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## The Moral Responsibility of Civilization

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The very existence of civilization — an achievement under the best of circumstances — is undermined by moral collapse. A haunting reminder of this now comes in the reponse of Hamas to yesterday's suicide bombing in Tel Aviv. The bombing killed nine persons and injured many more, but the attack also wounded the Palestinian government — perhaps beyond hope of moral recovery.

The suicide bomber, a young man named Sami Hammad (age 21), said the attack was a reprisal for the imprisonment of Palestinians in Israel. Islamic Jihad, the organization that claimed direct responsibility for the attacks, released a video of the bomber. "There will be more operations," he threatened..

Amazingly, Hamas, recently elected to lead the Palestinian government, called the bombing "legitimate."

The world watched with concern as Hamas was elected to lead the government. The Bush administration, joined by several other governments, quickly indicated that there would be no support for any government that supported terror or terrorists. Others, like former President Jimmy Carter, asked the world to wait and let Hamas prove itself. It has.

Hamas has now proved itself to be a terrorist group in control of the Palestinian government. As the editors of *The New York Times* asserted, this move was simultaneously immoral and stupid.

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