

TERRORISM AND THE PALESTINIAN AUTHORITY

As its cash flows to terrorists, West finally waking up

- In past four years, PA has spent \$1 billion on terrorists' salaries
- Nearly 30 per cent of foreign donors' cash given to terrorists
- Western governments issue warnings to Palestinians

ANALYSIS BY EDWIN BLACK



► THE ISSUE of government subsidies for Palestinian terrorist salaries has returned to the international spotlight. What began in November 2013 as a barely believable revelation — that taxpayers in Britain, the US and other Western nations were bank-rolling terrorist salaries — has now

become a universally-acknowledged, impossible-to-deny and impossible-to-defend embarrassment for governments.

For years, officials dissembled and dodged when the question came up. After a period of silent disbelief, the mainstream media now openly confirms the salaries and routinely refers to the programme. Political challengers on both sides of the Atlantic have stridently demanded that governments terminate foreign aid that amounts to taxpayer-incentivised terrorism.

A recent in-depth study has calculated that all terror incentives and rewards paid by the Palestinian Authority over the past four years total a mind-numbing \$1 billion.

As more citizens are murdered by Islamist terrorists in Great Britain, Europe, the US and elsewhere, Western donor governments have found their financial involvement with the Palestinian Authority terrorist salary programme increasingly indefensible.

Things might be changing. Are things changing? Maybe.

Public outrage over terrorism has resulted in intense pressure on governments to stop the financing. But it has been a long road.

Revelations that convicted Palestinian terrorists were receiving monthly salaries paid by the PA and using foreign donor funds first hit global headlines in November 2013.

The Palestinian "Law of the Prisoner" openly rewards those convicted of even the most heinous attacks with generous monthly "salaries" and a phantom job in the PA government.

The salaries increase on a sliding scale. The more carnage inflicted and the longer the prisoner sentence, the higher the salary.

Terrorists receiving a five-year sentence are granted just a few hundred dollars each month. The bloodiest murderers are paid as much \$3,000 monthly. Cheques are sent directly to the prisoner, who appoints a power of attorney to distribute the funds.

In 2013, the first salary programme operated by the Ministry of Prisoners to be discovered was estimated to consume some \$5 to \$8m monthly, with other benefit programmes doubling that sum. In all, some eight per cent of the PA budget was diverted to terror. But that was the tip of the cash pile.



The chronically bankrupt PA relies on foreign aid but prioritises the salary programme ahead of any civic expenditures on health, welfare, education or infrastructure. In every Western country, financial support for terrorism makes such funding illegal. But the UK, EU, and the US effectively act as

PHOTO: AP



Family of Mohammed Tarayreh, who murdered an Israeli girl, 13. They are eligible for a stipend

the chief bankers for the terrorists.

Government paymasters in various countries sought to portray the monies not as "salaries" but as "welfare". Ironically, the PA itself vigorously refutes that claim, bragging that such payments are proud rewards for its cherished fighters, including the type of terrorist who would slash the throat of children in their kibbutz beds.

Indeed, the Arabic term for the payments is *ratib*, which does not mean "welfare" — it means "salary".

Shortly after the 2013 disclosures, US Congressman Trent Franks of the House of Representatives' Terrorism, Non-Proliferation and Trade Subcommittee became one of the first politicians to grasp the implications. He scheduled a formal hearing on the topic and demanded that Washington cut all foreign aid to the PA. American foreign aid payments amount to roughly \$400 million a year.

Likewise, in February 2014, British MP Guto Bebb, known for investigating financial misconduct, was one of the first to sponsor a presentation on the topic in the House of Commons. Mr Bebb insisted that London halt the roughly £70-£90 million annually donated to the PA by the Treasury.

A formal hearing in the Canadian House of Commons and a session in the European Parliament yielded a similar outrage among a few key legislators. But most other US, UK and Canadian legislators were incredulous and felt the disclosures could not be true. No change occurred.

But after a fractious debate in the US, the first meaningful change in a Western government's approach to

THE HIT SQUAD DJs & ENTERTAINMENT

DJ, COMPERE PLUS EXTENSIVE SOUND
LIGHTING, LASER AND UPLIGHTING
SHOWS.



AWARD WINNING MAGICIAN/BALLOON ARTIST,
PARTYTIME PHOTOGRAPHY PACKAGES, ETC.
CALL AND DISCUSS FOR INDIVIDUAL
REQUIREMENTS

T: 0808-1-92-92-92 M: 07956 257497

WWW.SIMCHADJ.CO.UK
hitsquad@me.com

PALESTINIAN AUTHORITY SPENDING ON TERRORISTS AND THEIR FAMILIES

	2013	2014	2015	2016
1. Salaries to imprisoned and released terrorists	423.8 million shekels \$111,516,570	442.8 million shekels \$116,528,150	481.3 million shekels \$126,662,890	488.4 million shekels \$128,518,896
2. Salaries to "martyrs" families	603.6 million shekels \$158,843,940	618.6 million shekels \$162,807,890	620.4 million shekels \$163,268,940	663.6 million shekels \$174,630,296
Total salaries to support terror (Lines 1+2)	1,027.4 million shekels \$270,360,520	1,061.4 million shekels \$279,336,050	1,101.7 million shekels \$289,931,840	1,152.0 million shekels \$303,149,193
Percentage of budget and of foreign aid	7% of total budget 20% of foreign aid	7% of total budget 24% of foreign aid	7% of total budget 14.8% of foreign aid	6.9% of total budget 29.6% of foreign aid

(Source: Palestinian Authority's Ministry of Finance, annual budgets)



PHOTO: FLASH 90

Israeli security forces in Jerusalem's Old City after a stabbing attack in April

the nexus between foreign aid and rewards for terrorism finally occurred.

In mid-June 2014, a late-night compromise in Congress resulted in an unpublicised fiscal 2015 budget reduction. The last-minute insertion reduced "the amount of assistance ... for the Palestinian Authority by an amount ... equivalent to ... payments to individuals and the families of such individuals that are imprisoned for acts of terrorism or who died committing such acts during the previous calendar year."

Seeing \$60 million or more disappearing from its coffers, the PA abolished the governmental Ministry of Prisoners, through which the salary payments were made, and began funnelling the cash through an outside Palestine Liberation Organisation agency known as the Prisoners Authority, which reports directly to PA President Mahmoud Abbas. Notably, the PA itself is subordinate to the PLO.

This was a transparent re-routing of the same funding — it changed nothing for taxpayers.

Throughout 2015 and 2016, reports in the *Daily Mail*, the *Telegraph*, the *Wall Street Journal*, and many other publications — undeniably tardy — confirmed what Jewish and pro-Israel groups had been saying since 2013 with petitions, single-issue protest websites, advertisements and litigation efforts.

An exploding universe of researchers, activists, NGOs and Israeli officials joined the fray. These included Palestinian Media Watch, StandWithUs, and

NGO Monitor. Each added a disclosure, study or proof to the irrefutable unrefutable argument.

In February 2015, a rare media intervention lawsuit — similar to a Freedom of Information action, but directed at private litigation — secured some 5,000 pages of US court-sealed PLO terror salary documents. The files proved that senior PA officials — including President Mahmoud Abbas himself — scrutinised the details of terrorist carnage before approving monthly salaries. PA leaders could no longer distance themselves from the salary programme.

The first tectonic shift came a month year later, in March 2016, at the Aipac annual policy conference in Washington, DC.

During the run-up to the conference, numerous pro-Israel groups, led by StandWithUs, reminded the candidates that terrorist salaries must be opposed. Their efforts paid off. Hour after hour, every candidate, from Donald Trump to Hillary Clinton, loudly proclaimed that the PA must stop rewarding terrorists. From that moment on, the mumble and grumble had become a public roar.

In September 2016, a group of leading Republicans introduced the Taylor Force Act, named after the 28-year-old Texas student who was killed by a terrorist while in Israel. The proposed act, still stuck in committee, would terminate all PA funding if payment of terrorist salaries continued. The measure has become a rallying call for

pro-Jewish groups.

A second jolt occurred in October 2016, when International Development Secretary Priti Patel briefly halted £25 million in aid to the PA, conceding it may have gone to pay terrorist salaries — a conclusion previously denied. Funding quickly resumed with the assurance that only regular PA employees would be paid. Ironically, many of the thousands of PA government positions are phantom jobs awarded to convicted terrorists still in Israeli prisons.

On November 1, 2016, just a week before the US election, former Israel intelligence officer Yossi Kuperwasser put all the numbers together for the Jerusalem Centre for Public Affairs. He documented that the salaries, plus "martyr" payments to families, plus regular terror bonuses, including other related expenditures, had increased to \$300 million per year.

In the nearly four years since the original 2013 disclosures, the PA had spent a stunning \$1 billion on terror. In 2016, nearly 30 per cent of all foreign money received was diverted to the cause of terror.

The true number actually exceeds \$1 billion if cash diverted from education, sports and security funds are tallied. The Israeli ambassador to the UN, Danny Danon, called a press conference displaying a large poster declaring: "The Palestinian Authority has paid a \$1,000,000,000 to terrorists."

On May 3, 2017, the tense meeting between President Trump and President Abbas pivoted on terror issues. According to a White House state-



A martyrdom poster (above) for Ibrahim Osama Alan, who murdered Shlomit Krigman (left)



ment, "President Trump raised his concerns about payments to Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails who have committed terrorist acts, and to their families, and emphasised the need to resolve this issue."

On May 26, 2017, Norway's Foreign Minister learned that a women's centre it funded was named after a notorious terrorist who massacred a bus full of passengers. Norway's Min-

ister of Foreign Affairs, Børge Brende, declared: "The glorification of terrorist attacks is completely unacceptable." He demanded the money be repaid.

On June 3, 2017, 277 recently-released Hamas terrorists publicly complained that their salaries had been suspended to appease the Trump administration. Iran stepped in to provide a special subvention. Two days later, Mr Kuperwasser published an analysis suggesting that the PA may be genuinely be backing away from the salary programme as a concession to Washington.

Days ago, US Secretary of State Rex Tillerson announced that the PA would at long last subdue or completely terminate the salary programme. President Abbas and numerous other PA officials flatly rejected the suggestion, forcing an uncomfortable Mr Tillerson to retract his statement. But the item remains high on the agenda as Trump adviser Jared Kushner announced late last Sunday night that he would be flying to Jerusalem and Ramallah to jump-start the next phase of peace negotiations.

The next chapter in the saga will be written by the decisions of Western governmental paymasters, undoubtedly in blood.

Edwin Black is the New York bestselling author of 'IBM and the Holocaust' and 'Financing the Flames', which in November 2013 broke the terrorist salaries story worldwide. Black secured the 5,000 PLO documents proving senior PA officials closely review every salary before it is approved

STUARTS CAR & SHERUT SERVICE

Do you need to find a way of getting your children to or from school?

4, 6, 8, 10 & 16 Passengers

LOOKING TO TAKE ON SCHOOL BUS RUNS FOR SEPT '17 FOR ALL JEWISH SCHOOLS

14-16 SEATER MINIBUS • CAR • VAN • ESTATE CAR

SERVING: • NW London • Mill Hill • Edgware • Stamford Hill

8 passengers with lady driver available

Call early to avoid disappointment • All buses have safety belts
Shomer Shabbat • Available for long or short distance journeys



Will give discounts for registered charities using our service

CALL STUART - 07956 507 794

Licensed by the Public Carriage Office Operator License No 02580/0101



Designed by The London Jewish Advertiser 0208 203 6618