

## Chapter one: Introduction

The United States is currently in a war against terror, but how do we define a terrorist or terrorist organization? Currently, the international community has “no universal definition of terrorism,”<sup>1</sup> but according to the United States Department of Defense, terrorism is the calculated use of violence or the threat of violence to inculcate fear; intended to coerce or to intimidate governments or societies in the pursuit of goals that are generally political, religious, or ideological. According to the U.S Department of State Hamas and Hizbullah are International Terrorist organizations. This definition has great importance in international affairs because last January Hamas won the majority of seats in the Parliamentary elections in January 2006, and Hizbullah has joined a coalition that represents a fair part of the Lebanese parliament. I disagree with the terrorist classification of Hamas.

I disagree with the United States belief that Hamas and Hizbullah are terrorist organizations. Hamas and Hizbullah are not terrorist organizations, but actually freedom fighters that seek liberation from Israel. My thesis is valid because Hamas and Hizbullah do not pose a threat to the international community and they only fight for autonomy which is a freedom that every nation should be able to have. Some people would point to the attacks that Hamas makes against Israel as terrorists attacks but according to United Nations General Assembly Resolution No. 2649 they are actually permitted. Others would point to Hizbullah’s global attacks in the 80s and early 90s as a reason to declare it

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<sup>1</sup> Jean- Marc Sorel, “Some Questions About the Definition of Terrorism and the Fight Against Its Financing,” *European Journal of International Law*, Volume 14, Number 2 (2003), pp. 365.

a terrorist organization. Hizbullah has not committed a terrorist attack in over ten years and thusly does not deserve to carry the title of terrorist.

In this paper I will use quotations and facts from scholars who oppose my thesis, such as Tom Diaz and Barbara Newman, who published *Lighting out of Lebanon*. Their book discusses the dangers of Hizbullah as a terrorist organization. I will also use the work of Matthew Levitt, who published *Hamas: Politics, Charity and Terrorism in the Service of Jihad*. He discusses the many reasons why Hamas is a terrorist organization. I will also use work from scholars who support my thesis, such as Mona Harb and Rinoud Leenders, authors of the journal article titled, "Know thy enemy: Hizbullah, terrorism and the politics of perception," and Charley Reese whose journal article is titled, "Hamas and Democracy."

Hamas is an acronym that stands for the Islamic Resistance Movement. Hamas is an Islamist organization devoted to the destruction of the Zionist entity through jihad.<sup>2</sup> Hamas focus's its belief around the idea of Islamic awakening which is essential in the fight against Israel. They feel that there should be no peace or compromise with Israel and that they should receive no recognition by Islamic countries. Hamas supports Palestinian unity as a means to confront Israel, which they call the Zionist entity.

Hamas' origins lie within the original modern fundamentalist movement as a branch of the Muslim Brotherhood. In 1987, Hamas was founded with the goal of eliminating Israel and establishing in its place a greater Palestine, which would consist of Israel, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. According to Levitt, Hamas tries to accomplish this through a three pronged strategy:

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<sup>2</sup> Aaron Mannes, *Profiles in Terror: The Guide to Middle East Terrorist Organizations* (Maryland, 2004), p.113.

1. Social welfare activity that builds grassroots support for the organization;
2. Political activity that competes with the secular Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority;
3. Guerilla and terrorist attacks that target Israeli soldiers and civilians.”<sup>3</sup>

Hamas plans to counter the westernization and secularization of Arab society, while becoming internationally recognized as the sole representative of the Palestinian people.

Hamas is composed of three branches. These branches consist of a social welfare branch, a political branch and military branch. The social welfare and political branches are the face of Hamas’ social, administrative, political and propaganda activities. They give monetary aid to schools, open hospitals, build houses and do extensive community work. Hamas’ political branch is very successful, holding about a third of the seats in their parliament. After the January 2006 elections Hamas won 74 of 132 seats in the Palestinian Legislative Council, beating out the ruling party, Fatah, which put Hamas in charge of the Palestinian government. Hamas political branch runs on stressing reform and good governance rather than on their struggle with Israel. The military branch participates in operations, such as “executing suspected collaborators, surveilling potential targets, procuring weapons, and carrying out guerilla and terrorist attacks.”<sup>4</sup>

Hamas has a consultative council in Damascus that oversees all of Hamas activities, from media relations to military operations. The ground level committees are in the West Bank and Gaza and they carry out what is decided in Damascus.

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<sup>3</sup> Matthew Levitt, *Hamas: Politics, Charity and Terrorism in the Service of Jihad* (New Haven, 2006), p. 8.

<sup>4</sup> Matthew Levitt, *Hamas: Politics, Charity and Terrorism in the Service of Jihad* p. 9.

The founder of Hamas is Sheikh Ahmed Yassin. In 1973, he originally founded The Islamic Assembly, which did social and religious work.<sup>5</sup> Later, in 1982, Yassin founded The Palestinian Holy Fighters, which was founded to fight against Palestinian rivals and later Israel. In 1987 Yassin combined these two groups to form Hamas. In 1991, Hamas carried out its first terrorist attack against an Israeli civilian in Gaza and in 1994 Hamas carried out its first successful suicide bomb attack, which would become its specialty. Yassin was assassinated in 2004 by the Israeli government, in its decision to target all Hamas members. Yassin was succeeded by Mahmoud Zahar.

Since its founding in 1987, Hamas has committed countless acts of violence against both military and civilian targets in Israel and with every passing year, their acts of violence increase. Between February 1989 and March 2000 Hamas carried out at least twenty-seven attacks, but with the declaration of the second Intifida, in September 2000, Hamas' attacks increased significantly; between September 2004 and March 2004 Hamas conducted 425 acts of terror.<sup>6</sup>

Hizbullah is Arabic for Party of God. It is also called several other names: the Islamic Jihad, Revolutionary Justice Organization, the Organization of the Oppressed on Earth, and Islamic Jihad for the Liberation of Palestine.<sup>7</sup> Hizbullah is an Islamist Shiite organization, inspired by the Iranian revolution in 1979. The goals of Hizbullah are:

1. The expulsion of Western and Israeli presence in Lebanon;
2. The establishment of an Islamist state in Lebanon similar to that of the Islamic Republic in Iran;
3. The destruction of Israel;

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<sup>5</sup> Aaron Mannes, *Profiles in Terror: The Guide to Middle East Terrorist Organizations*, p.8.

<sup>6</sup> Matthew Levitt, *Hamas: Politics, Charity and Terrorism in the Service of Jihad*, p.12.

<sup>7</sup> Aaron Mannes, *Profiles in Terror: The Guide to Middle East Terrorist Organization*, p.145.

4. The capture of Jerusalem under Islamic rule.

Hizbullah holds that the belief that Israel is its most immediate enemy, but that the United States is their primary enemy. The United States has given aid to Israel, which fuels Hizbullah's hatred for the U.S. Hizbullah holds the U.S responsible for the Israeli assault on Lebanon in 1982.<sup>8</sup> In 1982, Israel invaded Lebanon to expel the PLO, this Israeli occupation soon became a source of anger and eventually led to the development of Islamic Shiite groups gaining aid from Iran. With the backing of Iran, Husayn Al-Musawi founded Islamic Amal. Eventually, the Islamic Amal combined with the Association of Muslim students and Al-Da'wa [members which were both groups founded in support of the Iranian revolution] to form Hizbullah. The spiritual leader of Hizbullah was Sheikj Husayn Fadlallah, who was the former leader of Al-Da'wa.

Hizbullah is well known in the Lebanese community for its extensive social work and propaganda, which exist to gain public support. Hizbullah provides social services such as hospitals, medical centers and even the distribution of bottled water, to the many that lost clean drinking water after the bombings of downtown Lebanon. Hizbullah also pays million of dollars to those who are dependents of Hizbullah members killed or injured, fighting against Israel.<sup>9</sup> Hizbullah also aids the community in restoration projects relating to the destruction that occurred during Israeli conflict with Lebanon.

Hizbullah's political branch is an active party in Lebanese politics. As of the year 2005, Hizbullah has 14 seats out of the 128 in parliament. The 14 seats held by Hizbullah are significant because they are in a coalition with the Amal Movement, which holds 15 seats, making them the second leading group, behind the The Rafik Hariri Martyr List.

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<sup>8</sup> Isaac Cronin, *Confronting Fear: A History of Terrorism*, p.262.

<sup>9</sup> Aaron Mannes, *Profiles in Terror*, p.160.

Independently, Hizbullah has the fourth most representatives in Parliament. Hizbullah's political branch capitalizes on the accomplishments of their social and military branches. Their main political claim to fame is the Hizbullah victory against Israel in 2000.

The military branch of Hizbullah is known for its guerilla warfare, which forced Israel to leave Lebanese territory in the year 2000. A Hizbullah spokesman described this as "The first Arab victory in the history of the Arab – Israeli conflict."<sup>10</sup> Hizbullah is also widely known for its terror attacks against military personnel and civilians. Hizbullah uses the techniques of car bombs and suicide bombs, paired with skilled guerilla fighters. Hizbullah operates internationally, with attacks in Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and against the United States in Lebanon. The self-proclaimed Party of God also holds the record for terrorist killings of U.S. military personal and before September 11, they held the record for the most U.S. casualties. Hizbullah's most renowned attack was against the U.S marine barracks in 1983.

Hizbullah's main source of income and support comes from Iran. Annually, it is said that Iran gives Hizbullah more than 100 million dollars. Hizbullah cells gain money through illegal activities such as drug running, gun trafficking, internet pornography and tax evasion schemes. Hizbullah also has a financial relationship with Syria in which they grow opium and a vast array of other drugs. Hizbullah also receives financial donations from many sympathizers, but some donations come through extortion.

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<sup>10</sup> Tom Diaz and Barbara Newman, *Lighting Out of Lebanon*, p. xvi.

## Chapter two: Scholarly review

Most of the information we have on terrorist organizations is actually subjective. Many authors portray their own opinions about these organizations through their writings, in order to consider their beliefs. In chapter 2, I will review what the scholars have to say about Hamas and Hizbullah. Are they terrorists, or are they freedom fighters?

Even though Hamas is known as an extremist group by most scholars, including Michael Herzog, he still acknowledges the fact that some scholars believe:

Hamas is already evolving in a moderate direction. They point to its very willingness to engage in elections and enter the Palestinian Legislative Council, and institution born from the Oslo peace process, which the group has long rejected; its acceptance of a temporary truce with Israel; its expressed willingness to consider a longer cease-fire should Israel withdraw to its 1967 borders; and various statements by Hamas leaders that exhibit flexibility.<sup>11</sup>

According to Herzog, this is not the case. He believes that there is overwhelming evidence showing that Hamas is a militant extremist group with no sign of yielding to moderation. Mahmoud Al-Zahar claimed in reference to the parliamentary elections that “the group sees no connection between the elections and the Oslo process, which is dead anyway.”<sup>12</sup> He then stated that the Israeli withdrawal to its 1967 borders will not grant it recognition or relations with Palestine. Zahar feels that the removal of Israelis to their previous borders is just another piece in the struggle: “Some Israelis think that when we talk of the West Bank and Gaza it means we have given up our historic war... This is not

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<sup>11</sup> Michael Herzog, “Can Hamas Be Tamed?” *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 85, No.2, (March/April 2006).

<sup>12</sup> Michael Herzog, “Can Hamas Be Tamed?”

the case.”<sup>13</sup> Herzog feels that the quotes by Zahar are discouraging and there needs to be some form of intervention. Hamas, in his words, needs to be disarmed before being allowed to enter politics. In a sense, Herzog believes that Hamas can not be taken down by anyone in Palestine, due to their political and military strength.

Many scholars including Matthew Levitt believe that Hamas’ branches all serve the strategic purpose of destroying Israel, under the ideological framework of the enemies of Islam. Thus, when Hamas swept the past parliamentary elections, the new government under Hamas declared no compromise with Israel. Hamas leader Mahmoud Zahar insists that attacks against their oppressor Israel, will continue unless they obtain complete liberation of Palestine. These attacks are funded by Hamas’ social programs. “Hamas leverages the appreciation it earns through social welfare activities to garner support – political and logistical – for its terrorist activities.”<sup>14</sup> The three branches of Hamas are so intertwined that many see them all as one in the same.

The cloudiness and the intertwined nature of Hamas’ branches lead many to believe that it is solely a terrorist organization. Matthew Levitt points to the fact that Hamas has performed a countless number of “spectacular and indiscriminate suicide bombings and other attacks for which it is now well known.”<sup>15</sup> There is also evidence that shows that Hamas’ social institutions are fronts for terror activities that are directed from the Hamas leadership. “Inside the Palestinian territories, the battery of mosques, schools, orphanages, summer camps, and sports leagues are integral parts of an overarching apparatus.”<sup>16</sup> These fronts, according to Levitt, engage in incitement, recruitment, and

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<sup>13</sup> Michael Herzog, “Can Hamas Be Tamed?”

<sup>14</sup> Matthew Levitt, *Hamas: Politics, Charity and Terrorism in the Service of Jihad* p.23

<sup>15</sup> Matthew Levitt, *Hamas: Politics, Charity and Terrorism in the Service of Jihad* p.11

<sup>16</sup> Matthew Levitt, “Hamas from Cradle to Grave,” *Middle East Quarterly*, (Winter 2004) pp. 3-15.

logistical and operational support for weapon's smuggling, reconnaissance and suicide bombings. Many Hamas operatives even take cover by working within the group's charity systems. All of these factors support the words of Yoav Biran, director general of the Israeli Foreign Ministry, "There is only one Hamas, and it is a terrorist organization. Its social fund is a mechanism to transfer money to terrorist activity."<sup>17</sup>

Some scholars believe that Hizbullah is not a terrorist organization and that in many cases they are actually provoked by Israel. Omer Mohammed discusses Hizbullah's alleged terrorist attacks on Israel over the past decade. Israel claims that "Hizbullah fighters entered Israeli territory and captured two additional Israeli soldiers."<sup>18</sup> Mohammed claims that Israel is not being honest. The Israeli soldiers were captured within Lebanon, while performing a covert undercover mission, but yet this event was made out to be a terrorist attack on Israel.

According to the scholar Mona Harb, Hizbullah has been declared an archetypical terrorist organization by the United States and Israel.<sup>19</sup> Former CIA director George Tenet told Congress that Hizbullah, as an "organization with the capability and world wide presence is Al Qaeda's equal, if not a far more capable organization."<sup>20</sup> To support his indictment against Hizbullah, he pointed to the organization's involvement in a series of terrorist acts and activities. Many scholars including Tom Diaz and Barbara Newman agree with Tenet's claims that the acts of the bombing of the Marine barracks and U.S. embassy in Beirut and the attacks on the Israeli embassy in Buenos Aires are sufficient

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<sup>17</sup> Jeroen Gunning, "Peace with Hamas? The transforming Potential of Political Participation," *International Affairs*, Vol. 80, No.2 (Spring 2004), pp. 233-255.

<sup>18</sup> Omer Mohammed, "Lebanon and Gaza: Pawns of Power", *Washington Report on Middle Eastern Affairs*, Vol.25, No. 7 (Oct 2006).

<sup>19</sup> Mona Harb & Rinoud Leenders, "Know thy enemy: Hizbullah, terrorism and the politics of perception," *Third World Quarterly*, Vol. 26, No. 1 (2005).

<sup>20</sup> Mona Harb & Rinoud Leenders, "Know thy enemy: Hizbullah, terrorism and the politics of perception," *Third World Quarterly*, Vol. 26, No. 1 (2005).

reasons to believe they are a terrorist organization. Tenet also claims that Hizbullah officials have met with Al Qaeda members at Hizbullah's training camps in Southern Lebanon. Lastly, Hizbullah supplies arms and logistical – financial support to Palestinian groups, including Hamas.

Hizbullah describes it self in a way that justifies its critics' opinions. Secretary-General Hassan Nasrallah told a crowd that Hizbullah's slogan is "Death to America," while justifying suicide bomb attacks against Israel. Hizbullah justifies these attacks by claiming that "there are no citizens in the Zionist entity all of them are aggressors and participants in the onslaught against the Palestinian people."<sup>21</sup> According to Harb and Tenet, this justifies Hizbullah as one of the most dangerous terrorist's organizations in Americas fight against terror. Harb suggests that the labeling of Hizbullah as both a terrorist organization and, conversely, as a Lebanonised political force about, to make the conversion into an unarmed political party, is incorrect because it does not fully grasp the complexity of Hizbullah.

The scholars Tom Diaz and Barbara Newman believe that Hizbullah is a terrorist organization because of Hizbullah's countless attacks on U.S. military personnel and civilians.<sup>22</sup> When they describe Hizbullah's activities they use subjective language, which insinuates that Hizbullah is a terrorist organization. They also associate them with the most hated terrorist group in America, which is Al Qaeda. They claim that "Al Qaeda members received advice and training from Hezbollah."<sup>23</sup> By linking them with Al Qaeda, they are showing us that Hizbullah is a terrorist organization and affiliates with

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<sup>21</sup> Mona Harb & Rinoud Leenders, "Know thy enemy: Hizbullah, terrorism and the politics of perception," *Third World Quarterly*, Vol. 26, No. 1 (2005).

<sup>22</sup> Tom Diaz and Barbara Newman, *Lighting Out of Lebanon* pp. 5.

<sup>23</sup> Tom Diaz and Barbara Newman, *Lighting Out of Lebanon* pp. 4.

the number one terrorist organization in the eyes of the U.S. In the book *Lighting Out of Lebanon* the authors are trying to put across the idea that Hizbullah is a threat to the United States. *Lighting Out of Lebanon's* main idea is to prove to us that there are “even more hidden layers of Hezbollah’s dark enterprise [that] lie undetected, coiled to strike in America.”<sup>24</sup>

Many scholars however are not satisfied with Hizbullah’s terrorist label. Hizbullah has not performed a terrorist act against the United States since 1985; today it is just merely a tool of the Iranian government. Due to all of the terrorist accusations, Hizbullah has been trying to clear its name by denying involvement in the Argentine bombings, the bombings of the U.S marine barracks, and links with Al Qaeda, while repeatedly condemning the acts of September 11<sup>th</sup>. Hizbullah also denied all international ties claiming that their operations are not global but confined to Lebanon and the Israeli- Palestinian conflict. Hizbullah’s participation in the Lebanese political system led many scholars to claim that Hizbullah is becoming Lebanonised, which means that Hizbullah is in a process, in which their political activities are slowly becoming purely civilian. It is becoming widely accepted that Hizbullah is becoming less radical. Another factor in the lebanonisation of Hizbullah is that they are able to operate successfully as a political party. If one accepts this view they must also accept the claims that Hizbullah’s military branch has no influence over their social and political branches.

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<sup>24</sup> Tom Diaz and Barbara Newman, *Lighting Out of Lebanon* pp. 4.

### Chapter three: Hamas and Hizbullah

There has been ambiguity attached to the term terrorist in reference to the fight against terror. According to the United States Department of Defense, “terrorism is the calculated use of violence or the threat of violence to inculcate fear; intended to coerce or to intimidate governments or societies in the pursuit of goals that are generally political, religious, or ideological.”<sup>25</sup> In my opinion this is not an adequate definition of terrorism. The definition of terrorism I will use is from Boaz Ganor. Ganor defines terrorism as the deliberate use of violence against civilians in order to achieve political ends. Using this definition of terrorism justifies guerrilla warfare on military personnel as not being an act of terrorism. When using the word terrorist or terrorist organization one must remember that it is a subjective term. The party is called terrorist but almost always describes themselves as freedom fighters. The definition of a freedom fighter is “a person who takes part in a resistance movement against an oppressive political or social establishment.”<sup>26</sup>

With the definitions of terrorism and freedom fighters clarified, I believe that Hamas is not a terrorist organization, but they are freedom fighters, who are rebelling against the constituted authority (Israel) in Palestine. Hamas does not have the make up of a terrorist organization, but they represent the rebellion against a suppressor. Hamas has many aspects to their organization, political, social and military branches, which all serve the best welfare of the people. Hamas is not a terrorist organization because they are a legitimate government that was elected democratically in January 2006. They have a system for social services, which benefit their community, do not have corruption

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<sup>25</sup> “U.S Department of Defense”, [www.defenselink.mil/](http://www.defenselink.mil/)

<sup>26</sup> “Merriam Webster Online”, [www.webster.com/](http://www.webster.com/)

among their politicians and they represent the nationalist aspirations of the Palestinian people.

Hamas should be recognized as a legitimate government mainly because it was democratically elected into office in January 2006. Hamas won 74 of 132 seats in Palestinian Legislative Council, beating out the ruling party, Fatah, which put Hamas in charge of the Palestinian government. The people in Palestine voted for Hamas and the will of the Palestinian people should be respected. The United States and the West are being hypocritical in their denial to recognize the legitimacy of Hamas as a government, “After all President Bush and his gang of neoconservative ideologues have been preaching that democracy in the Middle East will lead to Peace.”<sup>27</sup> If President Bush and his Western counterparts have been pushing democracy, why are they not respecting the will of the people in Palestine? The answer to this question is an easy one, “Democracy is good, in Mr. Bush’s view only if it elects the people he wants in office. The choice of the Palestinian majority, expressed in what all the observers said was a free and fair election, is not acceptable to Mr. Bush.”<sup>28</sup> In the United States, we respect the will of the people and I feel that we should offer the Palestinians the same respect, no matter how unpopular Hamas may be in the United States’ eyes. Hamas fits all the categories that define a democracy, plus they took the majority of the parliamentary votes, which says that they are a popular force. Hamas is a government for the people this concept constitutes their popularity.

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<sup>27</sup> Charley Reese, “Hamas and Democracy,” *Washington Report on Middle East Affairs*, Vol. 25, No.3 (Spring 2006), pp. 16.

<sup>28</sup> Charley Reese, “Hamas and Democracy,” *Washington Report on Middle East Affairs*, pp. 16.

Hamas runs on and gains most of its political support from its social works. When members run for office “maybe some will...say, Vote for me; I look forward to blowing up America, Bush said. But...I think people who generally run for office say, Vote for me, I’m looking forward to fixing your potholes or making sure you’ve got bread on the table.”<sup>29</sup> Hamas offers an abundance of social works such as construction of “mosques, schools, educational activities... to children and youth from kindergarten through primary and secondary school and all the way to postsecondary education. Hamas also works closely with graduates of Islamic universities and colleges in both the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.”<sup>30</sup> These locations are the two strong holds of Hamas, as shown in Appendix 1. Hamas strictly follows Islamic teachings such the “Zakat [which] is one of the five basic principles of Islam. Hamas diligently and in some cases, forcibly collects this tithe from its supporters in the West Bank and Gaza.”<sup>31</sup> They use this money to help support their works of charity. For example, a member of Hamas was quoted as saying “We helped him buy books for four hundred dinars for the library and bought a photocopying machine for 4,000 [Israeli] shekels and saw to it that it was taken to the library.”<sup>32</sup> Many of the people, who support Hamas, do so just because of the benefits of their social work, and with out any other knowledge of the organization. “As the mother of ten children and a recipient of Hamas aid told a reporter, all we know is they are the ones who bring us food.”<sup>33</sup> The previously discussed social welfare programs of Hamas,

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<sup>29</sup> Michael Hirsh and Dan Ephron, “Terror and Democracy,” *News Week*, Vol. 145, No.25 (Spring, 2005), pp.38.

<sup>30</sup> Matthew Levitt, “Hamas from Cradle to Grave,” *Middle East Quarterly*, (Winter, 2004), pp. 3-15.

<sup>31</sup> Aaron Mannes, *Profiles in Terror: The Guide to Middle East Terrorist Organizations* (Maryland, 2004), pp. 126.

<sup>32</sup> Matthew Levitt, “Hamas from Cradle to Grave,” *Middle East Quarterly*, (Winter, 2004), pp. 3-15.

<sup>33</sup> Matthew Levitt, “Hamas from Cradle to Grave,” *Middle East Quarterly*, (Winter, 2004), pp. 3-15.

paired with its honesty and loyalty, gives it the credibility that is necessary in order for it to be considered a legitimate government.

Hamas' honesty and loyalty towards the community, paired with the decline in popularity of the PLO, due to its corruption, helped Hamas to gain victory in the past Parliamentary elections. The PLO has been losing popularity in Palestine over the past decade. When describing the situation of the PLO Richard Curtis says Yasir "Arafat created one of the most ill-disciplined corrupt and ineffective organizations ever to be taken seriously on the world stage. Despite the pull of loyalty in tough conditions, Palestinians were losing faith in Fatah through the 1990s."<sup>34</sup> The PLO also did not fulfill its duties to the people politically by creating an official Palestine State or socially by helping the welfare of his people. According to Richard Curtis of the *Washington Report on Middle Eastern Affairs*:

Arafat was corrupt, and could not deliver on a Palestinian state. Hamas is honest, effective and holds firm. As Palestinians watched Arafat dither and Abbas fail, they lost any faith that Fatah has a path – by force or by negotiations – to get them a state. And meanwhile their daily life was getting worse and worse while their leaders drove around in Mercedes cars.<sup>35</sup>

These allegations of corruption by the PLO are well documented. Arafat "has skimmed off portions of these funds [funds that were given to aid Palestine], as he has with monies

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<sup>34</sup> Richard Curtis, "Caught by Surprise. Again; Arafat created one of the most ill disciplined corrupt and ineffective organizations ever to be taken seriously on the world stage," *The Washington Report on Middle Eastern Affairs*, Vol.147, No.6 (Summer, 2005), pp.32.

<sup>35</sup> Richard Curtis, "Caught by Surprise. Again; Arafat created one of the most ill disciplined corrupt and ineffective organizations ever to be taken seriously on the world stage," *The Washington Report on Middle Eastern Affairs*, Vol.147, No.6 (Summer, 2005), pp.32.

given to him on behalf of refugees in the camps.”<sup>36</sup> The PLO under Arafat also stunted the Palestinian economy’s growth, leaving the “Palestinians to live in dismal conditions.”<sup>37</sup> Arafat claimed that he had a free market economy in Palestine but in actuality “he is running a command economy, dominated by state-run monopolies and choked by corruption and favoritism.”<sup>38</sup> This command economy was put in place because “the PLO and the PA are more interested in improving the lifestyles of their VIPs. They have become corrupt. But no one has ever heard of any corruption in the institutions that belong to Hamas or that sympathize with Hamas.”<sup>39</sup> This view of the PLO and the newly found trust in Hamas, led many to feel that “today’s PLO, with all its members, committees and institutions, is outdated, redundant and impotent.”<sup>40</sup> The PLO’s corruption has also led it to lose its “attractiveness, respect and much of its credibility.”<sup>41</sup> This is why the people “see a Hamas victory giving the Palestinians a more responsive less corrupt government.”<sup>42</sup>

Hamas is a government that represents the wishes of the people. Hamas will not sell its people out to be on the United States pay roll, in order to take the more moderate stand that the United States would prefer. According to Reese, the United States and the West buy alliances, “the only friends we have in the Middle East are the rulers we pay to be

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<sup>36</sup> Rachel Ehrenfeld, “Intifada gives cover to Arafat’s graft and fraud,” *Insight on the News*, Vol. 17, No. 26 (Summer, 2001), pp 44.

<sup>37</sup> Rachel Ehrenfeld, “Intifada gives cover to Arafat’s graft and fraud,” *Insight on the News*, Vol. 17, No. 26 (Summer, 2001), pp. 44.

<sup>38</sup> Sharon Moshavi, “You Call this a Free Market? ; Arafat shares the blame for a Palestinian economy in tatters,” *Business Week*, (Spring, 1997), pp. 58.

<sup>39</sup> Grace Halsell, “Palestinian Islamist Azzam Tamimi Defines Hamas, PLO Differences and Calls for Dialogue with Both,” *Washington Report on Middle East Affairs*, Vol.17, No.8 (Winter, 1998) pp. 23.

<sup>40</sup> Jabr Samah, “New Hamas Government Trumps Old PLO,” *Washington Report on Middle East Affairs*, Vol. 25, No.4 (Spring, 2006), pp 13.

<sup>41</sup> Jabr Samah, “New Hamas Government Trumps Old PLO,” *Washington Report on Middle East Affairs*, Vol. 25, No.4 (Spring, 2006), pp 13.

<sup>42</sup> Mohammed Omer, “Hamas Scores Majorities in Gaza Municipal Council Elections,” *Washington Report on Middle East Affairs*, Vol.24, No.5 (Summer, 2005), pp. 14.

our friends,”<sup>43</sup> Reese then makes reference to Egypt, Jordan, and the Saudis because they are all on the Western pay roll in some way or another. This is why Hamas gained “a dominant public position...by committing itself to promote Palestinian national interests, while at the same time maintaining its allegiance to an Islamic vision.”<sup>44</sup>

To understand how Hamas represents the wishes of the people, one must understand the current occupation of Palestine by the Israelis and the failure of the Israelis to allow a Palestinian State. “Hamas is an acronym that stands for the Islamic Resistance Movement”<sup>45</sup> which is a “Jihadi (fighting for a holy purpose) movement in the broad sense of the word Jihad.”<sup>46</sup> Ahmad Rashad claims Hamas the people because they believe “that all the land of Palestine is Muslim,”<sup>47</sup> Hamas wants to free “the Palestinian people, delivering them from the occupying usurper, and to stand up to the Zionist scheme which is supported by neo-colonist forces.”<sup>48</sup> Hamas believes “that the conflict with the Zionists in Palestine is a conflict of survival. It is a conflict of civilization and determination that can not be brought to an end unless its cause the Zionist settlement in Palestine, usurpation of its land and the displacement of its people is removed.”<sup>49</sup> Hamas holds the urge to unite the lands of Palestine, to free the people from refugee camps and to have their own Palestinian State and economy which are all desires of the people of Palestine

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<sup>43</sup> Charley Reese, “Hamas and Democracy,” *Washington Report on Middle East Affairs*, Vol. 25, No.3 (Spring, 2006), pp. 16.

<sup>44</sup> Shaul Mishal, “The Pragmatic Dimension of the Palestinian Hamas: A Network Perspective,” *Armed Forces & Society*, Vol.29, No.4 (Summer, 2003), pp. 569-589.

<sup>45</sup> Isaac Cronin, *Confronting Fear: A History of Terrorism* (New York, 2002), pp. 298.

<sup>46</sup> Isaac Cronin, *Confronting Fear: A History of Terrorism* (New York, 2002), pp. 298.

<sup>47</sup> Ahmad Rashad, “Special Report: Hamas; The History of the Islamic Opposition Movement in Palestine,” *The Washington Report on Middle East Affairs*, Vol. 11, No.8 (Spring, 1993), pp. 37.

<sup>48</sup> Hamas, *Israel’s Occupation of Palestine Causes Terrorism* (New York, 2004), pp. 100-101.

<sup>49</sup> Hamas, *Israel’s Occupation of Palestine Causes Terrorism* (New York, 2004), pp. 100-101.

and the Islamic world. The shared desire between Hamas and the Palestinian people makes it a true democracy, which in definition is a government for the people.

Many people would claim that Hamas' attacks on Israel are terrorist attacks, but this is not the case. Going back to the previously mentioned definition of terrorism, which states terrorism as the deliberate use of violence against civilians in order to achieve political ends, proves Hamas is not a terrorist organization. This is the case because Israel itself was taken from the Palestinians. Hamas claims that there are no Israeli citizens. Thus, Hamas and the Palestinian people view all Israelis as being enemies because they are occupiers of the Palestinian land. This justifies the attacks against Israel, not as terror attacks, but as guerilla warfare, which is meant to help liberate the Palestinian people from the oppression and occupation of the Zionist entity.

Referring back to the Boaz Gannor definition of terrorism, Hizbullah originally was a terrorist organization because of their deliberate use of violence against civilians in order to achieve political ends. Two of Hizbullah's most famous terrorist attacks were two bombings of Argentina in 1992 and 1994. In 1992 "The Israeli embassy in Buenos Aires was struck by a suicide bomber, killing 29. And on July 18, 1994, another powerful bomb destroyed the main building of the Associations Mutualista Israelita. Argentina (AMIA) on a busy street in downtown Buenos Aires. That bomb killed 86 and wounded 300, the greatest loss of Jewish life in a terrorist incident outside Israel since the Second World War."<sup>50</sup> The civilian attacks in Argentina, performed by Hizbullah, were a few of many terrorist attacks that Hizbullah has carried out. Hizbullah is also known for carrying out acts that involved the hijacking and kidnapping of civilians. Before Hizbullah's most recent War with Israel, it was also known for its attacks on U.S. military personnel.

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<sup>50</sup> Tom Diaz and Barbara Newman, *Lighting Out of Lebanon* pp 6.

Hizbullah actually “holds the record for terrorist killings of U.S. military personnel with the murders of 241 U.S marines, sailors, and soldiers.”<sup>51</sup> This infamous “terrorist” was attack was performed by Hizbullah against the U.S. Marine Corp barracks in 1983.

According to Tom Diaz and Barbara Newman in *Lighting Out of Lebanon*, these attacks performed by Hizbullah, are acts of terrorism. They even went as far to refer to President Regan’s withdrawal from Beirut as being an act of caving under pressure “from an obscure band of terrorists.”<sup>52</sup> According to Boaz Gannors definition of terrorism, attacks on U.S. military personnel like what occurred in Beirut cannot be considered a terrorist attack because it was against military personnel rather than a civilian target.

Even though Hizbullah started out as a terrorist organization it has changed its identity and is currently no longer a terrorist organization. Hizbullah has not committed a terrorist act in over a decade.<sup>53</sup> Today Hizbullah is a local group that only takes part in the armed rebellion against Israel. Hizbullah also serves as a political force in Lebanese politics while giving large amounts of aid to the population of Lebanon through its social service programs.

Hizbullah is not a terrorist organization because it is a resistance party that fights solely against Israel. The U.S. currently lists Hizbullah as a terrorist organization which is not accurate. Hizbullah has not committed any international attacks since 1994; they have only channeled their energy to into fighting Israeli forces in southern Lebanon and aiding others against the transgressions of Israel. Edward Walker, president of the Middle East Institute, feels that Hizbullah has “attacked civilians in the past. What their terrorist

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<sup>51</sup> Tom Diaz and Barbara Newman, *Lighting Out of Lebanon* pp 5.

<sup>52</sup> Tom Diaz and Barbara Newman, *Lighting Out of Lebanon* pp. 12.

<sup>53</sup> Aaron Mannes, *Profiles in Terror: The Guide to Middle East Terrorist Organizations* (Maryland, 2004), pp.176.

activity is now, I don't know. The State Department still seems to think that they are engaged in civilian attacks- that's what they say. But they haven't given any evidence. Proof is required... if any group is to be accused of terrorism. The State Department should indicate what it is that Hizbullah has been doing to warrant inclusion on that list."<sup>54</sup>

Hizbullah also denies that it is a terrorist organization. According to Abdullah Qassir, who is a representative for the Shia Muslim Hizbullah organization in the Lebanese parliament, "Hizbullah is known in the region as a resistance party. We were never a terrorist group."<sup>55</sup> As a party, Hizbullah describes themselves a group that fights Israeli occupation but following the events of September 11, Hizbullah has been analyzed more as being a terrorist organization. Hizbullah has increased efforts to shrug off the terrorist label applied by its opponents. Hizbullah has denied the individual charges:

By strongly denying its involvement in the Argentine bombings and by rejecting responsibility for the U.S embassy and marine barracks bombings and the kidnappings in the 1980s. Hizbullah also fervently denied any links with Al-Qaeda and repeatedly condemned the bombing of the Twin Towers... It refuted allegations that it is running training camps for Palestinian militants.<sup>56</sup>

Hizbullah has also denied that it is a global organization, stating that it is confined to Lebanon and the Israeli – Palestinian conflict, while also denying any accusations of being a threat to the United States.

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<sup>54</sup> Nicholas Blanford, "Freedom fighters or terrorists", *Christian Science Monitor*, Vol. 93, No.246 (September,2001).

<sup>55</sup> Nicholas Blanford, "Freedom fighters or terrorists", *Christian Science Monitor*, Vol. 93, No.246 (September, 2001).

<sup>56</sup> Mona Harb & Rinoud Leenders, "Know thy enemy: Hizbullah, terrorism and the politics of perception," *Third World Quarterly*, Vol. 26, No. 1 (2005).

Another reason why Hizbullah is not a terrorist organization is that it is a political party. In the general election of 2005, it won 14 seats nationwide (of 128 total), and an Amal-Hezbollah alliance won all 23 seats in Southern Lebanon. Hizbullah has a large amount of clout as a political entity. This is why people look to Hizbullah's participation in the Lebanese political system as the party becoming Lebanonised, "which is a reference to the process of normalization of its political activities and gradual transformation into a purely civilian political party accommodated by the Lebanese political system."<sup>57</sup> Many authors believe that Hizbullah has given up radical violence and has taken up a "political Jihad."<sup>58</sup> Hizbullah also uses its political system to represent the needs and desires of the people in Lebanon. The second aspect of lebanonisation that is visible in Hizbullah is that it is starting to channel its ideological ambitions through its political party instead of acts of violence. Politically, Hizbullah represents the needs of the people through their desires to form an Islamic government, which will abolish the abhorred sectarian discrimination and achieve justice among all citizens. The occupation of Lebanon, by Israel helped to foster a dislike for the Zionist entity within the community, and Hizbullah takes full advantage of this sentiment. Hizbullah, being the only Islamic group to defeat Israel in 2000, speaks for the people of Lebanon in their ideology that "Our (Hizbullah's) confrontation with this entity (Israel) must end with its obliteration from existence."<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>57</sup> Mona Harb & Rinoud Leenders, "Know thy enemy: Hizbullah, terrorism and the politics of perception," *Third World Quarterly*, Vol. 26, No. 1 (2005).

<sup>58</sup> Mona Harb & Rinoud Leenders, "Know thy enemy: Hizbullah, terrorism and the politics of perception".

<sup>59</sup> Mona Harb & Rinoud Leenders, "Know thy enemy: Hizbullah, terrorism and the politics of perception".

Hizbullah, like Hamas, is known and admired in Lebanon for its extensive social work within its community. Hizbullah provides and maintains hospitals, civil defense centers, supermarkets and media outlets. Hizbullah also heads other institutions which provide jobs to many in the community. After the recent Israeli-Hizbullah war, Hizbullah has made an effort to rebuild the community. Hodroj a man of age 72 who lives in Beirut, describes how Israeli missiles destroyed his home. Hodroj describes how a representative from Hizbullah came and gave him \$12,000 in \$100 dollar bills. It was meant to pay for a years rent and furniture while Hizbullah builds him a new home. When asked if he supported Hizbullah, Hodroj said “we’re with Hizbullah all the way.”<sup>60</sup> Hizbullah has already handed out grants to over 15,000 homeless families, while pledging to rebuild apartment buildings and entire villages within three years. Many of the residents say “Hizbullah is the only group they trust to help. It’s our government.”<sup>61</sup> Hizbullah gives aid to many of the poor Shiites across southern Lebanon. Many receive charity from Hizbullah without knowing anything about the people that help them. This is one of the many reasons Hizbullah is able to gain support from the community. The true soldiers of Hizbullah are the social workers who help “cover medical bills, offer health insurance, pay school fees and make seed money available for small businesses. They provide essential services that the Lebanese government through years of war was incapable of offering.”<sup>62</sup> The presence of Hizbullah in the community is immense because many of the members are doctors, teachers and farmers which gives the group a civil base which endears them to Hizbullah.

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<sup>60</sup> Nicholas Blanford, “The War for Hearts and Minds,” *Time*, September 6, 2006.

<sup>61</sup> Nicholas Blanford, “The War for Hearts and Minds”.

<sup>62</sup> Nicholas Blanford, “The War for Hearts and Minds”.

Others will look to Hizbullah's recent Katysusha attacks on Northern Israel and say they were acts of terrorism. This is clearly not the case; they were actually acts of self defense against an aggressive and oppressive Israel. Israel claims that Hizbullah kidnapped their soldiers from Israel, thus justifying their attacks on Lebanon and condemning the acts of retaliation by Hizbullah. In actuality the Israeli soldiers were captured in Lebanese territory. In many cases, Hizbullah has not been the aggressor, but the defender against Israel. Sheikh Nasrallah feels, that in many cases, the West, mainly America and Israel, are the true terrorists. "We believe that the American administration has always exercised terrorist and aggressive policies and backed terrorist groups and regimes."<sup>63</sup> Sheikh Nasrallah points to the training of Osama bin Laden and his mujahadeen in Afghanistan and the United States past support for Saddam Hussein's regime as evidence. Furthermore, Nasrallah believes that the United States is in no position to categorize terrorism, since they support terrorist groups such as Israel.

Hamas and Hizbullah are not terrorist organizations. They are both resistance organizations, which fight against the occupation and oppression of Israel. Hizbullah and Hamas are legitimate because they both represent the will of the people through a democratically elected parliament. They also give aid to the people in their respective regions, providing them with shelter, food, education and other necessities they would lack without some sort of aid. Both organizations have a military which represents the will of the people. Hamas' military fights to gain back what they call greater Palestine, while defending the West Bank and Gaza strip from Israeli oppression, while Hizbullah fights to keep Israeli soldiers out of Lebanon. When asked about Hizbullah, a Lebanese

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<sup>63</sup> Nicholas Blanford, "Hizbullah chief offers carrot, stick," *Christian Science Monitor*, Vol.95, No.172 (July, 2003).

man said, “There are doctors, teachers and farmers. Hizbullah is the people. People are Hizbullah.”<sup>64</sup> This quote can account for Hamas as well because they both are organizations that are for the people and run by the people, they are both democracies.

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<sup>64</sup> Sabrina Tavernise, “Charity wins deep loyalty for Hezbollah,” *New York Times*, August 6, 2006.

## Chapter four: Opposing Views

Even though many people believe Hamas and Hizbullah are freedom fighters many also believe that they are terrorist groups. My thesis has its limitations. The main one is the subjectivity of the term terrorist. According to Sorel, the term terrorist is used to justify the opposition of a resistance group. If this resistance group is victorious they are liberators.<sup>65</sup> The problem with my thesis is that a different definition of terrorism may not agree with some of the points that support it. The second weakness in my paper is the idea of civilians. I am using the premise that Hamas can perform attacks on civilians because they are occupying their land, and because of this they are not actually civilians.

Many of Hamas' opponents claim that Hamas is a terrorist organization which uses its charitable branch as a front. These scholars claim that Hamas' charitable works are rooted in terrorism. According to the Sharon government, there is no difference between "the political and military wing, or between Hamas' resistance activities and its welfare network."<sup>66</sup> In the words of Yoav Biran, director general of the Israeli Foreign Ministry, "There is only one Hamas, and it is a terrorist organization. Its social fund is a mechanism to transfer money to terrorist activity."<sup>67</sup>

Scholar Matthew Levitt supports the idea that Hamas is three branch organization in which the charity and political branches are in place to help empower the terrorist/military branch. Levitt claims that there is evidence that Hamas's charity

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<sup>65</sup> Jean- Marc Sorel, "Some Questions About the Definition of Terrorism and the Fight Against Its Financing," *European Journal of International Law*, Vol. 14, No. 2 (September, 2003), pp. 365.

<sup>66</sup> Jeroen Gunning, "Peace with Hamas? The transforming Potential of Political Participation," *International Affairs*, Vol. 80, No.2 (Spring, 2004), pp. 233-255.

<sup>67</sup> Jeroen Gunning, "Peace with Hamas? The transforming Potential of Political Participation," *International Affairs*, Vol. 80, No.2 (Spring, 2004), pp. 233-255.

organizations have had a role in the terror activities directed and authorized by Hamas leaders:

Inside the Palestinian territories, the battery of mosques, schools, orphanages, summer camps, and sports leagues are integral parts of an overarching apparatus. They engage in incitement, recruitment, and logistical and operation support for weapons smuggling, reconnaissance, and suicide bombings. They provide day jobs for field commanders and shelter fugitive operatives. They socialize even the youngest children to aspire to die as martyrs.<sup>68</sup>

Matthew Levitt also gives examples. He claims that Hamas uses their hospitals as a means for terror attacks. In one instance, Hamas recruited Dr. Mustafa Amjad to help infiltrate suicide bombers into Israel from the Jenin area. Levitt even claims that Hamas officials use schools as safe house for arms and explosives. These examples are intended to show Levitt's thesis, which is, that "Hamas has established charitable organizations in order to camouflage its true nature. These charitable organizations raise funds abroad, supposedly to aid orphans, but in fact they use the contributions to purchase explosives."<sup>69</sup> Some scholars point to Hamas' use of suicide bombings and attacks on civilians to why it is a primary example of a terrorist group. They claim that Hamas is an organization of Islamic radicals that try to destroy the every day lives of innocent members of society. All of these aspects combine to make a terrorist organization in the eyes of many scholars.

Scholars, Tom Diaz and Barbara Newman, believe that Hizbullah is a terrorist organization because of Hizbullah's countless attacks on U.S. military personnel and

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<sup>68</sup> Matthew Levitt, "Hamas from Cradle to Grave," *Middle East Quarterly*, (Winter, 2004) pp. 3-15.

<sup>69</sup> Matthew Levitt, "Hamas from Cradle to Grave," *Middle East Quarterly*, (Winter, 2004) pp. 3-15.

civilians.<sup>70</sup> Diaz and Newman claim that Hizbullah's attacks in Argentina and on the U.S. marine barracks are prime examples on how dangerous Hizbullah is. Diaz and Newman also link Hizbullah with Al Qaeda. They claim that "Al Qaeda members received advice and training from Hezbollah."<sup>71</sup>

Others believe that Hizbullah is a terrorist organization for their suicide bombings and other attacks against Israel. According to the scholar Mona Harb, Hizbullah has been declared an archetypical terrorist organization by the United States and Israel.<sup>72</sup> Former CIA director George Tenet told Congress that Hizbullah is an "organization with capability and worldwide presence, [Hizbullah] is Al Qaeda's equal, if not a far more capable organization."<sup>73</sup> According to the Scholar Daniel Byman, "Both Hizbullah's terrorist actions and its guerrilla warfare are facilitated by the group's extensive international network. Hizbullah operatives have been found in France, Spain, Cyprus, Singapore, the "triborder" region of South America, and the Philippines, as well as in more familiar operational theaters in Europe and the Middle East."<sup>74</sup> Tenet also supports the claims of scholars Tom Diaz and Barbara Newman that the acts of the bombing of the Marine barracks and U.S. embassy in Beirut and the attacks on the Israeli embassy in Buenos Aires, are all reasons to believe it is a terrorist organization. Tenet also states that Hizbullah is a terrorist organization because Hizbullah supplies arms and logistical – financial support to Palestinian groups, including Hamas. In October 2000, Hizbullah provided "guerrilla training, bomb-building expertise, propaganda, and tactical tips to

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<sup>70</sup> Tom Diaz and Barbara Newman, *Lighting Out of Lebanon* pp. 5.

<sup>71</sup> Tom Diaz and Barbara Newman, *Lighting Out of Lebanon* pp 4.

<sup>72</sup> Mona Harb & Rinoud Leenders, "Know thy enemy: Hizbullah, terrorism and the politics of perception," *Third World Quarterly*, Vol. 26, No. 1 (2005).

<sup>73</sup> Mona Harb & Rinoud Leenders, "Know thy enemy: Hizbullah, terrorism and the politics of perception," *Third World Quarterly*, Vol. 26, No. 1 (2005).

<sup>74</sup> Daniel Byman, "Should Hezbollah be next?," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol.82, No.6 (November 2003).

Hamas, Palestinian Islamic Jihad, and other anti-Israeli groups.”<sup>75</sup> Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage best summed up what all of the previously mentioned scholars were trying to say when he warned of Hizbullah’s “lethality, noting that Hizbullah may be the A team of terrorists," while "al Qaeda is actually the B team.”<sup>76</sup>

Even though the scholars Gunning, Levitt and others have made valid points about Hamas as a terrorist organization, I believe they are incorrect. Hamas is not a terrorist organization because it does not use the money it gains for charity to fund its military wing, which is a widely held accusation. Hamas’ charity organization is designed to benefit the people in the community. Hamas builds schools, hospitals and libraries for their community, these buildings are for the sole benefit of the community for which they are built. Levitt claims that one reason that Hamas’ charitable branch is a front for the terrorist branch is that the charitable branch employs workers, who participate in the “terrorist” branch. I disagree with this statement because the members of Hamas’ so called “terrorist” branch are citizens of Palestine, who are also members of the military. Being that they are members of the community and members of Hamas, they have an interest in Palestine’s well being, so it behooves them to try and aid their community through social works.

Hamas justifies their use of suicide attacks by saying “the method of delivery is irrelevant...The Israelis deliver [their] bombs from air plains, helicopters and artillery tubes. Since [we] the Palestinians are denied modern weapons, [we] have to walk or drive [our] bombs to targets. Morally there is no difference whatsoever between bombs

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<sup>75</sup> Daniel Byman, “Should Hezbollah be next?,” *Foreign Affairs*, Vol.82, No.6 (November 2003).

<sup>76</sup> Daniel Byman, “Should Hezbollah be next?,” *Foreign Affairs*, Vol.82, No.6 (November 2003).

delivered by air or by foot.”<sup>77</sup> Hamas also disagrees with the argument that the targeting of military and civilian personal is terrorism:

Hamas members cite United Nations General Assembly Resolution No. 2649, which affirms the legitimacy of the struggle of people under colonial and alien domination recognized as being entitled to the right of self-determination to restore to themselves that right by any means at their disposal. Because Israel remains in violation of innumerable United Nations resolutions, Hamas feels that international law has been disregarded in the case of Palestinian affairs. Hamas therefore vows to maintain pressure on Israel and its military forces.<sup>78</sup>

According to Resolution No. 2649, Hamas has the right by any means to restore their self-determination. So therefore, their acts against Israel are not terrorist attacks by definition.

Some scholars believe Hizbullah is a terrorist organization. This belief has some validity because Hizbullah, at one point, was a terrorist organization, but some of their beliefs are incorrect. The scholars Tom Diaz and Barbara Newman claim that Hizbullah is a terrorist organization because of their attacks on the U.S. marine barracks. This is incorrect because Boaz Gannor’s definition of terrorism states that a terrorist attack must be against a civilian target. In this case Hizbullah attacked a military base. Hizbullah has denied the individual charges:

By strongly denying its involvement in the Argentine bombings and by rejecting responsibility for the U.S embassy and marine barracks bombings and the

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<sup>77</sup> Charley Reese, “Hamas and Democracy,” *Washington Report on Middle East Affairs*, Vol. 25, No.3 (Spring, 2006), pp 16.

<sup>78</sup> Ahmad Rashad, “Special Report: Hamas; The History of the Islamic Opposition Movement in Palestine,” *The Washington Report on Middle East Affairs*, Vol. 11, No.8 (Spring, 1993), pp. 37.

kidnappings in the 1980s. Hizbullah also fervently denied any links with Al-Qaeda and repeatedly condemned the bombing of the Twin Towers... It refuted allegations that it is running training camps for Palestinian militants.<sup>79</sup>

Hizbullah has also denied that it is a global organization, stating that it is confined to Lebanon and the Israeli – Palestinian conflict while also denying any accusations of being a threat to the United States. Others would look at Hizbullah and say that their attacks against Israel would make it a terrorist organization. I would disagree with this belief because the majority of the time, Israel is actually the aggressor, which strives to oppress those in Lebanon. We cannot label Hizbullah is a terrorist organization because they have not committed a terrorist act in over a decade. Currently they are more of a political organization which is dedicated to fighting the oppression of Israel.

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<sup>79</sup> Mona Harb & Rinoud Leenders, “Know thy enemy: Hizbullah, terrorism and the politics of perception,” *Third World Quarterly*, Vol. 26, No. 1 (2005).

## Chapter five: Conclusion

I believe that Hamas and Hizbullah are freedom fighters, who have been labeled as terrorists by those who have a vested interest in discrediting their cause. According to Sorel, “The expressions Terrorism and Terrorist have always had a pejorative connotation. In other words these expressions are used in order to oppose someone or something and to justify this opposition. This does not mean that the terrorist will be a terrorist forever. If they win, they will become liberators.”<sup>80</sup> Sorel uses a good example of this when he mentions the Occupation of France, in WW2, by Nazi Germany. Sorel says that “those who were called terrorists by the German occupying army suddenly became heroes of liberation, the Resistance fighters.”<sup>81</sup> In the eyes of the United States, Hamas is a terrorist organization only because they fight against her ally Israel, who currently occupies Palestinian lands. Israel is not defending itself, but they are actually the aggressors. Israel violates the borders of Palestine and Lebanon regularly, while executing attacks that usually result in high civilian casualties. Israel is the reason that there is a military branch of Hizbullah and Hamas. Both organizations represent the wants of the people, and they desire to better the economic situations of their people and their country. Hizbullah and Hamas were both elected in a fair election by the people. They both run hospitals, schools and give out aid to their respective communities. Stating these facts makes it clear that Hamas and Hizbullah better embody a democratic government and not a terrorist organization.

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<sup>80</sup> Jean- Marc Sorel, “Some Questions About the Definition of Terrorism and the Fight Against Its Financing,” *European Journal of International Law*, Vol. 14, No. 2 ( 2003), pp. 365.

<sup>81</sup> Jean- Marc Sorel, “Some Questions About the Definition of Terrorism and the Fight Against Its Financing,” *European Journal of International Law*, Vol. 14, No. 2 ( 2003), pp 365.

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