

of the surgical strike, while Palestinian violence appears by contrast to be “dirty” and erratic. The Banana Republic shopper can comfortably align with such an enterprise. An otherwise escapist and sometimes ironically critical² marketing discourse is able *here* to identify with the violent mission of the Israeli paratrooper because his imagined opposite is the Palestinian terrorist.

In U.S. government and media discourse, the association of the Palestinian, wearer of the *kufiya*, with the term “terrorist” has, until recently, been virtually indissoluble, and was secured by official superglue during what Edward Said terms the Great Terrorism Scare of 1983–87, when hysteria about Arab-Islamic fanaticism, hijackings, bombthrowing, and hostage-taking reached its panic peak (1988: 46). These images of terror are constructed as the opposites of everything that Western civilization imagines itself to stand for. In this political imaginary, Israel sits on the front lines of “our” system of defense, its military forces heroically patrolling the unstable frontier separating us from the barbarians. The aura surrounding the Israeli military battle against terror also envelops descriptions of its dealings with Arab civilians. Thus when the Israeli Defense Forces invaded Lebanon in 1982, at the cost of 20,000 Arab lives, the operation was called, no irony intended, “Peace for Galilee”; when it dealt with the Lebanese populace it practiced a policy known as “purity of arms.” Even the fact that the Gaza Strip and the West Bank are under *military* occupation is frequently lost sight of, banished from consciousness by the discourses of counterterrorism. The disavowal of the brutal realities of the occupation, as well as the deep U.S. complicity in that repression, has been virtually complete.

It is precisely because official discourse depicts virtually all of Israel’s actions as part of the West’s self-defensive war against Oriental barbarism that the Banana Republic can fashionably identify with the Israeli paratrooper. Only because Palestinians are so vilified and demonized in Western iconography can otherwise humanistic, benevolent, ethnographer-wannabe shoppers openly identify with military actions.

Occasionally the official image dissolves, as during the brief media spectacularization of the *intifada* (December-March 1988), when the coercion that official U.S. agencies of public meaning normally work so carefully to cover up was momentarily revealed. Banana Republic’s frivolous image of the paratrooper perhaps