

Hamas VII - An Israeli War Crime Goes Septic

By Terrell E. Arnold

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The Israeli Zionist dream for Palestine is coming true. Deprived of food, water, electricity, money, medical care, safety, leadership, and official outside help, the Palestinians are turning on each other as they struggle to survive. But Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert has made it clear that this is only the beginning. "Nobody dies from not having electricity," Olmert is said to have told his cabinet, and "no one in Gaza should sleep". Emphasizing that last point, low-flying IDF jets break the sound barrier over Gaza virtually every night.

The Palestinian government disaster was deliberately contrived by Israel, the United States, the European Union, and the United Nations. On top of this, the Israel Defense Force is conducting daily raids, bombings, attacks, kidnappings, and interference with human movements. The goal is to contrive the utter collapse of Palestinian society, while goading as many as possible into leaving, dying, or killing each other; it is doubtful that the Olmert government or its Zionist backers care which.

While the outside world has been more or less fixated on Lebanon, IDF forces and Mossad have been conducting intensive warfare and political harassment in Gaza and the West Bank. The Israelis have taken much of the parliament, many cabinet members, and the Deputy Prime Minister hostage, although they use the euphemism "arrest" for what they do. They have threatened to assassinate the Prime Minister and have bombed his and other government offices.

In the process they have progressively disassembled the democratically elected Palestinian Government by kidnappings, and it is doubtful that without an international outcry that so far has not been forthcoming, many of these prisoners will ever be released. Instead they may join the ranks of the estimated 10,000 Palestinian hostages the Israelis have held without charge for many years.

Westerners, particularly Americans, should get the goal for this carefully programmed nightmare in Palestine clearly into their heads. It is not to punish the Palestinians for taking an Israeli soldier prisoner. It is not about the sporadic delivery of home-made rockets into Israeli territory that seldom produces casualties. It is not about the occasional body-bomber who detonates himself or herself on an Israeli bus or

street with bloody consequences.

Those events actually serve as Israeli game plan window dressing. Anyone who has been watching closely knows that the objective is to assure that the Palestinians never get near a negotiating table. The Zionist government and its close supporters, many Israelis, and many American supporters of it, want all of Palestine as part of Israel, but Israel cannot go on taking Palestine bit by bit if the Palestinians are prepared to negotiate. Nor can they go on with an occupation that is designed slowly to swallow the rest of Palestine unless the Palestinians continue to fight back. As Patrick Seale commented in the Guardian in early July, "Palestinian moderates are Israel's real enemies."

This Israeli scenario is made specifically for an American market. In the midst of the Israeli destruction of Lebanon, a noise level that masked equally concentrated violence against Palestine, top US political leadership, including more than 400 members of the House of Representatives, pledged unswerving allegiance and support to Israel. To be fair, that was not merely a total lack of interest in whatever happened to the Palestinians or the Lebanese; the real concern was about the November congressional elections and the power of the Jewish vote.

Under that order of political corruption, democracy is taking a criminal hit in Palestine. Having led a concentrated campaign to harass the Hamas government of Palestine out of office, the United States now looks blandly on--along with Western Europe and the UN--while Israel takes the freely elected Hamas government apart. Israel is doing that not because, as western media have put it, "Hamas is a terrorist organization". The Israelis, whatever they say, do not really care about that; since the beginning, Israeli governments have often been led by terrorists, the most recent being Ariel Sharon before he was laid low by illness. The real concern is that from positions Hamas has put into the public domain, Israeli leadership has concluded that negotiating with Hamas could mean real concessions, essentially falling back to the 1967 green line and giving most of the West Bank and Gaza back to the Palestinians.

The brutal truth of the Palestine situation is that with hardly any visible objection--in fact with deliberate Western connivance--the world is watching an Israeli war crime in progress. While during the shooting phase of the late war both Lebanon and Palestine were being systematically destroyed, no UN resolution ever mentioned Palestine, and it is still being destroyed without letup.

Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice visited Mahmoud Abbas during the run-up to a ceasefire resolution, but she paid no apparent attention to the fact that the democratically elected government of Palestine was being dismantled by Israel. Bland US pleas for moderation on both sides that followed her visit rang weirdly hollow. When the occupying and attacking power has the alleged fourth most powerful army in the

world, while the people being attacked have no organized armed forces at all, such a plea is meaningless.

Hamas and Palestine have become a harsh study in intended consequences. It has been well advertised that the US, the Europeans, the UN and Israel want the Hamas government to fail. The denial of international assistance to that government and Israeli withholding of funds that belong to it started the Palestinian system to unraveling. Having had much of its physical infrastructure destroyed by the Israelis over the past four years, the Hamas government had little to work with, and Israeli destruction of power and water facilities in July-August pretty much shut down Gaza and the West Bank. Hamas candidates were elected because they were better at providing essential services than the Fatah leadership, but they cannot do that without resources.

If one looks candidly at the history of international terrorism, it becomes clear that Israel's efforts to take Palestine away from its people initiated the pattern of attacks that led us to 9/11. President Bush crows often that launching the War on Terrorism after 9/11 made the United States safer. However, in light of the crimes being committed against Palestine, such braggartry is a sad illusion. Enough new terrorists are being generated in Palestine and as a result of crimes against Palestine to keep the world well supplied for at least a generation. The long term consequences of taking down Hamas--intended or not--will be a pattern of political violence for which Americans and everybody else will pay and pay.

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