

Terrorism in Jordan: Politics and the Real Target Audience

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Abstract

Hidden beneath the emotional banter and caustic rhetoric of terrorism; against US interests in the middle east, is the factual truth. Using Jordan as an example, the dataset pulled from the Global Terrorism Database presents facts that when aligned with the political environment of the time period tell a very different story than what currently exists in the minds of most Americans. Taken from the perspective of terrorism as political violence, the 80 incidents, from 1970-2010, conducted in Jordan, were grouped into five distinct terror campaigns, discovering that there were relative periods of peace and security between these campaigns. When political machinations ignited fervor over territorial governance, terrorist events ensued. The most significant outcome of this cursory analysis is that all five terror campaigns targeted the country of Jordan and the Jordanian government. Included in the fatalities was the death of the only US diplomat; tied directly to Abu Zaraqawi and US monetary support to improvement of Jordanian economic and governmental infrastructure. With further research, this paper's framework can provide a new approach to the collective untarnished evaluation that must be performed on terrorism for each country if a comprehensive counterterrorism strategy is to be understood precisely and implemented effectively.

Key Words: Jordan, Terrorism, International Terrorism, Counterterrorism,

The Necessity of International Counterterrorism Intelligence Sharing

Introduction

Terrorism is a political strategy, employed by state and non-state actors who find themselves in a weak power position within the global community. Byman (2005) confirms this key characteristic of terrorism in the following statement: "terrorism is a weapon of the weak" (p. 259). These entities seek to gain an advantage through the use of violence. Although an agreed to definition of terrorism has been an impossibility within the global community at large, all can agree to some very basic tenets. The following assumptions are a precursor to understanding the conceptual presentation of this research.

1. Terrorism is about seeking a power position.
2. Terrorism is methodically planned and executed.

3. Terrorism is conducted against a target audience, it is not random.
4. Terrorism is violence or the threat of violence with intent to coerce change.

Although arguments exist for including many other tenets of terrorism, this paper is built on these five suppositions. The goal of this research is a cursory strategic-political analysis of the accumulated terrorist events recorded in the Global Terrorism Database for the subject country of Jordan. Additionally, this paper will focus on the political environment surrounding each of the five identified terrorist campaigns from 1970 to 2010. It will be demonstrated that both a logical and political reason lay behind each campaign. The terrorist events marked as “unknown perpetrator” or fall outside the designated campaign window will be included or explained away as potential random criminal acts. The political goals will be explained; the perpetrators, whether state or non-state actors, as a whole will be identified; and an attempt will be made to reveal distinct start-and-stop points driven by political decisions in the region. Overall, the logic of terrorism as presented in this paper will endeavor to eliminate the idea that Jordan has somehow assumed a dangerous persona for United States citizens, become a pariah in the global community, and as an open-minded and free country is somehow permanently degraded.

To begin understanding the terrorist campaigns, a definition is provided. Hoffman (2006) presents this definition in the following statement: “In the most widely accepted contemporary usage of the term, [terrorism] is fundamentally and inherently political. It is also ineluctably about power, the pursuit of power, the acquisition of power [,] and the use of power to achieve political change” (p. 2). In addition, Hoffman (2006) provides the following definition of a terrorist from the *Oxford English Dictionary*: “Anyone who attempts to further his views by a system of coercive intimidation” (p. 3) and further clarifies the meaning by making the following statement: “This definition underscores clearly the other fundamental characteristic of terrorism: that it is planned, calculated, and indeed [a] systematic act” (p. 3). Using the politics of the region for identified time periods, scholars can make a case for the power struggle by terrorist groups for the occurrence of events in Jordan as listed in the Global Terrorism Database. The difficulty with using any of the existing databases as a foundation of proof is that each has hidden criteria that filter the data being input as well as accepting input from multiple users. All events can be considered to have occurred; whether or not they can be formally proven as terrorist acts requires much greater research for each individual event. That being said, some broad assumptions will be made when considering the collective dataset that may not necessarily be correct. However, for the scope of this paper, the events will err on the side of terrorism and will be accepted at face value in order to bolster the validity of the outcome in either the positive or negative.

Jordan is a country with a population of 6.5 million; it achieved independence on May 25, 1946 as the Hashemite Kingdom of Transjordan and was renamed in 1950 as the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. Its first official constitution was adopted in 1952, granting Jordan a recognized position in the Arab world as a moderate Arab regime

(<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/3464.htm>). Holding to the principles of democracy, the citizens of Jordan experience freedom of choice in their personal lives without government interference. The population of Jordan consists of 60% Palestinians with the remaining percentage mostly native Transjordanians, all of Arab descent, with a small mixture of Armenians, Circassians, and Chechens. The religious majority is 92% Sunni Muslim. “From 1949 to 1967, Jordan administered the West Bank” until Israel took control after the 1967 war (<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/3464.htm>). Jordan today continues to maintain a role in the Muslim holy place of Jerusalem. One of only two Arab nations to sign a peace treaty with Israel, Jordan wants its citizens to live in a stable and secure environment. The State Department website presents the following initial scene-setter for that which led to the eventuality of terrorist acts in Jordan: “The 1967 war [between Israel, Egypt, Jordan, and Syria] led to a dramatic increase in the number of Palestinians living in Jordan” (<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/3464.htm>). With Israel taking control of the West Bank (former Palestine) and the Golan Heights in Syria, the volatility of the region was about to be unleashed. “[Jordan’s]...Palestinian refugee population--700,000 in 1966--grew by another 300,000 from the West Bank.... Following the 1967 war [, Jordan] saw an upsurge in the power and importance of Palestinian resistance elements (Fedayeen)” (<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/3464.htm>). Thus begins the recorded history of terrorism in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. It is surmised that terrorist events began to occur in earnest in the late ‘60s with the increase of Palestinians to Jordan’s population, further exacerbated by the radicalism of anti-Israeli groups who established themselves in Jordan as a result of the 1967 war.

Jordan remained a dedicated Arab nation to the plight of the Palestinians for many years and initially supported the anti-Israeli groups. However, Jordan recognized that its sovereignty was at risk and thus, a delicate balancing act was necessary between the Palestinian people and the global community. As its relationship grew stronger with the United States, Jordan’s risk of anti-Israeli backlash also increased. Five (5) major campaigns are reflected in the graphing of all terrorist incidents recorded for Jordan from the Global Terrorism Database by “total number per year.” These time periods, it will be demonstrated, are synonymous with significant political turmoil in Jordan and the Levant region. This research paper will provide analysis of each terrorist campaign as defined by the grouping of incidents. Reasoning for why terrorist activity was high around these time periods will be linked directly to the political machinations in the region, thus demonstrating that all five terrorist campaigns were attempted in order to gain a power position over the government of Jordan or simply to seek revenge. Ultimately, the paper will endeavor to present the case for Jordan as a safe and secure country and that United States’ interests have rarely, if ever, been the primary target audience.

Terror Campaign #1 (The Jordanian Civil War, 1970-1973): Eighteen Events

The Global Terrorism Database begins in 1970 with the first recorded terrorist event. Jordan experienced the most incidents during this time, in the forty years of recorded events. From February 2, 1970 to February 9, 1973, eighteen noted attacks occurred, seven by the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) (five in June 1970 alone), five by the Black September Organization, three by other Palestinian factions with three additional events having

unknown perpetrators. The PFLP attacked one military target, two businesses, three governmental targets, and one utilities target. Black September attacked three businesses, one government and one other facility. The mixture of remaining targets consisted of two military, two governmental, and one tourism. The PFLP events caused two deaths, and the two additional casualties were the result of events by unknown perpetrators (<http://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/>). This terrorist campaign consisted of the most-ever attacks; however, the casualties remained surprisingly the lowest, by far, of all other campaigns. It is safe to presume the target audience was absolutely the government of Jordan, coupled with the low casualty count; the majority of known targets were directly associated with the government infrastructure. September 1970 became a pivotal point of the civil war in Jordan between Palestinian factions and the Jordanian military. Nevo (2008) discusses the beginning of the civil war in Jordan and presents a supposition for the time it began with the following statement: “[The] civil war did not start and end in the second half of September 1970.... [The] roots of the confrontation can be traced to as early as 1965[,] following the establishment of the Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO)” (p. 220). Nevo (2005) further amplifies the beginning and the end of this conflict by stating the following: “The first political and military encounters commenced in early 1968.... The showdown ended... [when] a Jordanian operation against the Fedayeen [took place]....Its successful conclusion terminated both the military and the political presence of the Palestinian organisations in Jordan” (p. 220). From the Global Terrorism Database, the first identified terrorist campaign in Jordan had its origin on or about 1970; however, terrorist acts more than likely were occurring well before this time that finally resulted in the Jordanian operation mentioned above.

A unique aspect of this campaign is found in the fact that Jordan experienced the highest number of terrorist attacks and yet the lowest number of casualties of any other recorded time period. This campaign conducted by various Palestinian groups was attempting to demonstrate to the Jordanian citizens that their government was powerless. In addition, this campaign did not target civilians directly; in fact, with further research the evidence might even suggest that these attacks were designed to avoid the population at all costs. Avoiding casualties among citizens meant that the largest population segment of Jordan was Palestinian and any casualties could easily have turned the population against these Palestinian factions. This reversal eventually happened as a result of miscalculations by the PLO and splinter groups, misunderstanding the strong support of Palestinian Jordanians for their country, possibly driven by the fact that Jordanians live in a free and open society. Nevo (2008) points to this result in the following excerpt: “‘Civil war’ might suggest...the support of the Jordanians of Palestinian origin...but that was not the case. [Palestinians] in [their]...struggle against the [Jordanian] regime, neither enjoyed the backing of the Palestinian constituency in Jordan nor represented them” (p. 227). Simply stated, Jordanians were educated nationalists with a developed sense of pride for their country and the decision on which side to take was not an issue. The political goal of the Fedayeen during this struggle, led by Arafat, is clearly articulated by Nevo (2008) in the following passage: “Ever since they had managed to establish their position in Jordan, the various fedayeen groups, intoxicated by their power, were toying with the idea of overthrowing

the Jordanian Monarchy and...replacing it with a revolutionary Palestinian dominated republic” (p. 223). Jordan’s government found itself under severe social and economic pressure as a result of the influx of Palestinians pushed out of the West Bank after the Israeli war of 1967. The increased demands for government services to be provided by Jordan in the West Bank, as this was Jordanian sovereign territory before Israel took control, became a rallying point for the radical Palestinian factions. The inability of the Jordanian government to support the increase in population alone sparked upheaval among the Palestinian refugees facilitating a foothold for radical Palestinian groups.

As pressure on economic conditions increased, the PLO and splinter groups pressed forward, attempting to drive a wedge between the Palestinians, including those of Jordanian nationality, and the Jordanian government. Nevo (2008) outlines the following point whereby the confrontational attitude of the PLO became the turning point for King Hussein of Jordan: “Palestinian guerrillas took over the northern city of Irbid on 15 September [1970] declaring it liberated and installing a ‘people’s government.’ King Hussein responded by declaring military rule..; the Jordanian civil war, or Black September, had [begun]” (p. 217). The political environment cast Jordanian military might against a much weaker, rag-tag collection of radical Palestinian groups. Initially, the armed engagements were led by none other than Yasser Arafat and his military wing of the PLO known as Al-Fatah. Eventually, the weaker Palestinian factions aligned against King Hussein as well, including such groups as the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), Abu Nidal, and Black September, to name a few. Best known for their infamous attack on the Israeli athletes at the 1972 Olympic Games, Black September attempted to unite the scattered remnants of the Palestinian factions under one unified effort after the devastating rout by King Hussein’s army. Seale (1992) highlights this unifying phenomenon by stating the following: “Under the banner of Black September, Fatah radicals joined with Wadi Haddad and others in a widespread terrorist campaign” (p. 83). The numerous Palestinian factions became a threat to the government of Jordan as they resorted to terrorist acts in an attempt to secure popular support for their cause. Fighting Israel for their rightful ownership from the sovereign country of Jordan was creating an environment that would have brought severe retaliation by Israel unless King Hussein took action.

Under-equipped and ill-trained, the Palestinian factions thus resorted to terrorism in order to gain legitimacy with the citizens of Jordan. Nevo (2008) provides the following justification for terrorist attacks occurring in Jordan that were the genesis of this terrorist campaign: “A civil challenge to the legitimacy of the government and to the extent of its jurisdiction.., to elements of ethnic differences (Jordanians versus Palestinians) and ideological components (a pro-western, moderate monarchy...)” (p. 220). Furthermore, Nevo (2005) highlights the political goal of these Palestinian groups in the following excerpt: “The Palestinian fedayeen endeavoured to introduce an alternative to the functions of the government and to challenge its monopoly on...legitimate and organised violence” (p. 220). The preponderance of recorded terrorist attacks in Jordan during this timeframe was directly linked to radical Palestinian groups and it can be safely assumed that all events had this connection. The target audience was definitely the Jordanian government and its capacity to provide for the needs of its citizens. The political goal focused on overthrowing the monarchy and converting Jordan to a Palestinian state. The tactics used both explosives and hostage-taking, intended to shake the population’s faith in its

government's ability to secure the country and thus seek the alternative, which was to turn to the PLO for that security.

Syria also played a heavy hand in this terrorist campaign. Byman (2005) makes the following statement in support of these terrorist activities: "Hafiz [al-Asad] held a genuine ideological commitment to the Palestinian cause, but he also sought to use the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and other Palestinian factions as a weapon against Israel" (p. 100). Syria was focused on regaining the Golan Heights and seeking revenge for Israel's utter embarrassment of its military; Hafiz al-Asad was seeking plausible deniability in continuing to attack Israel. He supported the PLO as well as the Abu Nidal Organization outside Syria in the conduct of terrorist activities. Hafiz al-Asad saw the use of Palestinian proxies as the best way to regain the Golan Heights without causing Israeli retaliation. Byman (2005) outlines Syria's challenge in the following excerpt: "Israel's rout of Syria in 1967 and its lesser...decisive victories in 1973 and 1982 demonstrated that Damascus had no conventional military options against Israel. For Hafiz [al-Asad] to achieve...his strategic goals [,] he needed a means of inflicting pain on Israel" (p. 100). The use of terrorism as a political strategy by Syria was the only remaining form of power Hafiz al-Asad had at his disposal. The Jordanian government was undoubtedly the primary target of Syria's vehemence during this civil war, as King Hussein was attempting to oust the PLO and Palestinian factions from his country. Hafiz realized this strategy by the Jordanian ruler would cause a significant setback to his plans of regaining the Golan Heights and thus completely removing his ability to exert political pressure on Israel through terrorism. Removal of these anti-Israeli groups by King Hussein would ultimately bring the unwanted attention of Israel to Syria.

Hafiz wanted to avoid this confrontation altogether, having been militarily trumped on three previous occasions. He thus continued as a state sponsor of terrorism using the Palestinian factions, PLO, PFLP, Abu Nidal, and so on to force Jordan into a political change, allowing the PLO and others to operate freely against Israel from within Jordan's territory. The political strategy envisioned was meant to eliminate the ruling monarchy of Jordan and install a Palestinian-backed government that could bring enormous pressure to bear on Israel. Byman (2005) clarifies the way Jordan became the focus of Hafiz al-Asad's terrorist campaign in the following statement: "Syria supported the Palestinians in their struggle against Jordan's King Hussein in 1970. As the Syrian-Jordanian rivalry continued in the 1980s, Hafiz employed the Abu Nidal Organization, a radical and exceptionally murderous Palestinian splinter group, to intimidate King Hussein" (p. 101). The political strategy was meant to serve an interim purpose as the Syrian regime relentlessly pursued that which they believed would cause Jordan, a perceived much weaker state, to acquiesce. Byman (2005) outlines the effectiveness of Syria's political strategy on Jordan in the following quote: "Its campaign against Jordan through the Abu Nidal Organization and others for many years made Amman less willing to cut a deal with Israel and the Palestinians that Damascus opposed" (p. 106). By 1973, King Hussein had regained full control of his country and removed all significant influence by any of the Palestinian organizations. The political gains by Syria and the Palestinian factions were short-lived. Jordan

re-evaluated its place in the global community and determined the most effective way to maintain security as well as stability within its country and eventually to elicit greater support from the West. The first terrorist campaign had come to an end.

Between Campaigns (1973-1983): Five Events

This interim saw relative quiet for the country. From February 1973 until May 1983 only five total events occurred and three of them were conducted by unknown perpetrators. Perceived to be a final gasp by Hafiz Al-Asad of Syria who could not accept the circumstances in Jordan, he continued to employ the Abu Nidal Organization as a state-sponsored terrorist group. Nine were killed and five injured in a single event in 1976 by the Abu Nidal Organization when it attacked a Jordanian business interest. The total number of injured from the other four events amounted to one dead and eight injured whereby three of the four events were conducted against government structures. This ten-year period of relative solace demonstrates that the first campaign had ended in 1973; however, planning by terrorists had only been disrupted and continued as an after-shock with very little concern now for the citizens of Jordan (Global Terrorism Database <http://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/>). Once again, the target audience continued to be the Jordanian government as it now aligned itself with Western nations for economic and security reasons. The political turmoil between Israel and the Palestinians of the West Bank and Jordan's denial of the PLO kept the focus of these radical Palestinian groups alive with a hatred of Jordan.

This ten-year period experienced sporadic attacks reminiscent of the PLO defeat during the Jordanian civil war. Yasser Arafat had entered the world of politics in the West Bank. With the PLO ousted from Jordan, the radical anti-Israeli groups as well as Syria no longer had easy access to the country of Israel to inflict cross-border destruction. The country studies website highlights the change afoot politically with Jordan and the PLO that contributed to this relative period of calm in the following excerpt: "Following the Rabat Summit, Hussein and PLO leader Yasir Arafat met to reconcile relations, strained since the 1970-71 civil war. Their discussions resulted in the decision in early 1975 for Jordan and the PLO to cease mutual recriminations" (<http://countrystudies.us/jordan/62.htm>). These discussions hid the distrust the Jordanian government had for the PLO as King Hussein was not easily convinced of the political validity of Yasser Arafat's claims. The following excerpt sets the political stage for a re-emergence of terrorist activities in Jordan: "Hussein rejected...a PLO demand that it be permitted to reestablish its military and political presence in the East Bank. After 1974[,] there was a noticeable resurgence of Palestinian empathy for and identification with the PLO in many parts of the world" (<http://countrystudies.us/jordan/62.htm>). The prominent reason for the resumption of terrorist attacks in Jordan lies in the fact that King Hussein would not allow the PLO to re-establish in Jordan as Yasser Arafat had hoped.

Terror Campaign #2 (Israel's Attack on Lebanon, 1983-1984): Twelve Events

The second campaign, from 1983 to 1984 included a total of twelve events. An interesting note for this campaign was that six incidents were not claimed by any specific group. Abu Nidal became most prominent during this terrorist campaign with three events; the Black

September Organization conducted one, and a new group, the Jordanian Revolutionary and Military Committee (MOUAB), conducted two. This new organization coming to life was the first indication of home-grown terrorists internal to the country influenced by the growing rhetoric of radical Islamists. The terrorist attacks by unknown perpetrators most likely fall into this same category as a result of the devastation experienced by the Palestinians in Lebanon at the hands of the Israelis and Christian Phalangists of the Lebanese military. The terrorist tactic used in all but one event during this campaign was explosives. The sole event in which a firearm was used is recorded as having been against a rival terrorist organization, resulting in the only death. The destruction of all events resulted in five other casualties. The possibility of a significant lack of focus by the many terrorist groups with remnants still inside Jordan is a cause for rival factions to turn on each other. It is a reflection of the developing conflict between PLO and its Palestinian factions over the refugee camps in Lebanon. The political turmoil was intensifying in the region with Israel continuing to be the target as Egypt's Anwar Sadat was assassinated in 1981 in response to the signing of the peace treaty with Israel a couple years earlier.

Lebanon became the newest terrorist breeding ground after Israel's invasion in 1982. Jordan was caught between pressing for peace negotiations with Israel and siding with Palestine, given that its population was more than 60% Palestinian. The unknown perpetrators can logically be assumed to have been from one of the radical groups within Jordan at the time, all of which carried disdain for secular Arab regimes, of which Jordan was rapidly becoming known. Jordan trailed Egypt in this respect. William Johnson (1984) in an article from the *Globe and Mail* speaks of the following strong relationship that had developed between Jordan and the United States: "America's commitment to help Jordan meet its security needs remains firm and unwavering," Ronald Reagan said. "We also agreed that terrorism cannot be tolerated...the leaders of all states must stand together against this new barbarism that threatens civilization" (p. 1). This bold acknowledgement by President Reagan, coupled with the transformation by Yasser Arafat to global political engagement and away from radicalism, fomented further hatred by the radical PLO splinter organizations that once thought Jordan was the ideal candidate for becoming an anti-Israeli operating base. The eventuality of this idea had reached its lowest point to date, creating a feeling of hopelessness among these radicals. In an aggressive attempt to rekindle support of the Jordanian Palestinians against Israel, the second terrorist campaign began with a resurgence of terrorist attacks in Jordan.

Based on Yasser Arafat's recognition that he would gain nothing by continuing his terrorist attacks against Israel and by becoming a political figure, left some of the more radical members to split and continue their quest. "Sabri Khalil al Banna, known by his code name Abu Nidal, vehemently opposed this change. Abu Nidal and a small group of his supporters defected from Al Fatah and formed the Al Fatah Revolutionary Council" (<http://countrystudies.us/jordan/62.html>). The infighting among Palestinian factions continued to worsen as Arafat separated from the radicals of his organization and began making overtures toward a peaceful settlement with countries in the region. "A more serious split occurred in

1983 when Said Musa Muragha (also known as Abu Musa) organized Al Fatah fighters in Lebanon who feared Arafat's reconciliation with Egypt would lead eventually to recognition of Israel" (<http://countrystudies.us/jordan/62.html>). A significant armed conflict erupted in Lebanon where the Palestinian factions chose sides as indicated in the following passage: "The supporters of Arafat and Abu Musa fought each other for control of Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon during 1983 and 1984, with heavy casualties on both sides" (<http://countrystudies.us/jordan/62.html>). This internal battle within the PLO marked Jordan, albeit indirectly as Abu Musa had served in the Jordanian military for many years before joining the PLO.

Radical anti-Israeli groups openly demonstrated their distrust for the government of Jordan and continued to pursue Jordan as a base from which to operate against Israel. Three prominent leaders at the time continued their defiance as presented in the following statement: "Habash [PFLP], Hawatmah [DFLP], and Jibril [PFLP-GC] remained hostile and unforgiving toward Hussein since he ousted the Palestinian groups after the civil war of 1970" (<http://countrystudies.us/jordan/62.html>). The vehemence for the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan government appeared to have grown more defiant than during the Jordanian ouster of the radical Palestinian factions during its "civil war." The Jordanian government thus remained the vigilant target audience of the radical Palestinian factions as "Arafat began the process of reconciliation with Hussein in 1973, the... [Palestinian radicals] opposed any PLO ties or even dialogue with Jordan and publicly called for Hussein's overthrow" (<http://countrystudies.us/jordan/62.html>). The situation was further exacerbated by Jordan being chosen to host the Palestinian National Council. "Although a PNC meeting was held in Amman in November 1984, its legitimacy was questioned because several of the guerrilla leaders, including Habash of the PFLP and Hawatmah of the DFLP, refused to attend" (<http://countrystudies.us/jordan/62.html>). Jordan, as a small country caught in the middle of significant political turmoil, continued to be the target of terrorist attacks. The radical Palestinian factions attempted to regain a supportive position in Jordan, and this new uptick in terrorist events targeted the Jordanian government infrastructure and avoided the population once again.

The Lebanese Christians as well as Israeli Defense forces contributed to this uptick in terrorist attacks in Jordan. The killing of Palestinian refugees by Christian Phalangists known to be backed by the Israeli forces in Lebanon reignited the Palestinian population of Jordan against Israel and provided an opportunity for the radical Palestinian factions to attempt to re-establish themselves in Jordan. It is noted in the following excerpt from the Palestine facts website that "Sabra and Shatila are two Palestinian refugee camps in Beirut, Lebanon where nearly two thousand Palestinian refugees were massacred during...September...1982" (http://www.palestinefacts.org/pf_1967to1991_sabra_shatila.php). The political goal refocused on the complete overthrow of the monarchy in Jordan and the establishment of a Palestinian-led republic as Jordan was the most populous Palestinian country. The terrorists, as in the past campaign, avoided the population at all costs, which is a strong indicator that the unknown perpetrators were Palestinian radical groups and wanted to influence the Palestinian citizens of Jordan and gain their support. The variety of targets consisted of businesses, educational institutions, military, police, and private-citizen property in an attempt to reduce the confidence of the population in its government's ability to maintain security and stability.

Between Campaigns (1985-1990): One Event

This interim period again brought relative stability to Jordan. From January 1985 until April 1990, only one recorded terrorist event occurred in the country of Jordan. A bomb was used by Black September against a government building, resulting in no casualties. It can be surmised that this attack was instigated by Syria as a result of the mess in Lebanon and Hafiz al-Asad's continued attempt to establish the PLO in Jordan for its own nefarious purposes against Israel. However, the political environment of confrontation between the Jordanian government and PLO had cooled considerably. Yasser Arafat focused on engaging the global community in an honest attempt to reach a peace agreement with Israel as indicated in the following excerpt: "Arafat's declaration of December 1988, in which he begrudgingly recognized Israel and renounced terrorism, signified a long-term change [in] PLO policy.... Yet the inflamed rhetoric and violent activities of the PLO continued while Arafat talked peace" (http://www.palestinefacts.org/pf_1967to1991_plo_israel_exist_1988.php). This period of calm in Jordan witnessed terrorist activities shifting from al-Fatah and others to HAMAs and Hizb Allah who were now assuming the mantle for radical Palestinian causes and operating from Lebanon and the Gaza Strip.

Terror Campaign #3 (Gulf War, 1990-1991): Fourteen Events

In 1991 alone, eleven terrorist events occurred in Jordan, all of the incidents having no terrorist group claiming credit except a single event by the Avenge the Arab Nation organization. The casualties included one dead and eight injured during 1991. The three events in 1990 resulted in five injuries. None of these attacks are known to have resulted in any United States casualties or interests damaged. The variety of tactics employed by the terrorists indicates that the attacks were somewhat disjointed and uncoordinated. It appears to be potentially unknown groups acting in an isolated manner against targets of their choosing. The recognition of Israel by PLO leader Yasser Arafat caused a stir among the many anti-Israeli groups who were continuing to fight from Lebanon and Gaza; however, the Palestinian radical terrorists realized that attempting to operate from Jordan against Israel was a losing battle and only provided minimal, temporary political gains. Tension in Jordan and the Levant region increased dramatically with the United States entry into Kuwait to remove Saddam Hussein. This entry was the first foray into the Middle East of significant Western militaries since the British back in World War I. Visions of occupation and colonialism reverberated throughout the Arab world as noted in the following excerpt: "Most of the 1991 incidents [in the Middle East] were low-level attacks in Lebanon and elsewhere; many of these were related to the Gulf war and the Israeli self-declared security zone on southern Lebanon" (http://www.fas.org/irp/threat/terror_92/mideast.html). Although Jordan did not support military actions in the retaking of Kuwait, it remained a staunch ally of the United States. In Jordan, the emergence of never-before seen radical groups came to life as a temporary condition of the times as outlined in the following quote: "[Jordanian] security services cracked down on the

fundamentalist Muhammad's Army in 1991.... In addition, Jordan has tightened security along its border with Israel and last year interdicted several armed infiltration operations claimed by, or attributed to, factions of Arafat's Fatah or the Palestine Islamic Jihad (PIJ)" (http://www.fas.org/irp/threat/terror_92/mideast.html). With the Levant experiencing an increase in anti-western rhetoric as a result of Operation DESERT STORM, Jordan was rapidly perfecting its ability to monitor, track, and disrupt terrorist organizations from operating on targets inside the country.

Coming to the forefront of outspoken groups was the Muslim Brotherhood. Stemmann (2008) clearly presents the following reason for its sudden appearance in the public spotlight: "Traditional allies of the monarchy, the Muslim Brotherhood...has been accompanied by a growing radicalization...as a result of their refusal to accept the peace treaty between Israel and Jordan and their diametrical opposition to the military intervention in Iraq" (p. 8). A United States-led coalition during Operation DESERT SHIELD/DESERT STORM is presumed to place global United States' interests as targets for terrorist attacks. The specific interest in striking United States' interests in Jordan was extremely limited as "Jordan continued to recognize the 'State of Palestine'...host...a Palestinian 'embassy' as well as offices of Fatah and such PLO 'rejectionists' as the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine and the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine" (http://www.fas.org/irp/threat/terror_92/mideast.html). Furthermore "HAMA[s]...has an office in Amman. In addition, some extremist Palestinian groups with a history of anti-Western terrorist activity--including the PFLP-GC, Abu Abbas's faction of the Palestine Liberation Front, and some elements of the PIJ--maintain a presence in Jordan" (http://www.fas.org/irp/threat/terror_92/mideast.html). It appears, with the existence of many earlier known groups, that terrorist attacks could easily have chosen any target.

This terrorist campaign is the only one of the five identified in the forty-year history of recorded events whereby United States' interests in Jordan would most likely have been targeted. This terrorist campaign by the anti-Israeli groups falsely recognized the United States as a fickle country. Their references were based on the United States' reaction to the bombing in Beirut that killed several hundred Marines (1983) and the fact that the United States did nothing when Iran took United States citizens as hostages (1979). Palestinian factions that remained in Jordan had the potential to plan limited attacks on United States interests; however, they were still very much focused on anti-Israeli targets. The increased level of growth and professionalism in the Jordanian security services reduced the attempts even more. The potential existed to strike United States interests' because of the relationship that Jordan and the United States enjoyed and, thus, indirectly indicated Jordanian support for the United States actions in Iraq. The focus of these attacks could easily have been directed at the United States' policy of support for Israel, as a number of radical groups in the Middle East did not see the ousting of Saddam as a positive gesture but one of greater interference by the United States in Middle Eastern affairs. For all intents and purposes, these terrorist groups believed they had succeeded, even without conducting a single terrorist attack against United States' interests. The United States did not remain in Iraq, this time, thus perpetuating the belief that the United States was fickle and would withdraw when confronted with the threat of terrorist attacks against their interests. This miscalculation of United States actions led to the September 11, 2001 bombing and the eventual demise of Al Qaida and its many associated groups. The potential for targeting United States

interests was short-lived and ultimately none was targeted, although the political environment was rife with distrust of the United States' intentions when the Gulf War began.

Between Campaigns (1992-1993): Two Events

A short, two-year interim of minimal terrorist activity in Jordan existed; however, it could easily be thought of as a continuation of the previous campaign. From 1992 to 1993, only two events resulted in one fatality, no injuries, and no name for the perpetrators. The fact that both targets are recorded as business and private citizen/property, one could surmise that these two events were more of a criminal/vengeful nature internal to the country. The following excerpt identifies the two events specifically and give greater detail to the politics of the time: “The principal terrorism-related events in Jordan in 1992 were the...assassination of an Iraqi nuclear scientist...and the conviction...[the] royal pardon of two Jordanian legislators for involvement with a subversive Muslim group, Shabab al-Nafeer al-Islami (the Vanguard of the Islamic Youth)” (http://www.fas.org/irp/threat/terror_92/mideast.html). Outside influence into Jordan was non-existent as the following excerpt eliminates the idea that Syria may have been involved “There has been no evidence of direct Syrian Government involvement in terrorist acts since 1986, but Syria continues to provide support and [a] safe haven to Arab and non-Arab terrorist organizations in Syria and in parts of Lebanon in which Syrian troops are deployed” (http://www.fas.org/irp/threat/terror_92/mideast.html). Removal of inside influence for terrorist attacks is also ruled out as expressed in the following excerpt: “Jordanian security and police closely monitor secular and Islamic extremists inside the country and detain individuals suspected of involvement in violent acts aimed at destabilizing the government or its relations with neighboring states” (http://www.fas.org/irp/threat/terror_92/mideast.html). Jordan has become a secure and stable country internally and has discouraged external influences.

Terror Campaign #4 (Jordan-Israel Peace Treaty, 1994-1997): Fourteen Events

This period appeared to maintain a steady state of events with six events occurring in 1994 with the others evenly spread across the remaining years. The significance of 1994 was the Jordan-Israel peace treaty. Stemmann (2008) identifies the treaty in the following phrase: “Wadi Araba peace accords in 1994” (p. 8), establishing the Jordan-Israel future. Only the second Arab nation to recognize Israel as a state and enter into a peace settlement sparked considerable unrest within the country of Jordan, once again because the overwhelming majority of the population is Palestinian. In addition, Jordan now had a new group with which to contend, HAMAs. This organization evolved from a transformed-Islamic assistance center in the Gaza Strip operated by Sheik Yasin. Setting the stage for the next terrorist campaign, the Madrid conference of 1991 led to the PLO recognizing Israel as a state. The Palestinian facts website discusses the transformative steps of the PLO from terrorist organization to political entity. A major item of the 1991 Madrid Conference was the PLO must renounce terrorism; furthermore, they were to recognize Israel and acknowledge the intent to comply with UN resolutions. The PLO, namely, Yasser Arafat, promised to accomplish all outstanding issues and indicated in a gesture of intent

by sending a letter to Yitzhak Rabin in 1993 which included the following statement: “The PLO recognizes the right of the State of Israel to exist in peace and security [and] The PLO accepts United Nations Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338” (<http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/Peace/recogn.html>). With the signing of the Oslo Accords in September 1993, which established recognition between the PLO’s Yasser Arafat and Israel, the terrorist activities of radical Palestinian groups had reason to be sparked into action once more. The organizations saw their interim gains, albeit limited; erode to nothing over the past twenty years. Their efforts to coerce political change between Israel and the Palestinians had reached a point of desperation. This degradation coupled with Jordan’s signing of a peace treaty with Israel marked the end of any possibility of using Jordan to attack Israeli targets. Jordan had clearly decided to align itself with the global community at large and the United States in particular. The radicalization of Shiekh Yasin, in conjunction with the dramatic shift in the political environment in the Levant region, became the catalyst that ignited another significant round of terrorist attacks in the Jordan.

The terrorist campaign began anew with HAMAs as the leading component. P.R. Kumaraswamy (no date) outlines the time when this attack occurred in the following excerpt: “It was only after the outbreak of the Intifada in December of 1987 that Sheikh Yasin became a serious threat as his welfare organization transformed into a radical Islamic organization, HAMAs” (p. 113). Furthermore, as the Palestinian groups were plodding along in their efforts to maintain pressure on Israel through multiple attacks from Lebanon and the Gaza Strip, Jordan was quickly recognizing that allowing HAMAs to continue its presence in Jordan was a significant threat to its safety and security within the region. P.R. Kumaraswamy (no date) annotates the existence of the more radical leaders of HAMAs in Jordan with the following comments: “In 1995 Masha’al, a founding member of HAMAs, took over as the political bureau chief in Amman following deportation of Abu-Marzuq to the US” (p. 113). Vehemently opposed to any relationship with Israel, HAMAs took advantage of the openness of King Hussein and the population of Jordan, using this platform once again to incite terrorist attacks against Israel. Jordan could not allow these actions to occur from its sovereign territory as it would face the wrath of Israel and violate the peace treaty signed in 1994. The following excerpt clearly explains the dilemma with which Jordan was faced: “In 1999...Hussein’s successor Abdullah realized that Masha’al was a threat not only to Israel but also to the Hashemite Kingdom” (P.R. Kumaraswamy, no date, p. 111). With the ouster of HAMAs, Jordanian interests continued to be the target of terrorist attacks, as in all previous campaigns, and Israeli interests were also prominent targets since the peace accords with Jordan were concluded. The expulsion of HAMAs and increased due diligence by the Jordanian security forces made a clear statement to the region and the Arab world that Jordan would no longer tolerate terrorists operating within its territory.

Between Campaigns (1998-2000): Three Events

The final interim of this forty-year recorded history of terrorist attacks in Jordan was as quiet as the previous interim periods. From February 1998 to November 2000, only three events occurred in Jordan. Two events were aimed at government facilities and committed by individuals and the other an educational institution was attacked by a group called the Youth of

Islamic Awakening. Only one injury occurred throughout this two-year period. The mixture of perpetrators indicates that these attacks were potentially generated by internal strife within the country and not as a result of known terrorist organizations. In 1999, King Abdullah released a large number of political prisoners as a gesture of reform. Unfortunately, one individual in this group, al-Zarqawi, would become the sole mastermind behind the final terrorist campaign in Jordan. In the following remark, Stemann (2008) presents the event leading to that which could be considered the most dangerous threat ever to the citizens of Jordan: “An amnesty granted after the coronation of King Abdullah in 1999 led to Zarqawi’s release” (p. 17). The deadliest chapter in Jordan’s historic battle with terrorism would soon commence.

Terror Campaign #5 (Release of al-Zarqawi, 2000-2006): Ten Events

The largest and most deadly terrorist attack in Jordanian history to date was perpetrated by Al Qai’da in Iraq (al-Zarqawi, Nov 9, 2005) in which three targeted hotels were successfully attacked, resulting in early reporting from the Jordanian government in the following quote: “The Jordanian cabinet said in a statement that the attacks, which killed 57 people and wounded 110, appeared to have been carried out by suicide bombers” (<http://www.nytimes.com/2005/11/10/international/middleeast/10jordan.html>). One hotel was partially spared as the attacker’s vest failed to detonate initially and the other not at all. These individuals did not belong to radical Palestinian organizations of earlier years and United States citizens injured were not the target but the result of their attendance at the hotel weddings. The real catalyst linked to this upheaval is tied directly to the strong support Jordan gave to the United States and coalition members in their invasion of Iraq in 2001. Stemann (2008) provides confirmation in the following statement: “Jihadi ideas have found favour with certain sectors of society in the country. Military intervention in Iraq and in particular the figure of Abu Musaf Al Zarqawi have resulted in Jordan becoming a favourite Al Qae[’]da target” (p. 7). The final terrorist campaign was created by one man seeking only to take revenge on Jordan for his arrest and imprisonment.

The additional influence from the United States’ second foray into Iraq set the stage for United States’ interests to be considered potential targets. Stemann (2008) speaks to the following political changes that occurred in Jordan during this time: “US military intervention in Iraq is another factor in the hardening of the tone of moderate Islamist criticism... Not only has the Jordanian government come under fire for allying itself with the United States in the Iraq war, but the Arab governments have also been denounced for failing to act” (p. 13). Al Qae’da came to the forefront of the world’s attention with its attack on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. After this event, the cataclysmic change in many of the Arab nations happened almost overnight. The world now wanted to support anti-terrorism fully. Jordan in particular had taken the lead by promoting tolerance among religions through their “Amman Message” and their extremely effective security services as Stemann (2008) points out in the following statement: “The...country ha[s] succeeded in dealing with the Jihadi threat...thanks to effective work by the security forces and initiatives such as the Amman Message, which fosters a more tolerant vision

of Islam and thus divert[s] support from Jihadist ideology” (p. 8). Given the moderate approach by the Jordanian government, Stemmann (2008) states the following contrasting view: “The key figure in terms of intellectual development is a Jordanian national, Isam Al Barqawi, better known as Abu Mohamed Al Maqdisi...after a period in Afghanistan, he returned to Jordan in 1992 and became leader of the terrorist organization Bay’at Al Imam” (p. 15). Furthermore, Stemmann (2008) points out that “the intellectual father of Abu Musaf Al Zarqawi, Maqdisi remains in prison” (p. 15). The emergence of al-Zarqawi as the mastermind behind the most deadly terrorist attacks in Jordanian history is best described in the following excerpt: “Zarqawi returned to Jordan deeply marked by his experience in Afghanistan...[and] quickly sought out Maqdisi...and enlisted his help to setup his first terrorist group, Bayat al Imam” (Stemmann, 2008, p. 16). Zarqawi was thus determined to undermine the Jordanian government as his Afghanistan experience taught him that moderate Arab regimes, like Jordan, were acceptable targets.

Zarqawi, freed in 1999, set out on a mission against the Jordanian government for his past detention and the continued persecution of his mentor. He was determined to strike at Jordanian interests, Israeli interests, and United States interests with a vengeance. Stemmann (2008) confirms Zarqawi’s intentions in the following statement: “Despite failure of his previous attempts, Zarqawi was resolved more than ever to strike against the Jordanian regime, Israel and American interests in the region” (p. 17). He was also responsible for the only successful attack on any United States’ interest to date in Jordan. Stemmann (2008) states that “Zarqawi planned and coordinated the assassination of [the] US diplomat Laurence Foley” (p. 17). Furthermore, Zarqawi is connected to the only other United States’ interest in Jordan to be a target of attack as Stemmann (2008) points out that “[his] strategy led to attacks on US ships in Aqaba on the Jordanian coast in August 2005” (p. 17). The death of al-Zarqawi in 2006 in Iraq brought an immediate end to the deadliest assault on United States’ interests in Jordan.

Relative Quiet (2006-2010): Two Events

With al-Zarqawi dead, Jordan has entered a period of calm with only three events recorded in the Global Terrorism Database for this five-year period. The calm continues as personal experience over the past two years (2010-2012) provided no indications of terrorist threats in Jordan, either toward Jordanian or American interests. Some would argue this is due to the incredibly restrictive policies in place by the embassy as well as the due diligence by the Jordanian security services. Although vigilance against personal harm is an innate characteristic of all human beings, the fact that Jordan continues to create a stable and secure environment, providing a progressively more open political system as well as ensuring the rights of all citizens, is the greatest deterrent to other terrorist attempts. Jordan’s strong leadership within the global community indicates that freedom of religion, freedom of speech, and freedom to assemble will only improve, further deterring future political violence.

Conclusion

In the final analysis, Jordanian interests throughout the forty-year period from 1970 to 2010 were, by far, always the primary target of terrorists. It is safe to say that only during the

last of the five campaigns did United States' interests come under attack and never as the sole interest of any terrorist organization. It must be noted that of all the attacks that might have been considered directed toward United States' interests, only one American diplomat fell victim and no physical property, including the United States' naval assets, was damaged. The Global Jihad website highlights Laurence Foley's death on "October 28, 2002" as having been orchestrated by al-Zarqawi and all evidence demonstrates he was not a random target of opportunity, but a targeted political statement by al-Zarqawi based on support to the Jordanian government as the USAID representative (http://globaljihad.net/view_page.asp?id=662). Al-Zarqawi's subsequent death in 2006 brought an immediate halt to any further attacks on United States' interests. Because the United States and Jordan are close allies as is Israel and Jordan, it is easy to surmise that terrorist organizations will always consider all three countries as potential targets. This perception is patently false, as the facts of this paper outline and is more a perception bolstered by the hypersensitive rhetoric of United States' politicians and the sensationalism presented by the media. After thorough analysis of the political history of the Levant, the impetus to influence terrorists directly to attack is more a result of Jordan's bold and decisive leadership that consistently made it the primary target audience. All attempts by the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) under Yasser Arafat and its many factions failed to divide the Jordanian population, even with multiple attempts. State sponsors of terrorism, namely Syria, also failed on numerous attempts to fell the Jordanian regime. King Abdullah II continues to balance the country's interests with the Western nations against the Palestinian majority of his country to ensure continued security and stability for all Jordanian citizens. Absolutely nothing in the past forty years and currently indicates that United States interests were ever the primary target. The promulgation of the idea that United States interests in Jordan are incessantly targeted by terrorists is patently false and merely the perception of the uneducated or uninformed. Jordanian infrastructure was the target in more than 95% of all recorded attacks and if a new campaign erupts, chances are Jordanian interests will again be at much greater risk than United States or Israeli interests.

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