



# Syrian Terrorism and US Policy

*July 25, 1996*

*House International Relations Committee  
United States House of Representatives*

## **The Threat of Terrorism to Personal Security**

Good morning. As the country awaits final analysis of retrieved flight recorders from TWA Flight 800, we may soon know with certainty whether the devastating explosion last week off the coast of Long Island, New York was the product of a freak structural malfunction, an externally-implanted explosive device, or a surface-to-air missile or projectile. Whatever the results—even if the cause turns out to be a systemic flaw in the aircraft design or operation—we dare not lessen our vigilance about the proliferating threat of international terror. Indeed, the fact that we have accepted as distinctly plausible the scenario of a Stinger missile<sup>1</sup> being used against American civilian aircraft by terrorists on American soil shows that it is only a matter of time before such a horrific plot becomes a gruesome reality.

We now live in the age of terrorism and low-intensity conflict—a chronic state of low-level sub-conventional warfare that has rendered many societies more insecure than they felt during the Cold War. Ironically, the dissipation of the threat of mass annihilation from a Cold War-triggered nuclear exchange has given way to a new worldwide threat from independent groups operating with and without state sponsorship.<sup>2</sup> Precisely because Americans, as well as the rest of entire world—with the exception of Japan—did not experience or see close up the devastation wrought by nuclear explosions, the threat remained largely abstract. And because the specter of a nuclear exchange denoted total and absolute annihilation with no chance of survival, the average person on the street did not worry about his or her personal security. Terrorism, however, like violent crime, injects a high level of individual insecurity.

The onslaught of bloody terrorist outrages perpetrated worldwide in recent years has made far more lasting impressions upon the American public than the unseen specter of nuclear war ever

did. The list of such attacks is far too long to enumerate here, but a random selection of the most egregious include the bombings of Pan Am 103 over Lockerbie, Scotland in 1988 (killing 270 civilians on board and on the ground), the World Trade Center in 1993 (killing six and wounding more than 1000), the Albert P. Murrah building in Oklahoma City in 1995 (killing 167 and wounding more than 400), the AMIA Jewish center in Buenos Aires in 1994 (killing 96 people and wounding 130), a series of French targets in 1995 (killing a total of nine and wounding more than 100), American personnel stationed in Saudi Arabia in 1995 and 1996 (killing a collective total of 26 and wounding more than 280), four Israeli buses by suicide terrorists in 1996 (killing 59 and wounding more than 330), and targets in Great Britain in 1996 (killing two and wounding more than 100).

Nowadays, the fear of being the victim of terrorism affects our behavior and lifestyles more and more—restricting our movements outside and, to a lesser extent, inside the United States. Even though Americans have been subjected to a disproportionate share of worldwide terrorist attacks, the fact that most of these attacks—with the exception of the World Trade Center and Oklahoma City bombings—took place beyond our borders has lessened the personal impact on our lifestyles. However, other countries, such as Britain, France and Israel, have been afflicted with terrorism within their borders for many years.

Israel has experienced more terrorist attacks and has suffered more terrorist casualties per capita than any other country in the world.<sup>3</sup> The threat unleashed by the terrorists has become so personally diffused to the level of every citizen that a simple ride on a bus, a walk in a city street, a stop at a shopping mall, a visit to a millennia-old religious site or simply an outing to a park has become nerve-wracking at best and a nightmare at worst. Although the civilian victims of terror are selected at random by terrorists, the exact opposite is also true: victims are targeted by virtue of a particular nationality, religion or ethnicity—elementary human attributes equivalent to such in-born features as eye or hair color.

## **Terrorism as the Cornerstone of Syrian Viability**

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As this Committee, and hopefully the Congress at large, begins to focus on U.S. policy toward Syria, such an inquiry will also help to crystallize answers to the larger problem of worldwide terrorism. As one of the most aggressive supporters of international terrorist groups in the world today, the Syrian regime has become virtually synonymous with terrorism. Indeed, Syria employs terrorism as its most

frequent—and overwhelmingly successful—instrument of foreign policy. In fact, Syria's reliance upon terrorism is intrinsic to the regime's core identity and existence. *Were Syria to abandon terrorism, the regime of Hafez al-Assad would almost certainly collapse.* Assad's support of terrorism against Israel gives him particular strategic advantages that he cannot afford to lose. His sponsorship of the ten Palestinian rejectionist groups, including the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command (PFLP-GC), Hamas, and Islamic Jihad, gives him the opportunity to undercut Palestinian moderates, in particular PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat, whom he has long regarded with revulsion (despite meeting him on July 24 for the first time in 3 years). Assad's crucial interest in maintaining a violent confrontation with Israel—and the attendant diplomatic publicity and importance afforded him by the international community, especially the United States—allows him to anoint himself leader of the pan-Arab movement.

Recently, Syrian General Mustafa Tlas, Minister of Defense and number two to President Assad, delivered a speech to Syrian troops in Lebanon.<sup>4</sup> "Syria has become a center of international and Arab attention. Al-Assad's Syria now has the final say. It is also capable of foiling all conspiracies and aggressions against Arab rights..."

As the only Arab country bordering Israel willing to confront Israel violently, Assad remains a close ally of Iran and the Sudan—two of the other principal state supporters of worldwide terrorism. Most important, however, is Assad's ability to point out to his terrorist allies that Damascus alone has not only avoided sanctions and penalties from the West but has been openly and assiduously courted by the President and Secretary of State of the United States. The European prohibition on weapons sales to Syria has been lifted, removing one of the most powerful levers Europe held over Syria.

At present, Syria's economy is in shambles, its infrastructure in disrepair, its unemployment level in double digits, and its debt more than 40 billion dollars. No longer can it count on the former Soviet Union for rescue (either financial or political). Mr. Assad's only hope of surviving, both internally and externally, is through a systematic policy of instilling terror in his own population as well as in the population of Israel, Jordan and Turkey.

As is characteristic of other states that sponsor terrorism, Syria manifests similar features: it is a repressive dictatorship bent on squandering its precious few resources on acquiring the poor man's atomic bomb—chemical and biological weapons. The regime is prone to routine torture or murder of political prisoners, even liquidating thousands of civilians on a whim. In 1982, for example, Assad ordered the systematic destruction of the village of Hama, resulting in the slaughter of at least 25,000 Syrian civilians.

## Syria as a Rogue State

By all customary standards on terrorism, the existence of such overwhelming incriminating evidence should have earned Syria the designation of rogue state, similar to the designation appropriately applied to North Korea, Sudan, Iraq, Libya and Iran. This evidence establishes:

- active Syrian support, patronage and sponsorship of the most ruthless and murderous terrorist groups in the world, including those that have killed and targeted American citizens,
- the totalitarian efficiency of its brutal dictatorial regime and murderous suppression of political and religious dissidents, whose deaths during the past 15 years in all likelihood exceed 40, 000 civilians,
- its clandestine acquisition and development of a dangerously destabilizing arsenal of chemical, biological and ballistic weapons which can now reach nearly every square inch of Israeli territory as well as that of neighboring Jordan and Turkey,
- its direct role in sanctioning and facilitating international drug trafficking from the Bekka Valley and elsewhere in Lebanon and Syria, as documented in data collected by the Drug Enforcement Agency,
- its continued occupation of neighboring Lebanon (whose legitimacy Syria continues to deny to this very day, notwithstanding Lebanon's formal independence in 1946) despite the provisions of the 1989 Taif Accords that explicitly stipulate the withdrawal of Syrian occupation forces from Lebanon,
- its active collaboration with Iran in facilitating Teheran's massive supply to Hizbollah of virtually unlimited provisions of weapons, including new and more deadly Katyusha rockets, devastatingly powerful Sager anti-tank missiles, tanks, hundreds of pounds of concentrated explosives, rapid propelled grenade launchers, and now the SAM-7 missile (a Russian produced air missile equivalent to an early generation Stinger, capable of destroying Israeli aircraft). Many of these military supplies have gone directly through Damascus, where they have been unloaded from Iranian cargo flights into Syrian military transport vehicles for overland delivery to Hizbollah headquarters in the Bekka Valley,
- its efforts (by terrorist proxy) to destabilize both Jordan and Turkey, two of the most pro-western Muslim regimes in the Middle East, by continued acts of major terrorism, and
- its long-recognized role in supporting or facilitating major acts of international terrorism against the West—in particular, U.S. Government targets, civilians, and air passengers.

## U.S. Administration Policy

Such a colossal array of evidence should logically result in Syria being treated no differently than other international rogue states such as Iran and Libya, both of which have recently become the subject of a comprehensive policy of direct and secondary sanctions by the U.S. government, thanks in large part to the efforts of this body, and in particular this Committee. Yet, the non-inclusion of Syria in this bill and the attendant long record of forgiveness, accommodation, and even appeasement adopted by the Executive Branch—from the Bush to the Clinton Administration—is no accident.

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That President Clinton not only went to Geneva to meet with President Hafez al-Assad, but indulged him in the policy of prohibiting the participation of Israeli journalists at a joint press conference, reveals the extent to which the United States has kowtowed to the Syrian dictator. Any doubts about the magical allure held by President Assad should have been firmly dispelled by Mr. Clinton's subsequent pilgrimage to Damascus in August 1994 to meet on Mr. Assad's home turf. Clinton falsely trumpeted this visit to Mr. Assad as a success in getting him to openly moderate his support for international terrorism and softening his hard-line attitude toward peace with Israel. Secretary of State Warren Christopher, and his chief Middle East negotiator Dennis Ross, have far surpassed Secretary of State Henry Kissinger's long held record of shuttle diplomacy; the two men have collectively made more than 60 trips to Damascus in the past three and one-half years only to produce the proverbial magician's hat in which the rabbit, i.e., peace or some other lesser grandiose product, suddenly disappears.

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In one of Mr. Christopher's more unmemorable shuttle trips to Damascus this past spring, as he attempted to negotiate an end to the Israeli war with the Hizbollah, the ever patient and polite Secretary was forced to cool his heels for several hours on the Damascus airport tarmac as Mr. Assad reconnoitered with obviously more important Iranian visitors to broker the re-supply of weapons to Hizbollah via Iranian-flown shipments. The weapons were being unloaded into Syrian military trucks at the Damascus airport at that very moment, providing the Secretary with what must have been an amusing sight only yards away from his aircraft. Such diplomatic ignominy, let alone a constantly unrequited courtship, would ordinarily not have been tolerated or pursued.

Yet such policies have developed precisely because Syria has so successfully employed terrorism as the cornerstone of its foreign policy. Syria's unique geo-political position—most importantly, its contiguous border with Israel, its de facto control of Lebanon's border with Israel by armed surrogates, and its strategically important border with both Jordan and Turkey—has enabled Damascus to play its terror card with horrific success. In essence, Assad's good fortune in being physically

located on the border with Israel makes him part of a conflict that is perceived as political, thereby legitimizing his violent actions as political rather than criminal. Thus, Assad has successfully managed to portray his support for terrorism as the byproduct of his conflict with Israel. This would be the equivalent of viewing the Oklahoma City bombing as a political act requiring a political solution as opposed to a violent criminal act to be handled by the justice system. Acceptance of Assad's representation of his support for "resistance groups" as requiring a political solution would also be the equivalent of accepting Libyan and Iranian acts of violence against the West as politics and not terror. Syria, Iran and Libya back many of the same Palestinian rejectionist groups in carrying out international terror and also employ murder against their political opponents.<sup>5</sup> Yet while Iran and Libya have been universally condemned as rogue states, Syria has escaped this designation.

### State Department Assessments of Syria

Disturbingly, the State Department's official policy toward Syria grossly understates Syrian support of the very same terrorism for which the Department unreservedly condemns Iran and Libya.

Today, Syria is home to the offices, headquarters or training camps of at least a dozen terrorist organizations including Hamas and Islamic Jihad, two of the most violent and virulently anti-Semitic, anti-Christian and anti-moderate Arab groups in the world. In the past 8 years, Islamic Jihad and Hamas have collectively killed more than 350 Jews and 700 Arabs as well as 13 American citizens. To be sure, the State Department continues to include Syria, like Iran and Libya, on the list of countries designated as state sponsors of terrorism. Yet every few months, a trial balloon surfaces by which either the State Department or the White House raises the idea of taking Syria off the

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terrorism list in exchange for a few illusory promises of concessions on the peace talks or "restrictions" on the movements of terrorist groups on its soil. The operative language on Syria in the State Department's 1995 annual report on terrorism is even more telling: "There is *no evidence* that Syrian officials have been directly involved in planning or executing terrorist attacks since 1986. Damascus continues to negotiate seriously to achieve a peace accord with Israel and has taken some steps

to restrain the international activities of these groups. Syria continues to use its influence to moderate Hizbollah and Palestinian rejectionist groups when tension and violence in southern Lebanon escalate. It has, however, *allowed* Iran to re-supply Hizbollah via Damascus [emphasis added]."<sup>6</sup> This assessment would be comical were it not for the dreadful body count of innocent Israeli and Lebanese civilians in the past year owing specifically to the murderous provocations and terrorist acts

carried out by Hamas, Islamic Jihad and Hizbollah, all operating with the explicit support of Syria by virtue of being headquartered in Damascus (Hamas and Islamic Jihad) or controlled by Damascus (Hizbollah).

To be fair, the State Department also states in the section on Syria that Damascus “provides safe haven and support for several groups that engage in international terrorism...several radical terrorist groups maintain training camps or other facilities on Syrian territory and in Syrian-controlled areas, such as Ahmed Jabril’s Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command (PFLP-GC) which has its headquarters near Damascus. Syria grants basing privileges or refuge to a wide variety of groups engaged in terrorism. These include Hamas, the PFLP-GC, the Palestine Islamic Jihad (PIJ) and Japanese Red Army.... The terrorist group Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) continues to train in the al-Biqa’ (Bekka Valley) and its leader, Abdullah Ocalan, resides at least part-time in Syria....”

Having conceded the fact that these terrorist groups operate on Syrian territory, Ambassador Philip Wilcox, head of the State Department’s Office of Counter-Terrorism continues to falsely represent Syria as moderating its support for terror. At a press conference earlier this year,<sup>7</sup> at which the State Department released its annual State Department Terrorism Report, Mr. Wilcox answered questions about the report’s statement that Syria restrained Hizbollah in Southern Lebanon. Wilcox repeated the notion that “Syria has made [efforts] to restrain terrorist acts in south Lebanon.”

His evidence? That Secretary of State Christopher was able to achieve a truce between Israel, Hizbollah and Syria in which the “previous undertakings had been renewed and strengthened....” What Wilcox deliberately omitted was the fact that it was those very “previous [Israel-Hizbollah-Syrian] undertakings” as well as Syrian control over Hizbollah that resulted in Hizbollah launching hundred of murderous attacks on Israeli targets. Fed up with the war of attrition that Syria was controlling by proxy, the government of Shimon Peres finally unleashed a counter-offensive this year, which it dubbed “Grapes of Wrath.” The military attack was launched after the entire north of Israel was forced to evacuate (for the first time in Israeli history) following Katyusha missile attacks by the Hizbollah. Wilcox’s praise of Syria for its agreement to a cease-fire, after unleashing Hizbollah terrorists against Israel in the first place, is equivalent to granting mercy to a killer who, after murdering his parents, pleads for mercy as an orphan.

Wilcox also made other statements which, if he had been under oath before Congress, might open him to charges of lying to Congress. For example, Wilcox also stated at the same press conference that “Syria *did* take steps to restrain the activities of *all of these groups* in southern Lebanon.” In fact, evidence collected by the CIA clearly shows that the PFLP-GC, PFLP, Abu Musa Group, and Hizbollah were *more* active in Lebanon in 1995 and the first half of 1996 than in previous years. Mr. Wilcox’s prepared statement to this panel this morning, which I was able to review last night, not only repeats these demonstrably false claims but adds something even more preposterous: “*The Syrian*

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*Government has also demonstrated that it can use its influence to deter Palestinian rejectionist groups resident in Syria to avoid acts of international terrorism outside of Israel and the West Bank and Gaza.” In fact, Hamas, Islamic Jihad, and the PFLP-GC, all groups “resident in Syria,” have conspired to wage terrorist attacks*

throughout the world. For example, the court records submitted in the World Trade Center bombing show that the leader of Islamic Jihad from Damascus played a pivotal role in the bombing conspiracy, along with a top official of Hamas.<sup>8</sup>

The PFLP-GC, whose members are paid by the Syrian Army, launched a series of attempted airplane bombings in 1988 in Germany, but the plot was interdicted at the last moment by German intelligence. Hafez Dalkamouni, the principal organizer behind the plot to bomb five airlines, was released weeks ago from a German jail. His choice of destination: Damascus. Since then, the PFLP-GC has launched multiple terrorist raids against Israeli targets and continued operations in Europe. Thus, not only is Wilcox’s statement a blatant falsehood, but it also attempts to legitimize attacks outside of Israel as “international terrorism” while implying that attacks on Israel were acceptable. This double standard is nothing short of morally repugnant.

## **Syrian Support for Terror Groups and Operations**

Syria’s direct involvement in directing terrorist operations was demonstrated in 1986 when General Muhammad al-Khuli, Chief of Syrian Air Force Intelligence, and the Syrian military attache in London were unmasked as pivotal players in an attempt to bomb an El Al plane from London to Tel Aviv. Nizzar Hindawi was to smuggle a bomb aboard the flight by deceiving his Irish wife—pregnant with his son at the time—into believing she was transporting his belongings to Israel, where he told her he would arrive later. The bomb was detected at the last moment by an El Al security guard.

Following the exposure of this plot, and of the key roles of senior members of the Syrian government in orchestrating the plot, a series of ensuing sanctions were placed on Syria by various Western countries. Subsequently, Assad systematically dissolved his overt sponsorship of terrorism by creating a proxy network of terrorists enabling him to maintain a policy of plausible deniability.

Yet, the closeness of Assad’s affiliation with terrorist groups is plain for all to see. For example, in the fall of 1988, a group of terrorists from Ahmed Jabril’s organization, the PFLP-GC, was arrested in Germany for plotting to blow up an Iberian Airlines flight to Israel as well as other civilian aircraft. In the group’s possession, German security forces found five sophisticated barometric bombs, designed for detonation aboard aircraft as well as forged Syrian passports

which could only have been supplied from official Syrian sources. Jabril maintains his headquarters in downtown Damascus while operating training camps north of the capital and in Syrian-occupied Lebanon. Jabril's organization is largely underwritten by Syrian funds.

In the past 8 years, U.S. and other western intelligence officials estimate that at least 500 major attempted or successful terrorist operations originated, were planned, or were directed from Damascus or Syrian controlled territory in Lebanon. Instructions, for example, orchestrating attacks carried out by both Islamic Jihad and Hamas terrorists against Israelis and Palestinians have been issued from Damascus or via terrorist camps in Syrian-dominated areas in Lebanon. In addition, from bases throughout Syria, the PKK has launched dozens of attacks against the Turkish regime and Turkish civilians, resulting in scores of deaths. Syria routinely provides access to its airwaves to all terrorist groups, over which they have issued violent threats against American and Jewish targets as well as taking credit for actual terrorist attacks.

Most recently, on June 27, 1996, Colonel Abu Musa—a terrorist chieftain headquartered in Damascus—dispatched a terrorist squad through Jordan to the border with Israel. There, it infiltrated into Israeli territory, lying in wait in the early hours of the morning until a routine Israeli patrol passed. The terrorist squad, in a hail of machine gun fire, killed three Israelis and wounded two. Hours later, Colonel Abu Musa claimed credit for the attack in a radio broadcast from Damascus. A member of the Palestinian rejectionist front, Abu Musa operates under strict Syrian control. In fact, before he relocated to Damascus, Abu Musa—whose organization battled Arafat's Fatah in Lebanon—worked directly as a hit man for Syria. Nowadays, his entire organization is trained, financed and controlled by the Syrian government.

Elsewhere in Damascus are the headquarters of Islamic Jihad, a militant Palestinian Islamic terrorist group that specializes in suicide bombings, stabbings and the mutilation of Jews and Palestinians deemed to be enemies. The group has had training camps in Syrian-occupied Lebanon from the late 1980's, while Damascus has served as the site for its worldwide headquarters as well as its weapons arsenal. When Islamic Jihad leader Fa'thi Shiqaqi was assassinated in Malta in October 1995 (presumably by Israeli agents), his successor, Ramadan Abdullah Shallah, immediately surfaced in Damascus where he has delivered a series of speeches on Damascus radio as well as to Arabic publications threatening the United States and openly taking credit for terrorist operations against Israeli civilians, including some of the suicide bus bombings earlier this year in Israeli cities.<sup>9</sup>

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In the last two months, King Hussein of Jordan has openly accused Syria of sponsoring and encouraging dozens of terrorist attempts against both Israeli and Jordanian targets. "Those attempts

started after the ratification of the peace treaty with Israel. It has not stopped and we are still subject to people coming across the border bringing explosives aimed at carrying out attempts against Jordanians and their guests (Israeli tourists) and to use Jordan as a base of operations.”<sup>10</sup> One of these attempted terrorist operations involved an infiltration into Jordan from Syria by a heavily armed squad of the PFLP-GC. The group had been “monitoring the arrival and departure of buses via the northern crossing [al-Shaykh Husayn Bridge], the Israeli Embassy and ambassador’s residence, as well as a number of hotels in the capital where Israeli tourists stay. The group was caught in the possession of 24 anti-personnel and anti-armor mines..., automatic weapons, three explosive belts like the ones used by Iz ad-Din al-Qassam Battalions [ Hamas Death Squads] in their recent suicide bombings in Tel Aviv and Jerusalem.... Another Islamic extremist group crossed into Jordan...with a plan to mount a terrorist attack in the Petra District several months ago. The plan called for blowing up a hotel that was hosting a regional conference on security and disarmament held within the framework of the multilateral peace talks....”<sup>11</sup>

Only through the success of the King’s security services were these plots averted. Had just a handful succeeded against Israeli tourists, for example, the death toll might have exceeded 100. Publicly, King Hussein’s pointed and unambiguous comments against President Assad should prove instructive and educational for State Department officials unwilling to ascribe responsibility to the Syrian President for sponsoring acts of terror.

## **Syrian Acquisition of Conventional and Non-Conventional Weapons**

During the past decade, Syria has adopted a policy of trying to obtain “strategic parity” with Israel. Assad has accepted the notion of permanent and insurmountable qualitative Israeli Air Force superiority—which forms the strategic cornerstone behind Israel’s pre-emptive strike strategy against adversaries equipped with overwhelming quantitative superiority. To compensate for his Air Force’s military deficiencies, and to neutralize Israel’s all-but-declared acquisition of nuclear capability, Assad has embarked on an aggressive program of developing an advanced chemical and biological warfare infrastructure while simultaneously acquiring long-range precision guided ballistic missiles, whose capabilities are being enhanced to deliver chemical and biological warheads. Syria’s furious development of solid and liquid fuel plants is exceeded only by its frenzied acquisition of nerve and chemical gas stocks and manufacturing capabilities.

Following the 1991 Gulf War, Syria expended nearly \$2 billion—the assistance provided by the Gulf states as a reward for Syria’s participation—on SCUD missiles, 252 T-72 tanks from Czechoslovakia and additional SU-24 attack planes, among other military equipment. Since 1991, Syria has continued to build up both its conventional and unconventional warfare capabilities. Syria has now acquired the latest generation of missiles, including the SCUD-D from North Korea, as well as the launchers and adapted warheads needed to launch chemical and biological

agents. Syria has so rapidly developed its chemical and biological warfare program that Defense Department intelligence officials believe it to be among the most advanced in the Middle East today.

In the past three years, Syria has also acquired M-9 and M-11 missiles from China. According to *Jane's Intelligence Review* in 1995, the "M-11 missiles provide Syria with the ability to cover the entirety of Israeli territory."<sup>12</sup> That same report also noted that "Syria's possession of chemical warhead technology poses a significant threat to Israeli security." Ominously, the authors of the report noted that Israel has "no effective defense against ballistic missile attack. As a result, the deployment of large numbers of M-11's might shift the balance in the region.... *Syria could counter Israeli air supremacy by the deployment of effective missile forces* [emphasis added]."<sup>13</sup>

## **CONCLUSION: Policy Options**

There is no doubt that Syria has shrewdly exploited its role in the Arab-Israeli conflict to legitimize its proxy terrorist war with Israel, Jordan and Turkey. More important is the fact that Syria has been able to force the United States to compromise its standards on counter-terrorism and simultaneously be courted and pursued by the West. Assad is a leader who respects strength and recognizes unilateral compromise as weakness. In light of the fact that Assad could probably have had the entire Golan Heights returned to him under the Israeli governments of Rabin and Peres, it is manifestly clear that Assad prefers a state of hostility rather than real peace. As the United States knows only too well, Assad rebuffed every opportunity to state the magical words—that he would enact a real peace with Israel—that would have resulted in Israel turning over the entire Golan Heights. And knowing that the clock was winding down as the Israeli election neared, Assad continued to ignore all messages and approaches to nail down a deal.

At the same time, the U.S. policy of cajoling and appeasing Syria has failed. Although employing a carrot-and-stick approach is virtually always worth risking, the fact is that the generous supply of carrots and restrained use of sticks have had no discernible positive effect on the Syrian president. Therefore, it is time to drop the current policy of protecting the Syrian government from the same treatment afforded similar rogue regimes, such as Iran and Libya.

Of course, there is no way of knowing whether Assad will respond affirmatively to a new get-tough policy. But one thing is starkly clear: the existing policy has been a miserable failure.

## Notes

1. A minimum of fifty to as many as hundreds of American made Stingers are still unaccounted for from the recorded shipments to the Afghanistan *mujahideen* (Holy Warriors) through the Pakistani military in the 1980's. The CIA attempted to reacquire the unused Stingers through a generous buy-back program, in which the price offered per Stinger was set at a higher amount than the prevailing black market price. Although some Stingers were retrieved, most were not. At this time, possession of these unretrieved Stingers, according to intelligence officials, has extended at various times during the past seven years beyond the *mujahideen* of Pakistan and Afghanistan to the *mujahideen* dispatched to, or indigenous to, the Muslim republics of the old Soviet empire, as well as Bosnia, Sudan, Iran, and possibly Lebanon.

2. The threat of Islamic militants is not only posed by their fanatical violence but also by virtue of their amorphous structure unlike the linear pyramidal organization of traditional secular terrorist groups. These militant Islamic groups operate undetected and with virtual impunity in many countries around the world, networking with other Islamic groups, cross fertilizing and exchanging logistical support, financial support, training, safe houses, fake credentials and sometimes even weapons.

3. The four suicide bombings in Israel earlier this year killed 59 people. Extrapolated at the level of the U.S. population, this number is equivalent to the U.S. incurring nearly 3000 dead.

4. Damascus Syrian Arab Television Network. July 23, 1996 as reported by FBIS.

5. Libya has murdered its opponents in Egypt and, in the process of firing on demonstrators from their Embassy in Britain, Libyan officials killed a British policewoman. Libya has also carried out attempted assassinations of its opponents in the U.S. and Paris. Iran has systematically hunted down and murdered its opponents throughout Europe and the U.S since 1980. Syria attempted to assassinate a Syrian dissident cleric in Germany, but killed his wife instead. Syria has also engaged in plotting to kill its opponents in the Middle East.

6. *Patterns of Global Terrorism 1995*, United States Department of State, page 28. April 30, 1996, Washington D.C.

7. April 30, 1996, Washington D.C.

8. The spiritual head of Islamic Jihad, Abdul Azziz Oudeh, was an unindicted coconspirator in the World Trade Center bombing conspiracy. Mohammed Saleh, owner of the Yonkers gas station, was a top official of the worldwide Hamas organization. Both of the organizational backgrounds of these men are on file in the Southern District of New York, U.S. Attorney's Office. See also a speech made by World Trade Center prosecutor Andrew McCarthy before the Washington Institute on Near East Policy, 1996, in which he describes the role of Hamas and Islamic Jihad in the World Trade Center bombing conspiracy.

9. Prior to assuming his position as head of the Islamic Jihad, Mr. Shallah had been a professor at the University of South Florida in Tampa, Florida from 1991 through early 1995. During that time, he was the director of the World Islamic Studies Enterprise (WISE), a self-described Islamic academic research center. Following his assumption of the Islamic Jihad post, the FBI and INS conducted a series of raids on Mr. Shallah's previous campus office as well as the offices and home of University of South Florida Professor Sami al-Arian, who was the founder of WISE and an affiliated group called the Islamic Committee for Palestine, a self-described religious charity. In fact, as uncovered by federal investigators, both the World Islamic Studies Enterprise and the Islamic Committee for Palestine were clandestine arms of the Islamic Jihad terror organization. Under the cover of legitimacy granted officially by the University of South Florida, the WISE center actually brought in terrorists to the United States while also raising funds for the Islamic Jihad. Dr. al-Arian, who organized a series of terrorist conferences in Chicago and St. Louis between 1988 and 1992 featuring the top terrorist leaders in the world, is now the subject of a federal investigation. The materials seized from his home and office constitute one of the largest acquisitions of raw terrorist

material ever found in the United States, surpassing the materials seized in the World Trade Center bombing cases.

10. Jordan Times, June 3, 1996.

11. This report is from SHIHAN, June 1-7, 1996, Amman Jordan. The report contains the most public revelations thus far on the types of terrorist operations launched from Syria onto Jordanian territory this year.

12. *Jane's Intelligence Review*, "Destabilizing Arms Acquisitions" by John Sislin and David Mussington, February 1, 1995

13. *Ibid.*

