

Terrorist in our deli

“We can forgive [them] for killing our children. We cannot forgive them from forcing us to kill their children. We will only have peace with [them] when they love their children more than they hate us” –Golda Meir, former Prime Minister of Israel

Two recent terrorist attacks in Israel have shined a light on the purposes and patterns of Muslim terror, revealing the usual beliefs about such terror to be myths.

Last month an American student was murdered by a terrorist in Tel Aviv, Israel, while on a graduate school trip from Vanderbilt University. He had served in the US Military, surviving tours in Afghanistan and Iraq. Israelis are very saddened by his death, and very angry at the tremendous loss to his family, friends and nation at the hands of yet another despicable Arab Muslim with a knife.

In addition to adding to the sorrow and frustration Israelis feel by the continued attacks by Arabs, the tragic death of Taylor Force and other recent attacks, reveal important trends in the Muslim war against civilians in Israel.

For one thing, the victim was a tourist, not a Jew living in Israel. Most victims have been Jews, though some were Arabs and a couple have been non-Jewish workers or visitors from abroad. It seems this Tel Aviv beach terrorist went wild, randomly slashing anyone he could reach. On a Tel Aviv beach on any given day, there's a good chance a random person present is a non-Jewish tourist. Probably for this reason, tourists haven't had to be concerned about potential attacks.

The second anomaly is the location, as Tel Aviv is not nor has it ever been in a region contested by Palestinians to be their fantasized “homeland”. It is not near Gaza nor is it near the Judea and Samaria regions – mistakenly called the “West Bank” by the media. The terrorist did not live in the city, but illegally entered Israel from his Palestinian village in the disputed territory. Thus, he did not act out of a so-called

“resistance” to occupation or some wacko need to protect his Palestinian home. He came to Tel Aviv to murder apparently anyone, most likely as a way to demonize Israel and its tourist economy.

In addition to this attack, my own town of Maale Adumim was recently rocked by a gruesome violent attack. A night security guard at the local mall was violently and horrifically attacked by an ax-wielding Arab during the early morning hours. This attempted murder puts an end to other widely-held myths about Arab-on-Jewish Israeli terror. (At this moment, following weeks in a coma, the guard is conscious and undergoing rehabilitation at the hospital.)

The terrorist, who has been arrested, has no defense, as the entire attack was captured on security video camera. He was an employee by a deli in the mall, having worked there for some time serving Jewish residents from behind the counter without any indication of any animosity toward his Jewish customers. He often stayed late to clean up the deli and to share a cup of coffee with the security guard. They were very friendly with each other. It's obvious that the victim had no fear of his friend, as his back was to him when the ax suddenly came down on his head.

Palestinian Arab workers in the city, and in other East Jerusalem neighborhoods, are quite common, often working in restaurants, retail, construction, and even in the local health center. They deliver groceries to residents, work on road crews, and are just about everywhere during the day, though they don't live in town. To do this, they must meet certain qualifications to obtain a work permit, which allows them to get through the checkpoints at all city entrances.

When the terrorist's photo was finally shown in the media, I did recognize him as the friendly deli counter person I had frequently laughed and joked with while buying the delicious hummus, chopped liver, and salads such as avocado and mixed fruits. It felt good to have camaraderie with “the other”, one of our cousins, rather than feeling animosity or the need to keep a distance. How could this smiling face, who laughed

good-naturedly at my attempts at Hebrew, pick up an ax and repeatedly strike an unarmed "friend" who had never done him any harm?

Of course, the continuing story is in the media and on everyone's minds, day after day. How does one live with the knowledge that their good intentions and love for fellow man is not enough to make peace? This terrorist did not attempt murder because he was unemployed and destitute. In fact, it was the very employment and opportunity enjoyed by him that gave him access to the friend who became his victim. How do we understand this? How do we live with this?

Prior to these two terrorist attacks, I had felt secure in believing that as long as I stayed away from the Arab section of the Old City of Jerusalem, and the Gush Etzion bus stop, plus a few other places, I could avoid attacks.

With the realization and proof that Arab terrorists are targeting all Israelis, even other Arabs, and just about anyone else they come into contact with, killing indiscriminately, it's hard to feel safe anywhere. Not only that, but it's impossible to even consider making friends with Arabs. If they will attack their friend, suddenly and viciously, why befriend them? There is no trust.

In fact, at least temporarily, many Palestinian Arabs have lost their jobs. More businesses are putting out the word that they have job openings and want to hire Jews. We now lock our doors, even when we're home.

Dog trainers are offering classes on training our dogs in the arts of guarding and attacking on command. But do we really want our pets to learn to be aggressive? My Canaani is scary enough just by her size, exuberance and friendliness, along with a terrible shrill aboriginal bark. We're trying to teach her NOT to bite, which she does in play, not to hurt, just like other puppies.

Krav Maga (self defense) classes for women fill up and new ones are added. More people are getting their gun licenses and guns. People are angry, fed up, tired of our leaders failing

to do what needs to be done to secure our land and our safety. We don't want to be told we have to give land for peace. This is impossible with people who don't want peace, but who want to destroy us. We don't want to hear that we need to provide jobs, education etc. for our enemies and give them more money. Some of the homes the Palestinian Arab people live in are much nicer than those in which many of us Jewish residents of Judea (get that, Jew-dea?) live. And what an affront that the Arab car-ramming murderers are targeting bus riders, because they can afford cars while the bus riders cannot.

Why can't we afford cars? One major reason is the high cost of insurance; I've been told that most accidents on the roads are caused by Arabs, but I can't prove it. Rates are high also due to the high rate of theft of cars, again, largely by Arabs. Recovery is made more difficult because when a Palestinian steals a car, he can drive it straight to his village and the jurisdiction of the Palestinian police. Sometimes these police cooperate with Israel, and sometimes not.

Yet we tried to love our Muslim neighbors and employ them, but it has often been the employed ones who did the terror. There's no excuse, no explanation other than the incitement they're taught from the time they can walk, finally explodes when they have a weapon in their hands.

How can I look at another Muslim Arab again, without having my hand on a weapon? I hate that they're taking not only our lives, but our joy, peace and good feelings toward our fellow man. It's like Golda Meir said – the worst of their sins is to make us kill them, even if it is in self-defense.

The Muslim Arabs are robbing us of some of our goodness. My faith remains strong but it's the hatred that creeps in that I don't like. It depresses me. A reader of my emails remarked that I'd changed, after he read what I wrote about no longer trusting Arabs. I prefer to think that I haven't changed, but just gotten smarter.