the early 1980's about a movie documenting the amazing escape and pure heroics of the Liberty crew told in the book by bridge crew member Jim Ennes in "*USS Liberty, Dead in the Water*", he was told, "*Mention this again and you'll never work in Hollywood again*" by studio heads. This incident is confirmed at the source but a non-disclosure prevents revealing the actor's name. Hollywood shares some blame with the media and US Government in creating disposable Americans. Recently other actors including Sean Penn, [Richard Gere](#) and Mel Gibson endured vilification for going against Israeli reputation, defending their non-Jewish faiths or speaking out.

If we really support our troops, we must demand our government start by supporting the survivors and families of the USS Liberty. Absent this support, Americans do not support our troops. We support propaganda.

DOUBLE STANDARDS

Contrast the above behavior with the US response to three Americans killed in Gaza Palestine October 14, 2003. Within twenty-four hours President Bush condemned the attack on the security personnel hired by the US government and dispatched an FBI team to investigate. Reuters ran multiple stories. The Associated Press ran multiple stories. The New York Times and Jerusalem Post ran stories. The Washington Post ran stories¹. Multiple stories for Americans killed by Palestinians. Where are the stories about Dr. Salah and Mohammed? Because Israelis killed them, does that make them any less American?

GAZA BOMB KILLS 3 AMERICANS: EMBASSY ADVISES ALL U.S. CITIZENS TO LEAVE GAZA

Thursday, October 16, 2003 Posted: 1:46 AM EDT (0546 GMT) GAZA CITY (CNN) -- A roadside bomb went off beneath a convoy carrying U.S. diplomats Wednesday in Gaza, killing three American members of a security detail and injuring another, U.S. officials said. President Bush blamed Palestinian officials, saying they "should have acted long ago to fight terror in all its forms." Bush repeated calls to give a Palestinian prime minister control of all Palestinian security forces, and he blamed Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat for continuing to block reforms.

Three differences exist between the three Americans killed in Gaza and Rachel, the USS Liberty and the Salahs: The method of killing, who killed them and how the US responded.

THE METHOD: The three killed in October fell victim to a remote bomb, impersonal with no individual attached. Rachel, the Salahs and the USS Liberty all saw the faces of those killing them with bullets and bulldozers. The attacks were personal by recognizable and specific IDF soldiers.

¹ Bush Condemns Gaza Attack - Reuters (Oct 15, 2003) - Bush Blames Palestinian Authorities - AP (Oct 15, 2003) - Tense aftermath of Gaza bomb blast - BBC (Oct 15, 2003) - FBI Sending Team to Probe Bombing - Reuters (Oct 15, 2003) - Israeli Army Issues More Expulsion Orders - AP (Oct 15, 2003) - FBI to investigate Gaza blast that killed 3 Americans - CBC (Oct 15, 2003) - Explosion targets US convoy in Gaza Strip, killing 3 - Jerusalem Post (registration req'd) (Oct 15, 2003) - Three Americans killed as U.S. convoy bombed in Gaza - Haaretz (Oct 15, 2003) - U.S. Citizens Ordered to Leave Gaza - AP (Oct 15, 2003) - Gaza Strip Blast Kills Three Americans - AP (Oct 15, 2003) - Bombing of U.S. Convoy in Gaza Kills 3 Americans - Reuters (Oct 15, 2003) - FBI to probe attack; U.S. tells citizens to leave Gaza - Ha'aretz (Oct 15, 2003) - At Least 3 Dead as Blast Hits U.S. Convoy in Gaza - NY Times/Yahoo! News (Oct 15, 2003) - Lahoud wants Russia to play bigger role in Middle East - The Daily Star (Lebanon) (Oct 15, 2003) - Arafat condemns deadly attack on US diplomatic convoy - AFP (Oct 15, 2003)-Gaza Bomb Attack Kills Three Americans (BBC)-Bush Blames Palestinians for Gaza Deaths (AP (October 15, 2003).

The three security agents contracted by the US Embassy through DynCorp fell victim to a roadside bomb in an active war zone. The responsible party remains unknown though speculation abounds this is yet another false flag operation; it would not be the first time Mossad has killed its own or Americans to gain support. The 1982 bombing of the Marine barracks in Lebanon, documented in Victor Ostrovsky, a former Mossad agent's book "*By Way of Deception*" need not have happened. The Mossad knew intimate details prior to the attack and chose not to tell American intelligence the full story, providing vague information. The reasoning: killing of our soldiers would bring Americans to Israel's aid in Lebanon. Two hundred and forty-two American Marines died. Even when Ostrovsky's book published in 1989, the US Government failed to object to the lie of omission killing so many. Israel of course, banned the book.

THE KILLERS: The three Americans killed in Gaza are suspected to be victims of Palestinian resistance. Rachel, the Salahs and the USS Liberty are known victims of the Israeli military.

Unlike the Israelis who circle the wagons and spit forth excuses when they kill an American, the Palestinians immediately began rounding up suspects. Concurrently Hamas, Islamic Jihad and the Palestinian Authority denounced the attack. Killing an American serves no purpose to Palestinians. They have nothing to gain and everything to lose.

Contrast this with Israel's reaction to the USS Liberty, the Salahs and Rachel Corrie. Israel simply issued its reflexive vacant apology, plunged into denial mode, labeled anyone questioning "anti-Semitic" and promising to "investigate"...their standard non-response, though in each case, specific soldiers were responsible for the deaths and have yet to be held accountable. A promise to investigate by Israel illustrates an empty promise. Even when Israel does investigate and prosecute, as in the case of the [Deir Yassin](#) massacre April 9, 1948, the responsible Israeli personal were fined a penny for killing over 100 men, women and children reminding us of the "justice" once afforded African Americans killed in this country by Caucasian members of the Klu Klux Klan. Given their track record with holding Israeli citizens responsible for crimes against others, why would the US Government ever take their word without an investigation? We won't take Britain's, France's or Germany's, and these countries have proven themselves to be equitable. Israel's history proves the opposite.

THE COVERAGE & PRICE: Full bore press and multiple articles covered the roadside bombing of the three in Gaza. The USS Liberty survivors and their families were given gag orders. The press vilified Rachel Corrie and the Salahs aren't even mentioned.

As Americans, reason dictates our government and media would stand up for us...or at the least gives us the facts and truth. When Palestinians were suspected of murdering Americans, we had a team on the ground in twenty-four hours. When Israel is suspected, nothing. Does this dichotomy and unrealistic deflection of culpability concern anyone besides me?

Rachel's murder occurred in March 2003 by Israeli Defense Forces. She died flattened under a D-9 Caterpillar Bulldozer crushing her twice beneath its weight. The Israeli Air Force and Israeli Navy attacked the USS Liberty June 8th, 1967 for seventy minutes and have been trying to deny, bury and misdirecting ever since. The Salahs were killed in July 2004 by Israeli Defense Forces, awakened in the middle of the night and forced at gunpoint to leave their home with children present. Americans do not even know about this, but we know about every single one of the 111 Israeli children killed by Palestinians since September 2000. Of course few Americans know about the 590 Palestinian children killed by Israel during the same period.

The USS Liberty, the Salahs and Rachel Corrie are American citizens. In each case due to Israeli involvement their deaths go without US investigation or prosecution setting a dangerous precedent for all Americans. The USS Liberty received a cursory inquiry, which Captain Ward Boston the legal counsel on the commission and Admiral Thomas Moore debunked shortly before his death in February this year. In June 2004 the Israelis put forth a "transcript" of the pilots attempting to solidify their position. Unfortunately for Israel, the transcript proved their insistence of faulty identification regarding the USS Liberty was a lie. Transcripts from non-Israeli sources debunked the rest.

Thirty-eight years later, not a single US investigative team traveled to Israel and interviewed a single Israeli soldier regarding the USS Liberty Attack. A year-and-a-half after Rachel's death, the United States refuses to investigate even after the murder of [Tom Hurndall](#) from Manchester England was proven murder under pressure from the British government and Hurndall family. Corrie and Hurndall died in similar circumstances as international peace workers. But the three Americans suspected killed by the Palestinians got their inquiry within twenty-four hours. England protects its citizens and holds Israel accountable. In June of this year IDF forces shot at three more [British subjects](#), part of an identified UN team; fortunately this time, no one died and investigations began immediately. Why are the rules different when Israel murders Americans?

HUNTING AMERICANS IN AMERICA

In January 2003, the **SYDNEY SUNDAY TIMES** and several other international papers ran an article detailing how the American, British and Australian governments granted Mossad, the Israeli version of the CIA full rights to act as judge, jury and executioner on US, Australian and British soil against any American, Australian or British citizens Mossad deems a threat to Israel. All it takes to be a threat to Israel is public or private opposition to fascism. If you oppose fascism, you oppose its current manifestation

Zionism. If you oppose Zionism you are an enemy of Israel. In any other world, opposing fascism represents a person of conscience. In this, it marks you.

To date, according to Jewish Peace Groups we've interviewed in the US, these attacks have focused on American Jews predominantly in the South Florida region. Not only is this a direct violation of each victim's civil rights and several amendments, no foreign government should ever be allowed to hunt down Americans on our soil. These Jewish Americans remain loyal to this country and are our citizens. Our government fails to protect our Jewish citizens from a foreign power; our government sacrifices them to remain in the graces of a foreign power! The ADL does not protect them either and often assists in collecting and spying on Jewish Americans fighting Israeli fascism. A common misconception, the ADL protects Zionism, not persons of the Jewish faith. Several people, Jewish and non-Jewish have won defamation lawsuits against this Trojan Horse for its illegal spying, harassment and malicious targeting of American citizens.

CAUSE AND EFFECT: WE GET WHAT WE SOW

Being an American citizen used to mean something. Dr. Salah and his son Mohammed would not be dead today if Americans defended our own. With accountability, the price to Israel for summarily murdering any American in terms of public relations, international condemnation and a cessation of aid would be too high. An American passport protected the fourteen-year-old boy from becoming an Israeli propaganda stunt last year; it failed to protect Dr. Salah and his son as Israel now realizes after killing Rachel, targeting Americans gains a simple slap on the wrist with no further consequence. The United Kingdom stood up for the Hurndalls and received justice, demonstrating the value of a British life. When we don't hold others accountable, we create conditions that kill and for that as a nation we have only ourselves to blame.

How many more American citizens must die before we start acting in our best interests and demand the same of our politicians and our media? We've sacrificed Rachel. We've nearly sacrificed Brian. We've sacrificed the 34 sailors of the USS Liberty and now we've sacrificed Dr. Salah and Mohammed. What is it going to take for Americans to begin protecting our own? How many dead Americans are enough?

THE FOLLOWING PAGES CONTAIN THE FULL TEXT OF ARTICLES ELABORATING SOME OF THE INSTANCES AND FACTS MENTIONED IN THIS ARTICLE.

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ISRAEL FASHIONS A BOMBER OF ITS OWN

May 8, 2003: by Muthanna Al Qadi, The Palestinian Report

Since last December, 14-year-old Ahmad Abdul Haq from Nablus has been sleeping in his mother's lap. Three months ago, he experienced the worst day of his life - a day of horror that would have terrified any child. Ahmad was forced to play the role of the hero in a story fabricated by Israeli intelligence - a story he was certain would end in his death, at the hands of Israeli soldiers.

It all started on the afternoon of December 25. A group of Israeli soldiers came to the boy's house as he sat alone in his bedroom doing homework. The doorbell rang loudly and Ahmad could hear the stomping of heavy boots outside. When he went to the window, he was shocked and horrified to find a large group of soldiers attempting to break into his home.

Frightened, Ahmad quickly moved to open the door to his family's apartment, only to find that the soldiers had already arrived. The soldiers greeted him with kicks, and some beat him with the butts of their guns. One soldier, his face covered with a black mask, shouted in Arabic, "Are you Ahmad Abdel Haq?" In a shaky voice, the boy answered feebly, "Yes, I am Ahmad." The soldiers then pushed him to the ground, tied his hands and began searching the house.

Ahmad tells of how, under gunpoint, the Israeli soldiers forced him to play the role of a Palestinian suicide bomber. "They ordered me to sit on a chair behind a table," the boy recounts. "All the soldiers stood around me. One of them hung a Palestinian flag behind me and another came in with a gun. A third brought in a hand grenade." Ahmad says the soldiers then emptied the bullets from the rifle's magazine and placed it before him on the table. They then made the boy hold a copy of the Qu'ran in his left hand.

Ahmad noticed that one of the soldiers was taking pictures of him from different angles. But he was so scared that he was unable to mutter a single word, and carried out every order he was given in silence. He was commanded to play the role of a worshipper, praying in front of the video camera. A soldier gave him a paper written in Hebrew to pretend to read from as if it were his last will. "Oh, you suicide bomber, you want to carry out an operation, huh?" laughed the soldiers, taunting the frightened boy before the camera.

At the end of the performance, soldiers declared Ahmad "accused." And at that point, it was impossible for him to escape their conspiracy. Six hours after the soldiers had broken into his house, the officer in command led Ahmad to an armored vehicle, which terrified the young teenager even more. "I didn't know where they were taking me," he says. "I was scared that they would take me to the Hawara camp or somewhere like that."

But Ahmad suddenly remembered his final winning card. Gathering up his remaining courage, the boy yelled in a loud voice to the soldiers riding with him, "I am an American citizen. My American passport is in the house."

The soldiers were clearly confused by this fresh piece of information, Ahmad remembers. They began calling the Israeli military command and the United States embassy to see if what the boy said was true. After half an hour of phone calls, they realized that it was.

They promptly kicked him out of the jeep with a stark warning. "If you tell anyone what happened, we will kill you and your family," they told him. The jeep took off in a bolt.

Ahmad recalls that he was unable to even climb the flight of stairs leading to his house because he felt so sick and was in shock at what had happened. He was terrified that this ordeal would end in his death sooner or later. As soon as he entered the apartment complex, he collapsed.

The neighbors hurried towards him. Then his mother appeared, arriving from the family's supermarket after the neighbors told her what happened. The mother gathered her youngest son into her arms as tears streamed down her face. She was unable to speak.

The next day, the family informed the United States embassy of what had happened. The case was then transferred to the US consulate, because Ahmad is a Palestinian living in the West Bank. For his own protection, the consulate advised Ahmad not to leave his house alone for the time being, and to not even go to school. Ahmad did not attend classes for ten days.

"At first I was shocked. How could something like this happen to Ahmad, who isn't even 15?" wonders Ahmad's school principal Ahmad Douleh. "But after thinking about the tactics of the occupation, I am not surprised by anything they do."

Douleh describes Ahmad as an exemplary student. "He is very active and has a strong mind. He seems older than his age because of the absence of his father, who is deceased." When asked if he thought that Ahmad could ever do something like become a bomber, the principal shook his head. "No, that is not in Ahmad's nature."

The US embassy filed a complaint with the Israeli government's foreign ministry concerning Ahmad's case. It is still waiting for an official Israeli response. Spokesperson for the US consulate Chuck Hunter could only say that they have been "following up on the case since we first reviewed it." But that doesn't explain why the American complaint was only filed two months after the incident had taken place.

LAW, a Palestinian human rights organization, has been following the case and hopes to begin court procedures soon. LAW's Husni Kalbona explains. "After the case was documented by our Nablus-area lawyer Samar Al Aghbar, we filed a complaint to open an investigation. We are waiting for the results of the investigation so that we can continue legal procedures against the Israeli authorities." Kalbona says he wouldn't be surprised if the Israeli authorities continue to delay giving a response. "In cases like these, they purposefully stall, sometimes for several months," he concludes.

But regardless of the investigation results, many questions revolving around Ahmad's case remain unanswered. What would have happened if Ahmad had not revealed his secret? What if the same ordeal had happened to a child without an American passport granting a certain degree of diplomatic protection? These, and many other question marks raised by his case will likely remain unexplained.

ISRAEL 'FABRICATED' CHILD-BOMBER STORY

By Khalid Amayreh in the West Bank Thursday 25 March 2004, 18:55 Makka Time, 15:55 GMT

Palestinian leaders have accused Israel of fabricating a story about a 14-year-old Palestinian boy who planned to blow himself up.

The Israeli army said he was caught wearing an explosive belt at an army roadblock in the northern West Bank.

The boy, identified as Husam Abdu from Nablus, was shown on TV screens around the world, with an explosive belt strapped to his waist.

The Israeli army said the boy told interrogators that his dispatchers promised that he would have sex with 72 virgins in heaven soon after his death.

"We know for sure this is a fabricated story from A to Z. Would you believe that a 13 or 14-year old would agree to blow up himself in return for a hundred shekels which he would receive after his death?"

"It seems to me that the Israelis are bad liars as well," said Yaqub Shahin, a director-general of the Palestinian Authority ministry of information.

Painting a 'terrorist' picture

In an interview with Aljazeera.net, Shahin accused Israel of seeking to justify slaughtering Palestinian children by spreading the false impression that they are used as human bombers.

"Their [Israel's] goal is to besmirch Palestinian childhood so that when they slaughter the children, the world won't feel sorry for them," he said.

Arab Knesset member Muhammad Baraka has also voiced "serious doubts" about the veracity of the Israeli narrative.

"I have very serious doubts about the whole story. I can't give the Israeli army the benefit of the doubt."

Israelis have killed 263 children under 14 in the Intifada

However, Baraka urged all parties to "keep children away from this sinister and bloody conflict.

"Using children as bombs is infinitely diabolical. It is totally inconsistent with all religious, moral and human values."

Fatah denial

The armed wing of Fatah, the Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades, has denied any involvement in the incident, accusing Israel of "concocting the whole story for the purpose of justifying the killing of more Palestinian children".

The Israeli newspaper Yedeot Ahranot reported on Thursday that Abdu told Shin Beth interrogators that an anonymous person had promised him 100 shekels if he blew himself up in the midst of Israeli soldiers.

Samir Khiwairah, a Nablus journalist who personally knows the boy's family, told Aljazeera.net that the boy's mental capacity to distinguish things is very low.

"I don't completely rule out the possibility that some evil person gave him the explosive belt and told him he would become a hero ... but this is a very tiny possibility."

Khiwairah said the Israeli army had a history of "fabricating and concocting stories" for the purpose of vilifying the Palestinians and winning public relations points.

Similar story

A few weeks ago, another boy from Nablus, Muhammad Kuraan, made headlines when the Israeli army presented him to the media as a child who had been dispatched to blow himself up at an Israeli roadblock.

However, when the boy returned home, he reportedly told his family and relatives "Jews told me to do this or else they would kill me."

Aljazeera.net asked the Israeli army spokesman in Tel Aviv to explain why Abdu would accept 100 shekels to get blown up and what good the money could possibly do?

The army was also asked to explain why it had TV cameras ready at the roadblock more than two hours before the event.

Despite two hours of waiting, the army failed to provide an answer. Child-killing

The controversy of using children in the Israeli-Palestinian strife underscores the brazen ugliness of the conflict. According to human rights groups operating in the occupied territories, the Israeli army has killed hundreds of Palestinian children since the outbreak of the Palestinian Intifada more than three and a half years ago.

According to a spokeswoman for the East Jerusalem-based Palestinian Human Rights Monitoring Group (HRMG), the Israeli army and paramilitary Jewish settlers have killed 263 Palestinian children from age 0-14 and 236 minors from the age of 15-18 during the ongoing Intifada.

The total number of Palestinians killed by Israel since the outbreak of the Intifada is estimated at 2670. The figures for the injured and maimed are believed to be in the thousands. The number of Israelis killed by Palestinians during the same period is around 838, including soldiers, settlers and civilians. Israel claims its army does not target Palestinian civilians deliberately but admits, rather grudgingly, that the killing is carried out knowingly.

However, human rights groups argue forcefully that, in the final analysis, killing knowingly is killing deliberately.

JEWISH GROUP THREATENS TO KILL EDITOR OF COLLEGE NEWSPAPER

By M&M 11:24am Sat May 3 '03 (Modified on 12:17pm Sat May 3 '03)

SANTA ROSA, Calif. - The offices of Santa Rosa Junior College's student newspaper were locked temporarily following death threats against the editor for a piece she published criticizing Israel. The piece in the biweekly Oak Leaf appeared six weeks ago.

Since then, 19-year-old editor Kristinae Toomians has been the target of death threats from area Jewish extremists.

The article, entitled "Is anti-Semitism ever the result of Jewish behavior?" was written by Mark McGuire, a student.

The piece took a pro-Palestinian position Rich Mellott, the adjunct professor who advises the Oak Leaf staff, said he read the piece quickly and saw no reason not to run it.

"It was politically charged and there were a few inflammatory things, but it wasn't libelous and it didn't incite people to violence," Mellott said. "The First Amendment isn't there to protect agreeable stories."

Meanwhile, editor Toomians said the furor the article has been a learning experience.

"I was really nervous at first," she said "Because of death threat letters and fliers left on my car windshield, "but I have a lot of support here, and I'm feeling more at ease."

5TH AMENDMENT

*No person shall be held to answer for a capital, or otherwise infamous, crime, unless on a presentment or indictment of a grand jury, except in cases arising in the land or naval forces, or in the militia, when in actual service, in time of war, or public danger; nor shall any person be subject, for the same offense, to be twice put in jeopardy of life or limb; nor shall be compelled, in any criminal case, to be a witness against himself; **nor be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law**; nor shall private property be taken for public use, without just compensation. --*

ISRAEL UNLEASHES ITS DEATH SQUADS

19jan03

ISRAELI death squads have been authorized to enter "friendly" countries and assassinate opponents in a move that raises the prospect of political killings in Australia.

Agents of the Israeli secret service Mossad have been given free rein to kill those deemed to be a threat to the Jewish state – wherever they are hiding.

Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, who has until now refused permission for assassinations on the home ground of allies, has reversed the policy as part of a more aggressive approach to terrorism.

The move was revealed by former Mossad agents in a series of interviews with US news agency United Press International. It was later confirmed by US intelligence officials.

They said the policy raised the potential for killings in countries with close ties to Israel, including the US, Britain and Australia.

One Mossad official told UPI the policy shift was prompted by "a huge budget" increase for the agency as part of "a tougher stance in fighting global jihad (or holy war)".

"Targeted killings" have, in the main, been restricted to the West Bank and Gaza because "no one wanted such operations on their territory", one Israeli official said.

But that is changing with the appointment late last year of new Mossad director Meir Dagan. Another former Mossad agent told UPI: "Diplomatic constraints have prevented Mossad from carrying out preventive operations (assassinations) on the soil of friendly countries until now." Mr Sharon and Mr Dagan were now "reversing that policy, even if it risks complications to Israel's bilateral relations".

A third source said Mr. Sharon wanted "greater operational maneuverability" for Mossad. Asked if that meant assassinations within allied countries, he said: "It does."

The move comes in the wake of the assassination by the CIA of al-Qaeda suspects in Yemen. Qaed Sinan Harithi and five other suspects were killed last year when a unmanned Predator spy plane fired a Hellfire missile at their car.

That attack is thought to have limited the ability of the US to protest about Mossad killings abroad. "That (the Predator attack) was done on the soil of a friendly ally," an official at the US Congress said. "I don't know on what basis we would be able to protest Israel's actions."

Israel has in the past sent hit squads to kill opponents in hostile countries such as Lebanon, and snatch squads have been used extensively throughout the world.

Nazi war criminal Adolf Eichmann was captured in Argentina in 1960, taken to Israel and executed.

In 1986, scientist Mordechai Vanunu was snatched in Rome and transported to Israel after revealing details of Israel's nuclear weapons program. He was sentenced to 18 years jail, only being released from solitary confinement in 1998.

One of the few known cases of Mossad hit men carrying out an assassination on friendly soil occurred on July 21, 1973, when a Mossad team shot dead Moroccan waiter Ahmed Bouchikhi as he walked home from the cinema with his pregnant wife in the Norwegian ski resort of Lillehammer.

The assassins apparently mistook Bouchikhi for Hassan Salameh, a PLO intelligence chief suspected of masterminding the killing of 11 Israeli athletes at the 1972 Munich Olympics. Gullow Gjeseth, who led a Norwegian Government inquiry into the shooting, said: "This was much more than a murder. This was a violation of Norwegian sovereignty."

In January 1996, Israel paid undisclosed damages to Bouchikhi's family, but refused to admit responsibility for the killing.

Mossad is thought to have struck again in October 1995, when the head of the Palestinian militant group Islamic Jihad, Fathi al-Shikai, was gunned down on the streets of Malta. The hit, though never formally claimed, had all the trademarks of the agency.

A return to such killings is expected to raise concerns among Israel's Western allies. The assassinations are likely to be carried out by a unit of Mossad's secret Metsada department called the Kidon, a Hebrew word meaning "bayonet".

The agents will have to answer to Mr. Dagan, who has been described by a CIA agent as having a "real killer instinct".

Officially, Israel has refused to confirm or deny the policy change. Kim Farber, a diplomat at the Israeli Embassy in Washington, told UPI: "There is so little information available on this, there is nothing I can add."

A spokesman for Foreign Minister Alexander Downer yesterday refused to comment on the possibility of Mossad agents operating in Australia.

[ISRAEL TO KILL IN U.S., ALLIED NATIONS](#)

By Richard Sale

UPI Intelligence Correspondent

From the [Washington Politics & Policy Desk](#)

Published 1/15/2003 7:14 PM

Israel is embarking upon a more aggressive approach to the war on terror that will include staging targeted killings in the United States and other friendly countries, former Israeli intelligence officials told United Press International.

Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon has forbidden the practice until now, these sources said, speaking on condition of anonymity.

The Israeli statements were confirmed by more than a half dozen former and currently serving U.S. foreign policy and intelligence officials in interviews with United Press International.

But an official at the Israeli Embassy in Washington told UPI: "That is rubbish. It is completely untrue. Israel and the United States have such a close and co-operative intelligence relationship, especially in the field of counter-terrorism, that the assertion is ludicrous."

With the appointment of Meir Dagan, the new director of Israel's Mossad secret intelligence service, Sharon is preparing "a huge budget" increase for the spy agency as part of "a tougher stance in fighting global jihad (or holy war)," one Israeli official said.

Since Sharon became Israeli prime minister, Tel Aviv has mainly limited its practice of targeted killings to the West Bank and Gaza because "no one wanted such operations on their territory," a former Israeli intelligence official said.

Another former Israeli government official said that under Sharon, "diplomatic constraints have prevented the Mossad from carrying out 'preventive operations' (targeted killings) on the soil of friendly countries until now."

He said Sharon is "reversing that policy, even if it risks complications to Israel's bilateral relations."

A former Israeli military intelligence source agreed: "What Sharon wants is a much more extensive and tough approach to global terrorism, and this includes greater operational maneuverability."

Does this mean assassinations on the soil of allies?

"It does," he said.

"Mossad is definitely being beefed up," a U.S. government official said of the Israeli agency's budget increase. He declined to comment on the Tel Aviv's geographic expansion of targeted killings.

An FBI spokesman also declined to comment, saying: "This is a policy matter. We only enforce federal laws."

A congressional staff member with deep knowledge of intelligence matters said, "I don't know on what basis we would be able to protest Israel's actions." He referred to the recent killing of Qaed Salim Sinan al Harethi, a top al Qaeda leader, in Yemen by a remotely controlled CIA drone.

"That was done on the soil of a friendly ally," the staffer said.

But the complications posed by Israel's new policy are real.

"Israel does not have a good record at doing this sort of thing," said former CIA counter-terrorism official Larry Johnson.

He cited the 1997 fiasco where two Mossad agents were captured after they tried to assassinate Khaled Mashaal, a Hamas political leader, by injecting him with poison.

According to Johnson, the attempt, made in Amman, Jordan, caused a political crisis in Israeli-Jordan relations. In addition, because the Israeli agents carried Canadian passports, Canada withdrew its ambassador in protest, he said. Jordan is one of two Arab nations to recognize Israel. The other is Egypt.

At the time, Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu said, "I have no intention of stopping the activities of this government against terror," according to a CNN report. Former CIA officials say Israel was forced to free jailed Hamas founder Sheikh Ahmad Yassin and 70 other Jordanian and Palestinian prisoner being held in Israeli jails to secure the release of the two would-be Mossad assassins.

Phil Stoddard, former director of the Middle East Institute, cited a botched plot to kill Ali Hassan Saleme, the mastermind of the 1972 Munich Olympics massacre. The 1974 attempt severely embarrassed Mossad when the Israeli hit team mistakenly assassinated a Moroccan waiter in Lillehammer, Norway.

Saleme, later a CIA asset, was killed in Beirut, Lebanon, in 1976 by a car bomb placed by an Israeli assassination team, former U.S. intelligence officials said.

"Israel knew Saleme was providing us with preventive intelligence on the Palestinians and his being killed pissed off a lot of people," said a former senior CIA official.

But some Israeli operations have been successful.

Gerald Bull, an Ontario-born U.S. citizen and designer of the Iraqi super gun -- a massive artillery system capable of launching satellites into orbit, and of delivering nuclear chemical or biological payloads from Baghdad to Israel -- was killed in Belgium in March 1990. The killing is still unsolved, but former CIA officials said a Mossad hit team is the most likely suspect.

Bull worked on the super gun design -- codenamed Project Babylon -- for 10 years, and helped the Iraqis develop many smaller artillery systems. He was found with five bullets in his head outside his Brussels apartment.

Israeli hit teams, which consist of units or squadrons of the Kidon, a sub-unit for Mossad's highly secret Metsada department, would stage the operations, former Israeli intelligence sources said. Kidon is a Hebrew word meaning, "bayonet," one former Israeli intelligence source said.

This Israeli government source explained that in the past Israel has not staged targeted killings in friendly countries because "no one wanted such operations on their territory." This has become irrelevant, he said.

Dagan, the new hard-driving director of Mossad, will implement the new changes, former Israeli government officials said.

Dagan, nicknamed "the gun," was Sharon's adviser on counter-terrorism during the government of Netanyahu in 1996, former Israeli government officials say. A former military man, Dagan has also undertaken extremely sensitive diplomatic missions for several of Israel's prime ministers, former Israeli government sources said.

Former Israel Defense Forces Lt. Col. Gal Luft, who served under Dagan, described him as an "extremely creative individual -- creative to the point of recklessness."

A former CIA official who knows Dagan said the new Mossad director knows "his foreign affairs inside and out," and has a "real killer instinct."

Dagan is also "an intelligence natural" who has "a superb analyst not afraid to act on gut instinct," the former CIA official said.

Dagan has already removed Mossad officials whom he regards as "being too conservative or too cautious" and is building up "a constituency of senior people of the same mentality," one former long-time Israeli operative said.

Dagan is also urging that Mossad operatives rely less on secret sources and rely more on open information that is so plentifully provided on the Internet and newspapers.

"It's a cultural thing," one former Israeli intelligence operative explained. "Mossad in the past has put its emphasis on Humint (human intelligence) and secret operations and has neglected the whole field of open media, which has become extremely important."

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DEATH IN A CEMETERY

By Gideon Levy

July 23, 2004: Ha'aretz Daily

How many of us can imagine the night of horror that the Salah family endured? To lie on the floor of the living room for what seemed an eternity, embracing as one being, trembling with fear as the house was blasted with bullets and missiles; to watch the sniper's laser ray doing its dance of death across the apartment, searching out its victims; to see the missiles slamming into the walls of the house, missile after missile, as though an earthquake had struck; to get to their feet in the dark following the order to evacuate the building before it was demolished; to try to open the front door and discover that it had been twisted out of shape by the gunfire and couldn't be opened; to open a window and try to shout to the snipers, in the dark of the night, that the door was jammed; to see the father of the family collapse from a bullet fired into his neck by a sniper; to see the son collapse a few minutes later from a bullet in his cheek fired by a sniper; to watch, helpless, as your son lies on the floor, the life ebbing out of him, next to his dead father, and to cry for help, but to find that the soldiers will not allow anyone to enter; then to undergo an interrogation and humiliation; and to discover that the entire contents of the house had been destroyed.

That was the night of horror of the Salah family: the father, Prof. Khaled Salah, 51 at his death, founder of the Department of Electrical Engineering at An-Najah University in Nablus; his wife, Salam, and their three children, Diana, 23, Mohammed, 16, and Ali, 11, all of whom were at home that night. Fortunately for the firstborn, Amer, he was in Boston, where he is an engineering student. It was a night of horror on which the father, possessor of a Ph.D. from the University of California, Davis, and a member of the Israeli-Palestinian Peace Committee at An-Najah, was killed, along with his son, Mohammed, a boy who loved soccer and dreamed of becoming a pharmacist, who lay dying on the floor for lack of medical treatment, which the soldiers denied him.

Maybe you saw them. Two years ago, during the Mondial (the World Cup of soccer), Channel 2 News correspondent Itai Engel broadcast a report of his impressions from a house in Nablus where he had watched the game between Brazil and Turkey as a guest of the Salah family. Engel was flabbergasted this week when told what had happened to the family that hosted him. The boy too? The boy, too. He said he had been charmed by them, by the father and his son, both of them avid soccer fans. When asked about the possibility of a game between Israel and Palestine, Khaled consulted with Mohammed and then replied, "We're better, but it'll be best if you win, because we'll be in for it if we beat you." They talked about peace and about soccer.

Salam, the widow and bereaved mother, a survivor of that night, found it difficult this week to remember the television piece and her loved ones' remarks about peace. It's important for her that the Israelis know that Khaled was a man of peace. Between fits of crying, still in shock, it's important for her to tell the Israelis in detail what happened in

the pre-dawn hours of July 6 in her home on Saka Street, in Nablus.

Salam Salah got home from a wedding in the city a little before midnight. Only she and Diana had attended the family wedding. Mohammed stayed home with his father, watching television and waiting for the candies his mother would bring from the party. Mohammed was very fond of the white and pink wedding sweets stuffed with walnuts. No one could have imagined that those would be the last candies he would ever eat. Diana, who, like her brother Amer, was born in California - both are American citizens - holds a degree in business administration from An-Najah. She, too, was getting ready for her own wedding, a large-scale affair that was set for next month.

They soon went to sleep. Mohammed was an anxiety-ridden boy. Born into the first intifada in the tough city of Nablus, reaching adolescence as the second intifada erupted, he was a habitual nail-biter. He sometimes got nosebleeds, when the tension in Nablus rose. Salam says it might have been because they overprotected the boy.

At a quarter to two they woke up in a fright to the sound of a powerful blast. Salam and Khaled leaped out of bed and looked out the window of their bedroom. They saw nothing. From the window of Diana's room they spotted dark forms of soldiers surrounding the building. It was only from the kitchen window that the full picture became clear. "It's like hell," Khaled whispered to his wife. The whole area was swarming with snipers; tanks, helicopters and other army forces that had come to apprehend or liquidate wanted individuals who were probably hiding in the ground-floor apartment.

Their building is situated high on Saka Street, wedged on the hillside, with Nablus spread out below. The residences in the building are spacious. Two neighbors are physicians, and Sami Aaker, the owner of a sewing factory that produces garments for Israeli fashion houses is another neighbor. Aaker's home now lies in ruins, like that of the Salah family.

Khaled herded the children into the living room and they lay on the floor, folded into one another, five members of a family like one body. From time to time, another missile or shell hit the apartment and exploded, casting a lurid light, like fireworks. Occasionally searchlights or the snipers' red laser rays lit up the darkened living room. The electricity came and went. The door of the refrigerator, damaged along with everything else in the house, opened wide and the yellow light supplied a bit of illumination. Salam and Khaled called everyone they could think of on Mohammed's mobile phone, trying to find out what was happening. The shooting didn't stop for a second, and their home was being gradually destroyed. They called relatives, asking them to do something, fast.

One relative called the U.S. consulate in Jerusalem, but even the long arm of all-powerful America, whose nationals were in the besieged apartment, was of no avail. One missile had already slashed into the bedroom, another into the kitchen. Khaled's mobile phone rang in the bedroom, but no one could get to it. They cried, prayed, shouted, fell silent. And embraced one another. They had a Koran and they read verses from it in loud

voices, so people would hear.

"It was a nightmare. I will never recover from it. No horror movie I have seen can compare to it," says Salam, who wears black mourning clothes. Five missiles had already struck the house. Khaled tried to calm them: "It's only property damage, no one has been hurt." Salam says he was strong and knew no fear. They just didn't want him to move and risk being hurt.

They heard the windows shattering, the water streaming from pipes that had burst and the perfumes flowing out of bottles that broke one after the other, their scents wafting through the apartment. From above they heard the sound of a helicopter. The battle for the house was at its height. "We phoned and phoned but everyone was helpless. It was war, and my feeling was that none of us would survive it." It went on that way for an hour and a quarter, until 3 A.M.

When quiet fell, Salam shouted, "Please, please, we are a family of peace. My name is Salam, shalom." The quiet continued for a bit, and then the shooting resumed. Immediately afterward, the Israeli force ordered everyone to leave the building, because it was going to be blown up. The order was given through a loudspeaker, in Arabic. "Anyone who doesn't come out will have the building blown up with him inside," the soldiers threatened.

Khaled got up first. "We're all right, everyone is all right," he whispered. He walked toward the corridor and turned on a light. Salam told the children to wait until he could see what was happening. But the shooting started again and Khaled hurried back to the living room. When the shooting died down he again made his way toward the front door and tried to open it. However, the door had been bent out of shape by the gunfire and the key didn't work.

Unable to open the door, and taking seriously the soldiers' threat to blow up the house with them inside, Khaled went to the bedroom, opened the window, raised his hands and shouted to the soldiers, in English, "Sir, sir, we need help. Please come and open the door. I am a professor, we are people of peace. We have American passports." There was no response. Khaled tried again, this time in Arabic: "Help, help, we need help."

A split second later, Salam heard three shots. Khaled fell silent. She would never hear his voice again. Inside the room, the terrifying red laser ray pranced across the walls.

Salam crawled over to her husband and found him lying on the floor, between the bed and the window. At first she saw no blood, but he was no longer breathing. Then she saw the hole in his neck. "Diana, Diana," she screamed, "they have killed your father."

Then she noticed Mohammed lying on the carpet next to Diana. "What happened, Diana?" she cried. Diana said nothing. Salam quickly moved her son, revealing his mouth. Blood was flowing from his mouth and his cheek was split open. She tried to stanch the blood coming out of his cheek using paper towels. At first, she says, she

thought it was a superficial wound. The boy groaned. His eyes were wide open and he emitted strange noises. His eyes pleaded for help, but his mother had only the paper towels. She opened the screen window in the room and shouted hysterically to the soldiers, "You killed my husband and my son." She says she heard a soldier laugh.

"Shut up, woman," the soldier commanded her, in Arabic. And again a red laser beam skitted around the room.

"I will never understand how Mohammed was killed. Maybe one day I will know. Khaled raised his hands, so he was a convenient target for them. Him they killed in cold blood. They let him finish speaking and then they killed him. But how Mohammed was killed I don't understand. I shouted like a madwoman: 'Help, my son is alive, we have to save him.' They laughed and told me to shut up. The soldier who was laughing was standing below, on the street. I sat on the floor and kept on shouting like a crazy person. I pounded on the door until my hands were injured. I don't know how those curses came out of me. I called for help, Diana and Ali were crying hysterically, and the soldiers threatened to blow up the building with us inside."

Mohammed was still alive. Diana also shouted to the soldiers that they had two neighbors who are physicians, let them at least send over one of them or let an ambulance get through. Salam says that every time their shouting rose in pitch the soldiers threatened to shoot them unless they shut up. Finally the soldiers said they would send someone. They sent a human shield, using the outlawed "neighbor procedure," in this case the neighbors' 15-year-old son. The lean boy pushed the door from outside, Salam pulled from inside, and at last the door opened.

"We went out in our pajamas with our hands raised," said Salam. "The soldiers spoke to us humiliatingly. I shouted that my son and my husband are killed and they laughed at us, imitating my shouts. They took us to the neighbors' apartment. Diana asked where she should sit and a soldier said, sit on your bottom. When I asked to see the commanding officer, they laughed at me. When I said I wanted to be with Mohammed they imitated me. This is the most criminal and most cruel army in the world. It was murder in the first degree."

At 6:15 A.M., four and a half hours after the attack began, the soldiers allowed a Palestinian ambulance to drive up to the building. The father and the son were dead. Salam was taken for interrogation by "Captain Razel" from the Shin Bet security service, who questioned her about the wanted men who had hidden in the apartment below. She had no idea, she says, what was going on outside.

And that wasn't the end of it. "After all that they went into the house and shot at everything they found. Everything. There isn't a dress, there isn't a towel they didn't shoot at. At the computer, the refrigerator, all our belongings, they destroyed everything. They didn't leave us so much as a pair of socks. They destroyed everything. A home of 20 years, all our memories, all our dreams, our whole history. Imagine to yourself what's in a home of 20 years. They destroyed it all. My husband's books. I don't understand

why. They just wanted to show us how strong they are and how cruel."

What do the soldiers who were involved think now? The sniper who shot a father and his son to death, and those who denied the dying boy medical assistance? The army issued a statement the next day: "Dr. Salah and his son Mohammed were apparently killed by IDF gunfire, but there was no intention to do them harm. Because of the shooting of the wanted man from the building, the soldiers were compelled to shoot in different stages at every floor and at the roof of the building, and it's possible that in one of the instances the soldiers didn't identify the sources of fire correctly or were forced to open fire at suspicious movements. Because of the continuation of the event and the lack of information about whether there were additional wanted individuals in the building, it was not possible to send medical teams into the building."

Sirens wail in the main streets of Nablus. Another funeral procession - Yasser Tantawi, 21. His brother, Khaled, 19, was killed two months ago. Both are from the city's Balata refugee camp. A Swedish volunteer, Henryk Larsen, a medical student from Uppsala University, who joined an ambulance of the Medical Relief Organization, was an eyewitness to Yasser's killing last Saturday night.

Youngsters threw stones at Jeeps, the soldiers opened fire, Yasser was wounded in the leg and fell to the ground. The event took place in the camp's cemetery. Larsen tried to treat the wounded man, but came under fire and had to retreat. He saw Yasser's body jolted back and forth as the soldiers kept shooting at him. They shot him, he says, after he had already been wounded in the leg.

Dr. Rasan Hamadan, from the Medical Relief Organization, says that about 10 bullets were found lodged in Yasser's body and that the medical team reported that he was unarmed. Larsen, too, says he saw no weapon.

The response of the IDF Spokesperson's Office: "During operational activity by an IDF force in Balata refugee camp the force came under fire and a number of explosive devices were thrown at it. The soldiers opened fire at a terrorist armed with a Kalashnikov rifle who was advancing toward them, and killed him. In the complex reality in which the IDF operates, maximum efforts are made to avoid injury to the innocent. At the same time, in the case of armed individuals who are endangering IDF soldiers and those around them, it is the soldiers' obligation to prevent them from acting."

Two days later, on Monday of this week, soldiers killed another stone-thrower in the Balata camp cemetery. His name was Husam Abu Zeitouna. He was 14.

<http://www.haaretz.com/hasen/objects/pages/PrintArticleEn.jhtml?itemNo=455097>

Gaza bomb kills 3 Americans

Embassy advises all U.S. citizens to leave Gaza

GAZA CITY (CNN) --A roadside bomb went off beneath a convoy carrying U.S. diplomats Wednesday in Gaza, killing three American members of a security detail and injuring another, U.S. officials said.

President Bush blamed Palestinian officials, saying they "should have acted long ago to fight terror in all its forms." Bush repeated calls to give a Palestinian prime minister control of all Palestinian security forces, and he blamed Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat for continuing to block reforms. Palestinian police started rounding up suspects in a dragnet expected to last through the night, security sources said. The action followed word that Arafat had reappointed a law and order general, Gazi el-Jabali, to command Palestinian police forces -- a man he had previously fired from the job. The U.S. ambassador to Israel, Daniel Kurtzer, said the United States was "shocked by this latest terrorist outrage."

The convoy was carrying U.S. Embassy officials to Gaza to interview Palestinian students who have applied for Fulbright scholarships in the United States, Kurtzer said. It was carrying at least 12 Americans, according to Israeli sources. The four Americans victims were employed by the U.S. Embassy to provide security, Kurtzer said. Two Americans died on the scene, a third died on the way to a hospital, and a fourth was hospitalized, Kurtzer said. They were employees of Dyncorp, a company that provides security for the United States in Israel, Iraq, Afghanistan and elsewhere in the Middle East, according to a senior Bush administration official. A team of six FBI agents -- investigators, forensics and explosives experts -- was being sent from Washington to investigate the crime scene. No one immediately claimed responsibility, and some Palestinian militant groups criticized the bombing, calling it counterproductive in their fight against Israeli occupation. Two militant groups designated terrorist organizations by the U.S. State Department -- Hamas and Islamic Jihad -- said they had nothing to do with it.

A Hamas statement on its Web site said the group did not wish "to widen the circle of struggle and to take it outside the borders of Palestine."

The Popular Resistance Committees, an umbrella organization for militants, denied "any connection with this incident" but condemned U.S. support for Israel's construction of a barrier in the West Bank to prevent terror attacks. In Washington, State Department spokesman Richard Boucher said that "in the absence of information" on who did it, "the assumption one has to make, given the nature of the attack," is that Palestinians targeted Americans. The Palestinian Authority condemned the attack and Arafat's Fatah movement urged that all legal steps be taken to preserve the U.S. role in Middle East peacemaking.

Palestinian Prime Minister Ahmed Qorei strongly condemned the attack, offered his condolences, and promised an investigation. Chief Palestinian negotiator Saeb Erakat also offered his condolences and condemned the attack. Several hours after the bombing, the U.S. Embassy issued an advisory calling on U.S. citizens to leave Gaza. Kurtzer said there were several hundred U.S. citizens in Gaza.

A senior State Department official said the convoy had just entered Gaza through the Erez checkpoint and was traveling a route often used by U.S. diplomats.

According to the State Department, a roadside bomb was triggered immediately after the Palestinian police cars in the convoy passed by, hitting the U.S. vehicle. An Associated Press correspondent at the scene reported seeing a gray wire leading from the bomb crater to a small concrete building nearby.

He said an on/off switch was attached to the wire. Video of the scene showed a crater, about three feet deep and eight feet wide. Kurtzer said the attack was the second to target U.S. officials in Gaza. He said no one was injured when a U.S. bulletproof vehicle was attacked in June. Kurtzer said the attack would not change the U.S. commitment to the peace process and the Palestinian Authority had been asked to arrest those responsible. John Wolf, special U.S. envoy to the Middle East, was not in the country at the time of the attack despite media reports that said he was in the convoy, the embassy said.

Dore Gold, a senior adviser to Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, also offered condolences, noting that Israelis "understand exactly the kind of grief this terrible, terrible terrorism causes."

"Clearly these attacks are motivated by the same anti-Western, anti-American feelings that unite all these forces in the Middle East," he said.

Gold said "this attack would never have occurred" if the Palestinian Authority had cracked down on terrorist groups.

PRESS RELEASE

Date: 12/7/2004

On 6 July 2004 Professor Khaled Salah of An-Najah National University, along with son Muhammad, were killed by an Israeli attack unit. The Salah home was later demolished by six helicopter rockets. A press conference by the wife and daughter of Prof. Khaled Salah

"If I am Palestinian they will kill me...If I am American they will kill me... should I be Jewish to be safe?"

"My name is Diana Khaled Salah, I am 23 years, the only daughter of Khaled Salah. He was more like a friend than a father. Last night, about one o' clock I heard a bomb explosion. I saw Israeli soldiers come into the house. My father rushed into my room. I told him, Dad, it is full of soldiers downstairs."

"Are you kidding?" he said.

"No," I answered.

'He went to look in the kitchen. He rushed back and took me from my bedroom into another room.

"Our house is open, all rooms have windows and the windows were all open. The only room with three walls is the reception room (the living room). We all huddled there, Dad, Mum, Muhammad, Ali and I. We were all in one corner of the room for three hours. Three long hours. We could hear the shooting and bombing, they were using all kinds of weapons: tanks, rockets, helicopters and M-16s. Fire was crossing our house.

"We were so afraid but Dad said an Arabic expression: Let it be the money and not children. It means better to loose money better than souls. I was crying but he tried to cheer me up saying: I didn't know that you are such a coward. Up until that moment we were all OK."

(At this point Mrs. Salah interrupts saying, He knew no fear. He was a believer man. My husband used to read holy Quran and praying. Her voice is more composed than her daughter's.)

Diana continues...

"Minutes later, shooting stopped. It was so quiet. It is over! We thought. But then the IOF (Israeli Occupation Forces) started shouting over loudspeakers: Open the doors! All people out of the building! Dad went to open the door but he couldn't move it. The lock of the door was damaged from the bombing so the door could not be moved. He went to his bedroom window, held his hands and called in English to the soldiers: We can't open the door. The door is damaged. I am a peaceful man. We all are peaceful people. I have children. My daughter has an American citizenship. I have an American green card, I have no weapons. Only my children are here. Come and open the door. I can't open it. Then in Arabic he shouted: Help... help... somebody come and open the door.

"Suddenly we heard shooting and my Dad's voice stopped. Mum ran in to find my Dad lying on the floor. She called to him, Khaled.. Khaled...what happened? She came back crying and told us, they killed your dad.

"At that same moment my little brother Ali and I were still in that corner. But my other brother, Muhammad, was on the floor. My Mum asked me, what's wrong with Muhammad?"

“I said I don’t know. I can see him there...I thought maybe he was kidding. We called to him. He didn’t answer. Then we saw blood coming out of his mouth. But we could feel him breathing. Mum cried for help and tried to open the door but they started to shoot.

“I shouted, Mum don’t open! Please... Please ... I have no dad now... I don’t want to lose you too. I don’t want to be alone.

“When mum called to the soldiers for help they mocked and told her to shut up. We then called the neighbors. We thought maybe someone can open the door. One of our neighbors, a 17 year old boy, came and tried to open the door. The soldiers threatened him but he continued pull at the door. Mum was pushing from inside and the boy was pulling from the outside. Finally the door opened. We begged the Israeli soldiers to let us pull out my dad and brother’s bodies, but they refused and threatened to kill us too.

At this point the mother adds:

“We were shocked when we came out of the flat and saw the huge number of soldiers. Almost every two meters there was a sniper. We are not in a war.”

Finally Diana ends her testimony saying: “If I am Palestinian they will kill me...If I am an American they will kill me... should I be Jewish to be safe?”

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