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While You Voted, Palestinians Died

Tuesday November 07th 2006, 9:00 pm



No matter who wins the midterm election, be it Democrats or Republicans, the slaughter in Palestine will continue.

In fact, it is a safe bet to conclude that the vast majority of the winners, and indeed most of the losers, support the criminal state of Israel, infamous for using U.S. supplied weapons to kill Palestinian school children.

Israel's slaughter, fully supported by the neocons and most of our "representatives" sitting in Congress, is not even a campaign issue. Staunch support for Israel is a given. Pervert preachers may be paraded across the front page of newspapers and websites, but you will not see one photo of critically

wounded children ushered into the hospital in Beit Lahia in the northern Gaza Strip.

"The bodies arrived one after another on the shoulders of a seemingly endless river of mourners," the [Mercury News](#) reported as I showed my ID to a volunteer at the senior citizens center where I voted earlier this afternoon.

"One was a small boy weighing no more than 60 pounds, tightly encased in a green Hamas flag. Another was only pieces, placed in a box and hustled down the street on a stretcher."

As I filled out my ballot, ignoring incumbents and concentrating on bond issues, "Palestinian agencies condemned the destruction of homes, orchards, water pipes and electricity cables during the raid, which was intended to curb militant rocket attacks.... When outsiders gained access yesterday they found the town's historic Nasr mosque almost flattened, except for one minaret.... Women queued at water trucks, afraid that the remaining water supply had been contaminated by sewage," explained the [Times Online](#).

As I fed my ballot into an optical reader, wondering if my vote would be counted at all, the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee posted an urgent news release.

"The situation in Gaza is already desperate, approximately 40 percent of Gaza's residents live in poverty and unemployment is 55 percent. Now, many residents of Beit Hanun are without water and electricity during these winter months. A senior UN official, one of a few people given permission to enter Beit Hanun by the Israelis, described the atmosphere as one of death, destruction and despair. The European Union presidency, currently held by Finland, has issued a statement deploring 'the growing number of civilian casualties the Israeli military operation has caused.' Palestinian authorities have also confirmed a severe shortage of medical supplies, rendering hospitals unable to properly treat the growing number of victims."

Late last month, "Zogby International reported that, in the mid-term elections, 31% of likely voters believed that 'Israel must have all of the promised land, including Jerusalem, to facilitate the second coming of the messiah.' This is not an aberrant number. In 1987, a poll showed that 57% of American Protestants and 35% of American Catholics accepted 'a prophetic interpretation of the events of 1948,' namely, the founding of the state of Israel. In July 2006, the Pew Research Center found that 53% of Protestants 'believe that Israel was given by God to the Jews.' In August, they found that, among the total population, 52% said they sympathized more with Israel, and just 11% sympathized more with the Palestinians," writes [Robert O. Smith](#) for the National Interest.

According to a survey conducted by the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life, one out of every four Americans is an evangelical, or approximately 75 million people, and of this number 70 percent, well over 50 million people, support Israel, apparently as well its brutality toward civilians.

Earlier this week, David Brog, executive director of Christians United For Israel, told [Yedioth Internet](#), an online version of the popular Israeli newspaper, that AIPAC "is very effective at what it does. Their influence stems mainly from the

fact that they do good research, they have very convincing lobbies, and they have a lot of money that, without a direct connection, tends to flow toward those who support Israel. One thing AIPAC lacks is a massive grassroots presence.... We're talking about a constituency in America that would support doing what we need to do against radical Islam," or for that matter Palestinian women and children who are, according to Brog's boss, John Hagee, not entitled to live in Palestine.

"With its impressive contacts among Hill staffers, influential grassroots supporters and deep connections to wealthy donors, AIPAC is the lobby's key emissary to Congress," writes [Ari Berman](#) for the Nation. "But in many ways, AIPAC has become greater than just another lobby; its work has made unconditional support for Israel an accepted cost of doing business inside the halls of Congress. AIPAC's interest, Israel's interest and America's interest are today perceived by most elected leaders to be one and the same. Christian conservatives increasingly aligned with AIPAC demand unwavering support for Israel from their Republican leaders."

In March, AIPAC held its forty-seventh annual conference in Washington. During the celebration, AIPAC's executive director, Howard Kohr, spent twenty-seven minutes reading the "roll call" of dignitaries present at the gala dinner, including a majority of the Senate and a quarter of the House, along with dozens of Bush administration officials, no doubt most of them Israel First neocons.

In regard to AIPAC and the hijacking of U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East, it does not matter if politicians are Democrat or Republican. No matter who controls the House, Senate, or the White House, Israel will always be at the political forefront and the Palestinians will continue to be murdered in the shadows.

On October 26, the Mehr News Agency conducted a brief interview with [Rabbi Michael Lerner](#), chief editor of Tikkun magazine and the national chairman of the anti-war organization the Network of Spiritual Progressives. "The Democratic Congress will be filled with AIPAC-influenced Democrats who want to protect Israel at all cost," Lerner explained. "Bush is unlikely to do anything dramatic to push Israel into ending the occupation of the West Bank or to creating a viable Palestinian state."

In other words, no matter who controls Congress, the situation "on the ground," as the talking heads like to say, will not change.

It will be more of the same in the Middle East, including Iraq, for as [Philip Zelikow](#), dedicated Bushite and executive director of the nine eleven white wash commission, admitted in 2002, Iraq was invaded and occupied in the name of Israel. "Why would Iraq attack America or use nuclear weapons against us? I'll tell you what I think the real threat (is) and actually has been since 1990—it's the threat against Israel," Zelikow told a crowd at the University of Virginia. "And this is the threat that dare not speak its name, because the Europeans don't care deeply about that threat, I will tell you frankly. And the American government doesn't want to lean too hard on it rhetorically, because it is not a popular sell."

"As a result of the war on terror, the United States is now militantly opposed to the enemies of Israel, including the Palestinians," writes [Steve Sniegoski](#). "Israel has now taken a free hand in dealing with the Palestinians. As a result of American pressure, Syria removed its military from Lebanon. Now the United States and Europe are pressuring Iran with respect to its nuclear policy—in essence we see a de facto international effort to guarantee Israel's nuclear monopoly in the Middle East, in view of the fact that there is no call for Israel to give up its potent nuclear arsenal."

Even though no attack against Iran materialized at the end of October, as surmised by many, this does not mean the threat has evaporated, or will it if the Democrats win the House and, per chance, the Senate. For as we know, if we pay attention, the Democrats, or at least the governing echelon of the Democrats, are as rabidly pro-Israel and thus anti-Palestinian as the neocon Republicans.

"[L]aunching some missile strikes into Iran is not the optimal position for us to be in" given the ongoing war in Iraq, Barack Obama, possibly the next VP candidate teamed up with the fanatically pro-Israel Hillary Clinton, told the neocon Chicago Tribune. "On the other hand, having a radical Muslim theocracy in possession of nuclear weapons is worse."

[Joshua Frank](#) elaborates:

Senator John Kerry echoed this sentiment on May 29, 2004, when he told the Washington Post that the Bush

Administration has not “been tough on the [Iran] issue ... which is the issue of nuclear weaponry, and again just like I said with North Korea, you have to keep your eye on the target.”

Even DNC chair hopeful Howard Dean, allegedly the liberal arm of the Democratic Party, concurs Bush has not been tough enough on Iran. The Forward quotes Dean as saying, “The United States has to ... take a much harder line on Iran and Saudi Arabia because they’re funding terrorism.”

In fact, while campaigning for president, Dean contended that President Bush had been far too soft on Iran. In a March appearance on CBS’ Face The Nation, Dean even went so far as to say that “[President Bush] is beholden to the Saudis and the Iranians.”

It should be remembered that Dean was elected chairman of the Democratic National Committee in February 2005 and the DNC is the principal organ governing the Democratic Party and the DNC is responsible for promoting the Democratic political platform, as well as coordinating fundraising and election strategy—in short, you can bet the “bomb Iran” plan, as dictated by AIPAC, will figure prominently in campaign activity as 2008 draws close.

For AIPAC, essentially the puppet master of Congress, Iran is front and center. In fact, for AIPAC, so important is the art of greasing the skids for an Iran invasion, they went out of their way to filch a classified draft national-security presidential directive (NSPD) on Iran. As you may recall, an alleged Israeli mole burrowed in the office of Douglas Feith, Larry Franklin, was pinched by the FBI for passing the NSPD draft on to the Israelis.

“The classified document that Franklin allegedly passed to AIPAC concerned a controversial proposal by Pentagon hard-liners to destabilize Iran. The latest iteration of the national-security presidential directive was drafted by a Pentagon civilian and avid neocon, Michael Rubin, who hoped it would be adopted as official policy by the Bush administration. But in mid-June, Bush’s national-security advisers canceled consideration of the draft, partly in response to resistance from some at the State Department and the National Security Council, according to a recent memo written by Rubin,” [Laura Rozen and Jason Vest](#) reported in November, 2004, for the American Prospect. “Was it to this end that Franklin was allegedly observed by the FBI passing the draft NSPD on Iran to AIPAC? Was he trying to inform AIPAC, or Israel, about the contents of the draft NSPD? Or rather, and perhaps more plausibly, was he trying to enlist the powerful Washington lobbying organization in advocating for a Iran-destabilization policy? In other words, is the Franklin case really about espionage, or is it a glimpse into the ugly sausage-making process by which Middle East policy gets decided in Washington and, in particular, in the Bush administration?”

More likely, the “powerful Washington lobbying organization” decides not only who shall and who shall not be a Congress critter, but also drives “the ugly sausage-making process by which Middle East policy gets decided in Washington” at the behest of Israel, as Philip Zelikow intimated, although Zelikow’s revelatory comments were assiduously ignored by the corporate media.

I thought about all of this as I walked across the parking lot toward my car. If the ballot I had cast a moment earlier had contained a single antiwar—or for that matter, even less likely, an anti-AIPAC candidate—I would have voted for him. As it stands, I voted on bond issues and amendments to the New Mexico state Constitution.

Come January, 2007, when the latest crop, and no doubt a staid number of incumbents, are sworn in, the Palestinians will bleed still.

So will a whole lot of Iraqis.

In fact, it is almost a sure bet a few million Iranians will suffer a likewise fate, as the neocon disease, the “clash of civilizations” contagion has infected far too many Democrats.

I know this is bleak, even cynical.

But we have allowed, due to inattention and apathy, our political system to suffer a hijacking by Machiavellian thugs.

I’m not sure a mere election will put it back together again.

It may take a revolution instead, as Jefferson apprised.

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