

Massacre in Gaza: The Paradox of Peace

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Twice this year, the leaders of Hamas indicated their readiness to accept a Palestinian State within the 1967 borders. Khaled Meshaal, Hamas leader, informed former president Jimmy Carter of this decision in April 2008. In May 2008, it was revealed that Yves Aubin de La Messuziere, a retired senior French diplomat had held discussions with Ismael Haniyeh and Mahmoud Zahar, two prominent Hamas leaders who confirmed Hamas' readiness to accept a Palestinian State within the 1967 border, reflecting an unofficial acceptance of Israel. But this truce is contrary to the Zionism ideals:

"The settlement of the Land of Israel is the essence of Zionism. Without settlement, we will not fulfill Zionism. It's that simple." (Yitzhak Shamir (Maariv, 02/21/1997).

Thus, it became necessary to punish those who sought peace - and wage war.

Sadly, this was not the first time. History has repeated itself. Only our media has successfully managed to throw sands of ignorance in our eyes and blind us with bigotry, keeping our wits dull with misinformation. For the sake of the innocent victims everywhere, the truth must be exposed. We must revisit history.

Hamas, an Islamic Resistance Movement, was born with the first Palestinian uprising in December 1987.

With the end of the Intifada and the initiation of the Oslo peace process, the resistance component of the Palestinian struggle -so critical to Hamas's political thinking and action- was undermined. In the two- to three-year period before the second Intifida in 2000, Hamas

was no longer prominently or consistently calling for political or military action against the occupation, but was instead shifting its attention to social works and the propagation of Islamic values and religious practice.

The start of the second Palestinian Intifada on September 28, 2000, coupled with the impact of September 11, dramatically changed the environment in the West Bank and Gaza. Pre-existing political arrangements were disrupted, economic conditions deteriorated, and social structures weakened. Within a context of desperation and hopelessness Hamas reasserted itself.

At the same time, under the leadership of Ariel Sharon, land expansions through land expropriations and economic dispossession escalated. His agenda did not include a Palestinian state. The United States uneven handling of the conflict encouraged Sharon's plans. With a weak Palestinian leadership in place, and the increasing significance of Hamas influence, the U.S. opened dialogue with a senior Hamas leader in early September of 2002. Israeli reactions clearly indicated it did not want to have any Palestinian engaged in dialogue with the U.S. for fear that there may be a political solution to the Israel-Palestine conflict.

United States-Hamas contacts of which Israel was fully aware, ended when the Israeli army arrested a politically moderate Hamas official in Ramallah on September 9, which Hamas interpreted as a deliberate attempt by the Sharon government to undermine its exchange with the Americans. A few days later, Israel launched an attack in Rafah that killed nine Palestinians, including civilians. Predictably, a suicide bomber staged an attack on a bus in Tel Aviv on September 19, killing six people. Other Hamas-Palestinian Authority (PA) cease-fires have been undermined by Israeli attacks. Alex Fishman, the security commentator for the right-of-center Yediot Ahronot, Israel's largest mass-circulation newspaper, detailed in the November 25, 2001 issue of the newspaper how the assassination that November of Mahmud Abu Hanud, a key Hamas figure, shattered a Hamas promise not to carry out suicide bombings inside Israel:

“Whoever gave the green light to this act of liquidation knew full well that he was thereby shattering in one blow the gentleman's agreement between Hamas and the PA; under that agreement, Hamas was to avoid in the near future suicide bombings inside the Green Line - Israel's pre-1967 borders - of the kind perpetrated at the Dolphinarium, a discotheque in Tel Aviv.(Perry, 2004,7)(1).

In effect, Israel's actions led Hamas to play into their hands. Having already marginalized the PLO and Yasser Arafat, by instigating Hamas suicide bombings Sharon would ensure that negotiations for a Palestinian state would not take place, no matter what the cost.

Once again, the actions and motives of the Israeli government are ignored. The relentless Israeli siege on Gaza is cheered on by the “civilized world”, the American government topping the list. Reminiscent of Amphitheatres in Roman times, the “West” is looking on as the innocent Palestinians are being butchered by American weapons, funded by taxes; enabled through lack of Arab leadership and unity, and an absence of human indignation. The lust for blood goes on. UN Security Council has called for “restraint by urging an end to all violence in Gaza”. This is the same UN body that sanctions Iran for being a “threat to peace” while pursuing its inalienable right within the framework of the law, yet it urges restraint when it comes to genocide. Perhaps it should not come as a

surprise given that Newt Gingrich at the American Enterprise Institute declared that the United Nations should be made a tool of the United States and Israel:

“The United States and Israel share a special bond rooted in our democratic traditions of government, our pluralistic societies, and our common respect for faith — not just one faith, but all faiths, and for all people of goodwill. These values are central to our national identities and unite us in a common vision for what we expect from the U.N. The U.N.’s past and current treatment of Israel has fallen dramatically short of these ideals. When the U.N. moves finally to end the second class treatment of Israel, it will provide an important indication that U.N. reform is truly moving in the right direction.

“The challenge before those of us who believe in the principles of the United Nations Charter, but who also believe that the UN as it operates today has betrayed these principles, is to effect change in the voting practices at the UNGA. I believe the United States can lead other countries in an effort to successfully reform the United Nations but it will take significant work over the long haul.

“In the first place a decision will have to be made that the UN is important enough to us to link our multilateral diplomacy with our bilateral diplomacy.

“A key first test for a concerted effort by the U.S. to win U.N. votes should be an upcoming vote in the (GA Assembly) concerning the abolishment of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People and of the Division of Palestinian Rights.” (2)

The United Nations is at the mercy of man’s inhumanity. Israel can make its way by ruin of others and hear “Restraint”! Perhaps the weakness of the UN body is based on fear for Israel has been successful at intimidation.

Having successfully targeted high profile British personnel to chase them out of the British Mandate Palestine, the United Nations Mediator, Count Folke Bernadotte was assassinated on September 17, 1948 when he flew from Damascus to Jerusalem in order to negotiate the boundaries between Palestine and present day Israel. He was shot six times at point blank, along with his aide Colonel Andre Pierre Serot (3). The Bernadotte assassination sent a clear message to all nations and to future representatives of the United Nations: Israel would never compromise.

“Take the American declaration of Independence. It contains no mention of territorial limits. We are not obliged to fix the limits of the State.” - Moshe Dayan (Jerusalem Post, 08/10/1967)

Every person that does not speak up and make another aware is a spectator cheering for blood sport. Jonathan Swift aptly said:

“I never wonder to see men wicked, but I often wonder to see them not ashamed.”

We can each save a life, collectively; we can save the people under siege.

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Notes

(1) Perry, M. "Israeli Offensive Disrupts US-Hamas Contacts," Palestine Report, October 9, 2002
Downloaded April 23, 2004; [www.jmcc.org/](http://www.jmcc.org/media/report/02/Oct/2b) media/report/02/Oct/2b

(2) www.aei.org/publications/pubID.23396,filter.all/pub_detail.asp

(3) J. Bowyer Bell, "Assassination in International Politics", International Studies Quarterly, Vol. 16, No. 1 (Mar., 1972), pp. 59-82

Featured image: Statue of the founder of Zionism Theodor Herzl, unveiled in 2012 at the Mikveh Israel synagogue in Tel Aviv. It is called "Herzl meets Emperor Wilhelm II"

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