

Terror

HOW ISRAEL HAS COPEDED
AND WHAT
AMERICA CAN LEARN

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Prologue

Darryl Moody's eyes widened as he entered the security control tower at Tel Aviv's Ben-Gurion Airport. The half-dozen young women and men working there hardly noticed the small group of American visitors who had stepped into their workspace. Clad in T-shirts and jeans, the Israelis were bantering softly while checking video monitors and making notes. Cartoons hung from the bulletin board. "This is not what I anticipated seeing," Moody thought to himself. He was in Israel for the first time, for a conference on homeland security and behind-the-scenes tours of sensitive sites. Israel's reputation for exacting security measures led him to expect something else. "I had in my mind, you know, high tech, people in military uniforms, disciplined demeanor," he told me. "What I saw was so much more casual." Still, he concluded, their approach evidently worked for them.

It was mid-2005, and for nearly four years, Moody had been working on security issues in the United States. He was a vice president of BearingPoint, a management firm hired by the federal government after the September 11, 2001, attacks to work on enhancing border protection, immigration control, and other security-related issues. His responsibilities included helping to organize the newly established Transportation Security Administration and to improve airport security.

Moody knew that Israeli practices at Ben-Gurion were considered "the gold standard for aviation security," as he put it. While touring the facility, he created a mental checklist of what he witnessed: the long serpentine road from the front gate to the terminal, massive space in the terminal, thick floor-to-ceiling windows of

bombproof glass, camera surveillance of cars being unloaded. Helpful as these features might be, recreating them in American airports would not be accepted, he believed. Too difficult, too expensive.

True, some American airports were being renovated to enhance security. Moody thought of Baltimore Airport, which was increasing the distance between entry and passenger check-in. Los Angeles International was restructuring so that parking would be a mile away from the terminal. But in general, he believed, U.S. air travelers were adequately protected by existing methods of passenger screening, x-ray and explosive-detection machines, and armed marshals in planes. Still, on the evidence, Israelis were not satisfied with U.S. procedures. El Al, Israel's national airline, screens its own bags at four of the five American airports out of which it operates—Kennedy in New York, O'Hare in Chicago, Los Angeles International, and Miami International. At Newark International, El Al screeners may recheck luggage that has gone through U.S. detection machines. Isaac Yeffet, El Al's retired head of security, said that El Al screening included the use of more sensitive machines and more rigorous questioning of passengers.¹

I asked Moody what he found to be different about Israeli procedures at Ben-Gurion. At first he said simply that the Israelis do more screenings. Then with a laugh he added, "The main difference is that in Israel they profile with a capital P. And they don't hide that fact." Darryl Moody is articulate. His smile spreads easily across his round face. As an African American, Moody admitted to keen sensitivity to the issue of profiling. He knows well that at airports and elsewhere in the United States, singling out individuals for scrutiny based on racial, ethnic, or religious background is forbidden. All air passengers, regardless of age or other characteristics, must empty their pockets and remove their shoes and belts for inspection. Individuals undergo additional scrutiny only for cause or through random designation.

What did he personally think about profiling? I asked. "In America we just couldn't do it," Moody replied. He sighed. The Israelis obviously think it is necessary, and it's their country, he said.

“So if you don’t like it, don’t come to this country.” In fact, Israeli screening centers on an interview by a carefully trained inspector. Each individual is asked about the purpose of his visit, length of time in Israel, country of origin. One question builds on another. If the passenger’s answers raise concerns, he will be further scrutinized. Otherwise, he quickly moves through the screening process. No removal of shoes or belts. No routine confiscation of nail files and scissors.

Moody thought back to the weeks after 9/11, when some of his colleagues said the United States should just copy the Israeli methods of airport security. Others objected that, besides the issue of profiling, time-consuming interviews of passengers would be unworkable because of the greater volume of U.S. air traffic. Moody believes that national pride also played a part. He recalled that Australia rebuffed his company’s offer to go there and produce a biometric identification card for their transportation workers. Rather, the Australians asked him to explain the process so that an Australian firm could implement it. “I found the same attitude in every country where we’ve tried to provide our expertise,” Moody said.

In considering what Americans can learn from Israel’s experience, Moody’s reactions underscore three truths. First, while Israeli preparedness is commonly acknowledged as advanced, even “the gold standard,” preconceived notions about Israeli practices may be inaccurate. The best understanding comes not from hearsay but from personal observation. Second, not every worthwhile measure is easily transferable from one society to another. For example, for cultural, political, or financial reasons, Americans might be unreceptive to certain practices. But third, refusal to learn from others, whether because of national pride or wrong assumptions, can leave a society more vulnerable. By understanding Israelis’ experience with terrorism, from adjustments in their daily routines to the country’s emergency response procedures, Americans can better discern how to cope and to save lives.

* * *

Although terrorism has been variously defined, it commonly includes deliberate violence against innocent individuals with the aim of influencing political outcomes. For thousands of years murderous assaults against innocent people have occurred in the name of religion or ideology.² But terrorist attacks, especially by suicide bombers, increased dramatically toward the end of the twentieth century and into the twenty-first. Their targets were in countries with diverse populations and political systems, including in India, Indonesia, Iraq, Israel, Kenya, Pakistan, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Spain, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, Turkey, the United Kingdom, and the United States. These assaults were carried out largely by Islamic extremists or by secular nationalist militants. The principal example of the latter was in Sri Lanka, where the Tamil Tigers, a Marxist and ethnically based organization, was behind more than eighty suicide bombings.³

The 9/11 attacks shocked Americans into recognizing their own vulnerability. Since then, authorities have thwarted plans by terrorists to attack other U.S. targets, including the Brooklyn Bridge, the New York City garment district, and the Los Angeles Airport. Overseas, however, terrorists have been more successful, having set off bombs in Madrid, Istanbul, London—and, with increasing frequency, in Iraq. But no country has endured more systematic terrorism over an extended period than Israel. Elsewhere, intervals between assaults might be measured in months or years. Not in Israel. Beginning in September 2000, a year before the jetliner attacks on America, and throughout the six years following, Palestinians attempted thousands of attacks against Israelis. Most were prevented by Israeli forces, but around four hundred succeeded, including nearly one hundred and fifty suicide bombings.⁴ Palestinian bombers blew themselves up in buses, restaurants, shopping malls, dance halls, ice cream parlors, and schools—killing around 1,100 adults and children, and maiming 7,500 more.

The frequency and the random locations of the targets placed the Israelis on edge. Beyond the victims and families who were directly affected, much of the population felt stressed. During the first years

of the “intifada,” as the Arabs called their uprising, many Israelis stopped dining out or traveling by bus. (The rush of terrorist attacks after 2000 is sometimes called the second intifada, the first and less violent one having extended from 1987 to 1993.) Fewer shoppers went to open markets and department stores. Attendance at movie theaters fell—at least for a while. By 2004, the public’s behavior had largely reverted to earlier patterns. Israeli security efforts had succeeded in sharply reducing the number of terror incidents. But even a year earlier, Israelis were drifting back to old form. In 2003, despite three or four suicide bombings per month, markets, stores, movies, and restaurants had again begun to bustle with patrons. Still, the threat of terrorism had influenced the mindset of some people in unexpected ways.

* * *

In the spring of 2003, Lawrence “Levi” Lauer was strolling with his 14-year-old daughter Anya near their Jerusalem home. The Lauers live in a neighborhood known as Old Katamon, a charming residential area where balconies brim with red and yellow begonias. Street crime in Israel is rare, and people have long walked with relative abandon. While the spate of Palestinian attacks that began in 2000 had caused some to hesitate, many Israelis, like the Lauers, maintained their routines.

Interrupting their amiable chat, Anya suddenly suggested that she and her father change their relative positions on the sidewalk. “Dad, I think you should be walking on the outside and I should be on the inside,” she said. At first, Levi Lauer thought she was merely observing a quaint tenet of Western etiquette: A gentleman should shield a lady from the splash of passing vehicles. At least that was what Lauer had been taught during his growing-up years in America.

But etiquette was not on Anya’s mind. “What if a terrorist bomb should explode from the street?” she asked. “If you died, I think that somehow I would eventually get over it. But if I were killed, I know you could never get over it.”

Lauer had left Cleveland in 1976 to live in the Jewish state. Then 31, he was a rabbi in the reform, or progressive tradition of Judaism, with its emphasis on promoting social justice. After settling in Israel, Lauer continued to labor on behalf of the underdog—foreign workers, victims of human trafficking, the poor and needy. He was especially determined that Israel's Arab population be treated justly. After the wave of Palestinian attacks began, Lauer's list of people in distress expanded. At times the number of terror victims and their families seemed to rise by the day. An organization he founded, Atzum (the Hebrew word for powerful), began to raise funds to help these new victims just as it was helping others in need.

Anya's comment stunned her father. "Sure," was all he could say. He changed places with her, anguishing in silence over how his child had been impelled to such calculation. Was this what terrorism had driven Israeli children to worry about? He barely noticed the sun's golden reflection on the Jerusalem-stone homes along their way. Lauer felt sadness more than fear about the effects of the intifada. He and Anya kept on walking.

1

Terror

Two years before Levi Lauer and his daughter took their stroll in Jerusalem, Yuli Nelimov, 16, stood outside a seaside building in Tel Aviv, 40 miles west. The structure, once a dolphin aquarium, was now a dance hall called the Dolphi Disco. The wall beside the entrance was decorated with cartoon-like depictions of underwater life. Yellow sunfish cavorted against a background of sea anemones. A lazy octopus hovered above them. The dancehall, sometimes referred to as the Dolphinarium, regularly drew a weekend crowd of teenagers, most of them immigrants from the former Soviet Union.

It was nearing 11:30 PM on June 1, 2001, a crisp Friday night. Like the teens in Tel Aviv, others around the world were celebrating the end of their school or work week. Lines of young people awaited entry to a movie in Tokyo, a theater in London, the dance floor at Webster Hall in downtown New York. In their anticipation of a joyful experience, the groups were interchangeable. They also shared a condition of vulnerability. Largely unprotected and unaware, each group was susceptible to the whim of someone intent to do them harm. Those waiting to dance in New York's Webster Hall were as vulnerable and oblivious as those at the Dolphinarium.

Amid the throng waiting for the doors of the Dolphinarium to open, Yuli and her 18-year-old sister Yelena were especially eager. The Nelimov girls had emigrated from Russia five years earlier with their mother, Ella; brother, Sasha, then 9; and their grandmother. Their divorced father had remained in Russia. Both sisters loved to dance, and going to the Dolphi at the end of a school week had become a joyful routine. In fact, that day their fun had begun at home, when they posed for photographs in their mother's dresses. As they dressed for the evening, both girls decided to wear multi-colored beaded anklets that they had strung themselves. When Ella saw Yuli painting her fingernails green, she gently chided her. Green nail polish struck her as a bit tawdry. "Oh Mom, it's for fun," Yuli answered, dismissing her mother's fussiness. "The dancehall lights make the green sparkle." Ella shrugged her shoulders, a signal of reluctant surrender to her teenage daughter's whim.

Outside the dancehall, some of the youngsters were on cell phones. Yuli's light brown hair bobbed about her small earrings as she joked with friends. Nearby stood Ilya Gutman, 19, his dark brows arched in a happy expression. He and his family had left Kazakhstan nine years earlier. While helping to care for his disabled brother, he was enrolled in computer studies. Many in the group were similarly devoted to family and schoolwork. Irena Usdachi, 18, was deemed by her high school principal to be remarkably intelligent. Irena Nafmaniashtsy, 16, was, according to her teachers, vivacious and bright. Some who came to dance had arrived in Israel only months earlier: Roman Gurokhovsky, 20, with a shock of hair that curled toward the corner of his eye, and Aleksei Lupalo, 16, whose ironic smile seemed to portend the delivery of a clever one-liner.

The disco manager, Avi Mizrahi, stepped outside and sensed the enthusiasm of the crowd. Standing in front of the entrance, he glanced down the stone promenade past a kiosk 60 feet away that was selling Coke and ice cream. Across the street a bungee jump amusement ride glittered under neon lights. Mizrahi reentered the disco feeling good about the party atmosphere.

Earlier that day, while Yuli and Yelena were draping themselves

in their mother's attire, Sa'id Hutari was preparing to wrap himself in something less seemly. Born in Jordan twenty years earlier, Sa'id was heir to a family grievance. His grandfather was among 750,000 Arabs who were displaced in 1948 during Israel's war of independence. The previous year, the Jewish population of Palestine had accepted the United Nations plan to divide the land into separate Jewish and Arab states. But the neighboring Arab countries rejected the plan and attacked the nascent Jewish state.

In the ensuing conflict, some Arabs fled their homes when their leaders promised a quick return after the Jews were defeated. Some were pressed to leave by Jewish armed forces. Others fled to avoid deadly crossfire as people often do in wars. No matter the reason. And no matter that around the same period 850,000 Jews were forced to leave their homes in Arab countries. These Jews, like millions of other displaced persons from Europe, China, and the newly established states of India and Pakistan, settled in different countries. But more than a half-century later, only the Arabs continued to claim a "right of return."¹ And of all the world's displaced persons of that time, only the Arabs remained in refugee camps.

The neighboring countries that set up the camps—Egypt, Lebanon, Syria, Jordan—largely refused to absorb their inhabitants and encouraged their continuing hostility to Israel. Third and fourth generations were born into the crowded camps, steeped in resentment. These descendants were bred to believe that the only acceptable resolution of their grievances was to regain the homes of their grandparents or great-grandparents. Whether or not the homes still existed was immaterial to their proclaimed "right of return" to what was now the state of Israel. Insisting on this "right" would mean that perhaps 4 million—the estimated number of Palestinian descendants—could take residency in Israel. Since Israel's population consists of about 5.5 million Jews and 1.3 million Arabs, a large influx of Arabs would, of course, mean the end of the Jewish state.

The hatred bequeathed to Sa'id Hutari left him susceptible to virulent manipulation. Organizations like Hamas and Islamic Jihad

openly called for killing Jews as a means to end Israeli occupation. But for them, the occupation was on all the land between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea, including the state of Israel.

The 1993 Oslo Accord provided for recognition of Israel by Yasser Arafat's Palestinian Authority, along with steps toward creation of a Palestinian state. The borders were to be negotiated, though by general understanding the new Palestinian state would be created from land that came under Israeli control after the 1967 Israel-Arab war. On the one hand, that meant the Gaza strip, a wedge of land along Israel's border with Egypt. And on the other, the West Bank, an area between Israel and Jordan, west of the Jordan River.

Between 1948 and 1967, the West Bank was under the control of Jordan. Before then, for thirty years, it had been under the authority of Britain as part of the Palestine Mandate. (The mandate, granted by the League of Nations after World War I, initially included what later became Jordan as well as Israel and the area between them.) For centuries before World War I, the Ottoman Turks had ruled the area. In fact, the last time an indigenous population was sovereign in the land of Palestine, including the West Bank, was two thousand years earlier, when it was part of ancient Israel. Jewish sovereignty ceased when the Romans conquered the area and sent much of the population into exile eighty-seven years after the death of Christ.

Under the guidance of Hamas's Qassam Brigades, that June evening in 2001, Sa'id Hutari donned a garment variously described as a harness or belt. It was packed with explosives and inch-long nails, screws, washers, and ball bearings. Hamas and other terrorist groups, including Islamic Jihad and the Al Aqsa Martyrs Brigades, were prompting young people like Sa'id toward actions incompatible with civilized society.

Sa'id's father spoke of his son as a quiet, happy boy who did well in school. After becoming an electrician, Sa'id moved to the West Bank. Some two million Arabs now live there in addition to 240,000 Jews who moved there after 1967. The Jews are commonly

referred to as “settlers,” and the land as “occupied territory.” (Many Israelis insist the term should be “disputed territory,” since sovereignty and border issues remain unresolved.)

Sa’id had rehearsed his assignment under the direction of Jamal Mansur, a Hamas leader who worked from an office in Nablus, an Arab town in the West Bank.

Alighting from a Subaru, Sa’id made his way across a parking lot to the Dolphinarium. Scarcely older than the Israeli teenagers gathered near the entrance, he wedged his way among them. His bulky jacket drew no particular attention as he moved within feet of Yuli and Yelena. Nor did the 30-odd pounds of concealed explosives impede his movement. A wire attached to the deadly cargo extended to a triggering device in his pants pocket. A few minutes past 11:30 PM Sa’id Hutari reached into his pocket, placed his finger on the button, and pressed.

A flash of light leaped upward from his chest, accompanied by a deafening blast. In an instant, bodies were thrown into the air. Limbs were sundered, and pieces of arms, legs, and hands flew in every direction. A burgeoning fireball engulfed an area 50 feet across as strips of human membrane were catapulted far beyond the edge of the fire.

The metal pieces that had been packed with the explosives sprayed outward as fast as bullets. In less than a second, a nail could puncture a victim as cleanly as a hypodermic needle. Drilling farther inward, it could slice through an artery and end up lodged in the heart. A screw might take a different trajectory. Turned into a propeller, its rotary force could tear open a wad of skin and grind into the underlying muscle and nerve tissue, converting them into a mushy mass. A second screw might spin through the spinal cord, severing the motor connections between brain and limbs and leaving the victim permanently paralyzed.

For an instant after the detonation everything was silent. Then screams and moans. Young people, some whole, some in pieces, lay scattered on the pavement made soft from the heat of the explosion.

Blood gushed from ripped abdomens and from openings where an arm or leg was torn away. The ground was dotted with pieces of skin and of scalp with hair attached.

Blood was spattered on automobiles parked far from the epicenter and on the walls of the distant kiosk along the promenade. Danny Shamalov, 17, whose foot was punctured by nails, recalled the carnage the next day from a hospital bed: "I saw a young girl sitting without a leg; she was screaming and didn't let anyone get near her. Next to her someone lay dead. I saw a boy running and holding his torn arm, and I saw another girl without an eye."²

The outer wall of the Dolphinarium was pockmarked with shards of metal. The overhang above the entryway was charred, though inexplicably, the adjacent mural was undamaged, its still-life fish eerily placid amid the chaos. Within minutes, vehicles poured into the scene, their sirens screaming, blue and red lights flashing. Police cordoned off the area.

Scores of emergency medical workers made their way through the dead and maimed. The workers began to administer first aid as they placed the injured onto stretchers and loaded them into ambulances. Survivors were quickly dispatched to area hospitals, where teams of doctors and other health workers were scrambling in preparation. Priority attention went to the living, while the dead victims were covered with white plastic sheets and left on the ground. As the bodies awaited transportation to the morgue, their motionless arms and legs extended beyond the sheets. Among the twenty who lay dead were Yuli and Yelena Nelimov, Ilya, the two Irenas, and Roman and Aleksei. Another 120 were injured, many of them critically, including one who died days later.

Within an hour the victims had been removed, though remnants of recent life remained pervasive. Into the next day, clean-up crews labored to remove the traces. Caked blood had colored patches of the ground burgundy-black. Segments of skin turned dark from the searing heat remained stuck to the pavement, and bone fragments lay scattered far from the epicenter.

Minutes after the attack, radio and television bulletins announced

what had happened. Ella Nelimov was driving with a friend when she heard the radio bulletin. As with other parents trying frantically to reach their children at the Dolphinarium, Ella's calls to her girls' cell phones went unanswered. Her middle-of-the-night trek began at Ichilov, the main hospital in Metropolitan Tel Aviv, the first stop in Ella's search. When she arrived, she encountered a growing crowd of desperate parents who were also seeking word about their children. She reached a hospital aide and described her daughters, Yuli and Yelena. The aide said that identification of the newly arrived patients was not yet complete and that Ella would have to wait. She sat quietly along the lobby wall and eventually was told that her daughters were not at the hospital. Ella's friend then drove her to Tel Aviv University's Wolfsohn Hospital on the southern edge of the city. As at Ichilov, Ella's girls were not among the newly admitted patients. Perhaps, Ella thought, someone might have information at the Dolphinarium, and she went there next. As she approached the perimeter an hour and a half after the bombing, the smell of the carnage was still fresh. She told a police officer of her search at the two hospitals and wondered if anyone at the scene might know where her daughters had been taken. The officer advised her to check at the morgue.

The morgue, part of the National Forensic Institute, was less than a mile from the Dolphinarium, and when Ella arrived she found herself among grieving families. Mothers, upon learning the worst, had collapsed on the building's grounds and were being treated by paramedics. She walked past them and went inside. She was escorted to a room that contained the unidentified remains of two victims. At first she could not recognize the mangled figures, but a soft gasp escaped from her throat as her eyes glided to a hand. The fingernails were painted green. Then she saw the ankles of each figure encircled with the multicolored beads that her girls had strung. Though overwhelmed with sadness, she remained stoic.

A year later Ella Nelimov still seemed uncomprehending. At a graveside memorial service for her daughters, she stared at the two black marble headstones. Like most Jews from the former Soviet

Union, she grew up uninformed about religious practices. Centuries-old Russian anti-Semitism had been reinforced by the Soviet regime's own version as well as its general antipathy to religion. Many Jews had grown distant from the traditions of their parents or grandparents. Still, during the Cold War, a core of Jewish activists pressed for the right to emigrate and openly practice their religion. They were less likely to receive permission to leave than to be sent to prison for their effrontery.

Only in the late 1980s, when the Soviet regime was near collapse, were Jews able to emigrate in large numbers. Reattachment to their historical roots prompted nearly one million Jews from the former Soviet Union to move to Israel in little more than a decade. Ella's daughters, Yuli and Yelena, felt especially drawn to a sense of peoplehood and convinced their mother to make the move. After their deaths, Ella told a rabbi that she knew little about rituals and asked him to guide her through Jewish mourning. "We are here in Israel, we're Jews, and I wanted to do what they do here," she said. Subsequent months were difficult, but she kept her equilibrium. She had attained a better-paying government job and was receiving support from friends and from a volunteer community group.

Now, dressed in a black blouse and pants, she stood before her daughters' graves clasping a bouquet of flowers. "I can see in my mind what they looked like just before they went out that night," she said. "I can see it like it was yesterday."

Months after the attack, Australian television broadcast a documentary that included an interview with Sa'id's father. Mr. Hutari said that he had no forewarning that Sa'id was going to blow himself up but that he was proud of what his son did. "I hope that my other three sons will do the same," he said. "I would like all members of my family, all the relatives, to die for my nation and my homeland."³

Unlike most Israeli facilities that have been have been bombed, the Dolphinarium was not quickly repaired and returned to its original condition. Three year after the attack, the building remained closed and barred. On a June evening much like that tragic

evening in 2001, flashes of moonbeam bounced from waves along the nearby beachfront. They shone on a simple memorial several feet from the entrance to the former dancehall. A life-size iron silhouette depicts a boy and girl holding hands. Not far away are the names of the victims, and a simple inscription: "We will not stop dancing."

* * *

The attack at the Dolphinarium, though widely reported, seemed distant to many outside Israel. Few patrons of public establishments elsewhere in the world changed their habits or felt threatened as a consequence. But three months later, on September 11, 2001, dancing at Webster Hall and elsewhere in the New York area came to a halt. In the following days the slogan, "We are all Israelis now," became a commonplace for many, at least for a while.⁴

As Americans were jolted into recognizing their own vulnerability, more began to pay attention to how the Israelis were dealing with terrorism. Information exchanges between United States and Israeli officials grew in a variety of areas, from law enforcement to medical preparedness. These concerns led to numerous conferences, including one at New York University Medical School on the eve of the second anniversary of the jetliner attacks. Dr. David Applebaum, chief of emergency medicine at Shaare Zedek Hospital in Jerusalem, was invited to share his experiences in caring for hundreds of victims of terrorist attacks. After making his presentation, on Monday, September 7, 2003, he quickly left the conference to return to Israel.

In anticipation of his daughter Nava's marriage three days later on September 10, Applebaum, 50, seemed to wear a perpetual smile. His dark pepper-and-salt beard contrasted with glistening white teeth. As they posed for a photograph, 20-year-old Nava leaned toward her father's chest. The joyful glint in their eyes matched perfectly. Now, with his return to Israel, he could give full attention to his daughter and the imminent celebration.

Born in Detroit, David attended the Hillel Elementary School,

a Jewish school at which his father was the principal. Miriam Seagle, a childhood friend, remembers afternoons at David's home when they were seven, stuffing down hotdogs and watching television. *Howdy Doodly* was a favorite program. David's family moved to Chicago when he was a teenager, after which Miriam rarely saw him. But decades later, on a visit to Israel with her husband, they reconnected. She chuckled as she recalled her impression: "He was still sweet and funny, just like he was as a kid."

After David completed college, he became an ordained rabbi, but he also earned a masters degree in biology from Northwestern University. He then attended the Medical College of Ohio in Toledo, graduated in 1978, and worked as an emergency room doctor in Cleveland. After immigrating to Israel in 1982, he divided his time between the United States and Israel, performing emergency medicine at each.

During the next two decades, Dr. Applebaum forged a reputation as a creative clinician and organizer. He developed a life-saving procedure that can dissolve clots in the first moments after a heart attack. And he responded to the often-crowded conditions in hospital emergency departments by creating an alternative service. He established a privately owned system of clinics called Terem, which grew to include eight urgent and primary care facilities in the Jerusalem area. Many patients with sore throats, upset stomachs, and minor injuries now seek care at a Terem clinic, and hospital emergency departments have become less clogged.

Miriam Dombey, David's assistant at a Jerusalem clinic he directed, recalled an incident in which a Jewish woman did not want to be treated by an Arab physician on staff. Dr. Applebaum would have none of it. He intervened, telling the patient that nationality played no part in determining the qualifications of staff members. "Our staff has a right to be here and complies with our professional standards," he said. Staring directly at her, he warned: "You can accept treatment by our doctor or go elsewhere."

With his wife, Debra, who had grown up in Cleveland, David had six children. Nava, their oldest daughter, had just completed

two years of national service, working with children suffering from cancer. She was planning to enter college and study genetics. Meanwhile, relatives from America and Canada had arrived to join with hundreds of Israeli friends and family to celebrate Nava's marriage to Hanan Sand, a student at a religious school.

Café Hillel, a lively gathering place in Jerusalem, attracts young and old. Salads and sandwiches are common fare, along with a specialty drink of the house, a mug of cappuccino. The café, on Emek Refaim Street, is easily accessible. Just beyond two security guards, the door opens directly into the dining area. Inside, to the left, patrons place their orders at the counter. Behind the counter a crew of young sandwich-makers labor to keep pace with demand. On the opposite wall, large windowpanes give full view to an outdoor eating section. People linger over drinks, and relaxed conversation is the rule.

Not surprisingly, the café would seem a pleasant place for a father-daughter chat. For David and Nava, their late-evening snack and the take-home desserts they promised the rest of the family carried special significance. Nava's marriage the next day meant that this night was to be the last with her family before beginning her own household.

From their home a few blocks away, David and Nava made their way to Emek Refaim Street. They crossed the alleyway that borders the restaurant and walked under a black awning. The white lettering on the forward flap simply said: "Café Hillel." Nava passed the security guards and entered. David, a few feet behind, had not quite reached the door. Suddenly, from 30 feet down the street, near the adjacent pizza parlor, a man yelled, "Stop him. Stop him." Yitzak Mor was shouting and pointing frantically to a man in a white shirt, halfway between David and himself.

Mor had been working as a guard at Pizza Meter for only one week. Stocky and dark, he was barely older than the Jewish state. He was one year old when his family emigrated from Morocco in 1948, the year that Israel was established. Skilled with his hands, Yitzak previously worked as an electrician and machinist. Israel's

economy had soured in recent years, and work was harder to find. But the intifada had also created a new industry. The demand for security guards mushroomed, and Yitzak found employment at a security agency. He was initially assigned to a nursery school, then to an elementary school, and later to the Pizza Meter next to the Café Hillel.

Seven months after his frantic shouts, Yitzak Mor and his wife, Chava, recounted the experience to me. Their modest third-floor apartment is in Gilo, a section on the edge of Jerusalem. Yitzak stretched his arm along the back of a worn green couch. A pack of Time cigarettes lay on the coffee table between us.

“That day, I came to work at 5 PM,” he recalled. It was Tuesday, September 9, and he was expected to stay until midnight. “When I arrived, I saw more police and security people than usual, and I asked, ‘What’s going on?’” He learned that a warning had been issued that a terrorist might be in the vicinity.

Mor had never encountered a terrorist. Like other guards he carried a pistol, but he had fired it only during practice. A government security man nearby said, “If you see the terrorist, just grab him quietly if you can.” Mor asked, “Is that a joke?” “No.” He wandered up to the corner and heard the same warning from the two private guards in front of the Café Hillel. He felt unsettled. How would he know if he’d seen a terrorist?

He returned to his post outside the Pizza Meter. Customers came and went uneventfully. Toward the end of his shift, around 11:20 PM, a man walked past him toward the café. When Mor saw the man from the rear he became alarmed. “It looked like there was a square suitcase on his back. He had a white shirt, and this thing under it bulked out,” he recalled.

Mor called at him to stop, but the man kept moving. Then Mor bellowed the words that have echoed in his mind ever since: “Stop him. Stop him.” Fearful that shooting at the man from behind might detonate the bulk, Mor hoped a guard at the café would fire from the front. But to no avail.

A flash of light and a deafening explosion erupted from the man. “I felt like I was flying,” Mor said. The blast lifted him and spun him around. He lay in the street riddled with shrapnel, barely conscious. With sirens wailing, police cars, ambulances, and other emergency vehicles quickly arrived.

The scene was littered with bodies and blood. Part of the roof of the café had collapsed, and the awning bearing the name “Café Hillel” dangled precariously. Plastic coffee cups, napkins, and broken glass covered the street along with body parts and torn clothing. Perah Tiab had been walking up the alley next to the café and was showered with debris. Sobbing, the 41-year-old woman said, “It was like the sky was bleeding.”

At the hospital it became clear that Mor’s injuries were serious but not life-threatening. “It was a miracle,” he said wistfully. “I was the same distance away from the bomber as Dr. Applebaum.” With a nod of disbelief he added: “But he was killed with his daughter and I wasn’t.”

Mor expressed grief over their deaths and then turned inward: “To have gone through this and lived is another type of affliction.” His wife Chava interjected: “I was in shock. I saw my husband on television in a wheelchair and that’s how I learned. I tried calling and calling but couldn’t reach him at the hospital. Then they called me.”

Mor was discharged from the hospital after a few days to convalesce at home. His wounds were healing, but he continued to spend much of the time in bed. Chava evinces frustration: “He remained unable to walk, but it was clear that the problem was not just with physical injury.” When we spoke in 2004, seven months after the attack, Yitzak rose to his feet. He hesitantly navigated around the coffee table before sinking again into the couch. “My psychiatrist says I don’t have any physical problem with my legs. But I can hardly walk—my legs don’t work.”

Yitzak’s experience had brought his wife to despair. “Now I can’t even look for work. I have to stay with him all the time.” She

sounded disbelieving. "His personality is different." They were living off of a small government stipend and help from the volunteer group, Atzum.

Yitzak, shoeless and in white socks, stretched backwards. At a glance, he seemed physically fit, garbed as he was in a turtleneck jersey and green running pants. But as he talked, the malaise became evident. He spoke haltingly about his efforts to go out in public. "If I get on a bus, I feel my heart pounding, so I get off after a few blocks. I keep trying, but when I get on the bus I start to shake, and I hold on to people." Chava nodded knowingly. With a half-smile she said that not all the strangers appreciated being grabbed. She shook her head about the toll the event had taken. "You wouldn't recognize him from the way he was before." Yitzak listened impassively. "Now he can't even change a light bulb."

Their grown children and other family members visit and try to help. But Yitzak was psychologically traumatized, a victim of post-traumatic stress disorder.

As I was about to leave, Yitzak looked at me quizzically and asked, "How does a man have the will to blow himself up? Do you have an answer for that?" The question seemed as much philosophical as related to his experience. I shrugged and responded with another question: "How does his mother come to say that she is happy that her son blew himself up?" Without pause, Chava offered a long "Ahhhh," and asked, "How does a woman with children become a suicide terrorist?" It was a reminder that women and even children as young as 11 had been suicide bombers. We looked at each other in silent wonderment.

The night of the bombing, victims were rushed to local hospitals. The most severely injured were taken to Hadassah, where advanced care is available in specialties like neurosurgery and microsurgery. But fourteen victims, including Yitzak Mor, were brought to Shaare Zedek. Ordinarily, Dr. David Applebaum would have tended to him. David was invariably among the first to arrive at the hospital upon notice of an attack, offering comfort to patients and encouragement to staff. But even after the ambulances began to de-

liver the wounded, he had not shown up. The hospital director, Jonathan Halevy, suspected that his absence might have meant that he was part of the tragedy.

Minutes later, word filtered back to the hospital that Dr. Applebaum and Nava were among the dead. An unusual quiet fell over the staff as they continued to work, many brushing away tears. “I felt as if we’d been orphaned,” nurse Simcha Hacoheh said. “He was an amazing human being,” she added. “As soon as he arrived each day, he would go around wishing everyone ‘Good morning,’ staff members and patients alike.”

The suicide bombing that night, for which Hamas claimed credit, killed seven people and injured fifty-seven. But the loss of David and his daughter seemed especially cruel. Dr. Halevy recalled David’s many innovations to emergency care, including his introduction of computer technology to follow each patient’s course of treatment. “Thousands of Jerusalemites owe their lives to him,” Halevy said. At the funeral the next day, David was extolled as a scholar of the Bible, a humanitarian, a loving family man. He treated Arabs and Jews without distinction and took pride in having an ethnically mixed staff. A former Chief Rabbi of Israel, Yisrael Meir Lau, called him “one of God’s emissaries.”

At his sister’s funeral service the same day, Yitsak Applebaum, 22, said, “Nava was always smiling, always happy, always surrounded by her many friends.” He added, “She will be an eternal bride.” After Nava’s coffin was lowered into the grave, Hanan, her fiancé, made his way to the edge and dropped a small red box into the cavity. It contained the wedding ring he had planned to place on her finger that night.

Miriam Dombey and her husband Moshe had been friends of the Applebaums long before she began working for him in 1996. In June 2004, nine months after David and Nava’s death, when I asked how the family was faring, she said they had been “amazing.” “Of course we don’t know what they feel in private—it must be sad,” she posited. “But in public they show great strength.”

The family was living out the promise that the oldest son,

Natan, had offered soon after the funerals. “We are not a family that is afraid,” said the 24-year-old. “We go to cafés and take buses, and we will continue to do so. We do not live for the moment; we live for the future.”⁵

Months later, Natan became the father of a baby boy. As is Jewish custom, the child was named after a deceased and honored family member, in this case, David. He was also given the middle name Avi Chai, which in this context meant “my father lives.”

The legacy of David Applebaum continues in other ways as well. His deeds have been celebrated through a variety of medical and religious memorials. Perhaps the most unusual was in August 2004, when fifteen physicians and their families emigrated from North America to Israel as part of an Applebaum Fellowship program. The program was established by Nefesh B’Nefesh, an organization that offers grants and encouragement to people interested in moving to Israel. The doctors’ decisions to immigrate arose in part from their religious commitment. But Dr. Applebaum’s own behavior had been inspirational. One of the doctors, Michael Chernofsky, who had been a hand surgeon in Pennsylvania, recalled a conversation with David two years earlier about practicing in Israel. David’s encouragement, he said, helped influence his family’s decision. Jeremy Halberstadt, a pediatrician from Queens spoke of David’s example. “The greatest hope of physicians like myself who are arriving here is to be able to contribute to the Jewish people in the way Dr. Applebaum did,” he said.⁶

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The stroll that Levi Lauer took with his daughter Anya, the Dolphinarium memorial, the activities of the Applebaum family, and the return of diners, dancers, and commuters all carried the same message. The Israeli public was determined to live. Of course, they lived with a continuing burden of uncertainty. For those most directly affected by the terrorism—the victims and families—the consequences are profound and often long-lasting. Suffering from depression or post-traumatic stress disorder, they may need treatment

for years afterward. Indeed, the terrorism has imposed a condition of permanent stress on the entire population. But the stress is part of a strange norm. It is tucked into the collective psyche, often beyond consciousness. Even with the anticipation of further terrorist attacks, anxiety is overshadowed by determined resilience.

The ability to cope with stress is certainly not peculiar to Israeli society. At the same time, some new Israeli institutions, whether born of tradition or necessity, have addressed the waves of terrorist attacks in ways that are unique to the Jewish state. One such example derives from the religious tradition of reverence not only for life but of respect for the dead.