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Soldiers (not innocent students) killed at settler center

[08/03/2008 - 04:50 PM]



From Khalid Amayreh in Occupied East Jerusalem

The Israeli electronic and print media on Saturday revealed that the bulk of the eight Israeli Yeshiva (Talmudic religious school) "students" killed or injured in an attack on the headquarters of the Jewish settlement movement in Jerusalem on Thursday were actually paramilitary soldiers.

Israeli spokespersons claimed immediately after the attack that the lone attacker, a Palestinian from East Jerusalem, targeted innocent religious students.

The Israeli media, which is subject to routine government censorship, normally avoids giving "detrimental details" about Palestinian resistance attacks, especially when Israelis get killed, ostensibly in order to reap maximum propaganda benefits by giving an initial impression that the victims were innocent civilians, not soldiers or settlers.

The Israeli media, especially those targeting foreign audiences, also ignored the fact that Merkaz Ha'rav, the ideological central nervous system of religious messianic Zionism, combines Talmudic studies with military training in its educational program. This is known in Hebrew as "Hesder Merkaz"

Even Yitzhak Rabin's killer, Yigal Amir, is reportedly to have studied at the Merkaz Ha'rav.

Similarly, the bulk of the Zionist-influenced or Zionist-controlled American media, with the exception of a few examples, readily parroted Israeli propaganda, repeating the claim that innocent religious students were the target of the attack, an apparent retaliation for the wanton slaughter by the Israeli army of as many as 138 Palestinians, the vast bulk of them innocent civilians, including more than 13 toddlers and babies.

The Israeli human rights organization, B'tselem, and Amnesty International have pointed out that at least half of the Israeli carnage's victims were innocent civilians or people who played no role in hostilities.

It has not been established which Palestinian (or non-Palestinian) organization did actually carry out the attack in West Jerusalem.

Some reports have suggested that a Hizbullah-linked group may have carried out the attack, probably to avenge the murder by suspected Mossad agents in Damascus last month of Hizbullah's military official Imad Mughniya.

However, Hizbullah on Friday denied any involvement in the Jerusalem attack on the Jewish settler center.

Meanwhile, a prominent rabbi has once again called the Palestinians Amalekites, which the Bible says "must be destroyed" and "wiped out from the face of earth."

Amalekites were members of an ancient nomadic people of ancient Palestine which the Bible says were descendants of Esau's grandson, Amalek.

The Rabbi, Ya'akov Shapira, who is also the current Director of Merkaz Ha'rav, suggested that all Palestinians would have to be exterminated.

"The murderers are the Amalekites of our day, coming to remind us that Amalekites have not disappeared, just changed their appearance," the rabbi was quoted as saying.

One of the people killed in Thursday's attack is Doron Maharata, ostensibly a former Indian immigrant to Israel who had converted to religious Zionism.

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The Israeli newspaper, Ha'aretz, showed him in full military gear, which obviously belies Israeli media claims that the "victims were merely innocent Yeshiva students."

According to Ha'aretz, Maharata at age 17 enrolled in the Merkaz Ha'rav as part of the "Hesder Merkaz" track, in which students perform nine months of army service.

Meanwhile, Israeli officials said they would seek to use bloody scenes from the attack as part of a public relations campaign to tarnish Hamas's image abroad, especially in the West.

Hamas officials, however, scoffed at the Israeli "hasbara gimmicks," calling it "sickening."

"This will be like Nazi propaganda operatives displaying images from resistance attacks in central Europe in order to give the impression that the Nazis were poor, innocent victims, and the resistance was all-diabolical," said one Hamas official from the Hebron region.

Since the beginning of 2008, the Israeli occupation army has killed and maimed thousands of Palestinians, mostly innocent people.

Israel claims, usually when addressing Europeans and North Americans, that its army doesn't murder Palestinian civilians deliberately.

However, human rights organizations operating in the occupied territories contemptuously dismiss Israeli claims in this regard, arguing that in the final analysis killing knowingly is killing deliberately and that when the number of victims is so vast, as is the case in Gaza, even intent itself becomes irrelevant.



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