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The Power of AIPAC: Who Runs America?

Not many Americans know anything about the hideous barbarity in Gaza, because US cable networks and newspapers rarely carry pictures of disfigured blood-splashed children who have been killed, maimed or orphaned by the Israelis, says Brian Cloughley.

Winston Churchill and Franklin Roosevelt were pretty close, politically and personally. They led the fight against fascism in the early 1940s, and although they had their disagreements they got on very well. They were both blunt in expressing their views, but there was no doubt who was the more powerful : Roosevelt called the shots, although Churchill had a lot of influence on him. But it would have been unthinkable for Churchill to have behaved in the way that the present (though not for long) prime minister of Israel did with the present (though not for long) president of the United States.

Prime minister Olmert of Israel, who has been forced to stand down because of allegations of corruption, telephoned President Bush to make the latter alter his orders to his Secretary of State to support a mild resolution in the UN Security Council that called for a ceasefire in Gaza. The barely believable transcript of Olmert's boasting of his success is on public record. He said:

"I [Olmert] spoke with him [Bush]; I told him: You can't vote for this proposal. He said: listen, I don't know, I didn't see, don't know what it says. I told him: I know, and you can't vote for it! He then instructed the secretary of state, and she did not vote for it."

There is no other head of government in the entire world who could say such words to the president of the United States. And will Olmert's successor be able to speak with Bush's successor in the same way and with a similar result?

We know the name of the next US president, but we don't know who the next Israeli prime minister will be. It looks as if it might be a choice between two steel-minded sadists, Tzipi Livni or Binyamin Netanyahu, both dedicated haters of Palestine, Palestinians and Arabs in general. So what might they be able to say to President Obama? Will they be able to

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pick up the phone and call him to suggest forcefully that he alter the voting intention of the United States of America in the UN Security Council? And what would he do, if they did?

Given the commitment to Israel of Mr Obama and his Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton, as was obvious in their groveling speeches last year to the American Israeli Public Affairs Committee, there is no guarantee that they will, either of them, ever utter a word in criticism of Israel.

There is one thing certain: the US Congress is going to continue its unconditional support for Israel, no matter what war crimes are committed by its disgusting thugs-in-uniform. The Reps need the money, after all, which they get through political action committees which are generously funded by American Jews. And they are scared to political death by the threat that pro-Israel agencies will destroy them politically if they dare say a word against Israel.

There are very few Representatives of the people of America who would dare challenge Israel, or who might possibly criticize Israel, or who have the courage to condemn atrocities committed by Israel.

The worst of all the barbarians who are killing children and their mothers and fathers in Gaza are the Israeli pilots who mercilessly bomb houses occupied by terrified families. And they are staunchly supported by the House of Representatives of the United States of America.

These pilots, these vile little war-gamers of the skies, these latter-day examples of what Tom Wolfe called "The Right Stuff", can zoom over towns full of traumatized children and happily heave and hurl their bombs and rockets to kill yet more Palestinian kids without the remotest chance of being shot down. How heroic; how truly gladiatorial. How contemptible. They are blood brothers with the pilots of the Nazis' Stuka ground attack aircraft of yesteryear, with their terrifying sirens, who bombed columns of fleeing refugees all round Europe.

But the US House of Representatives rushed to praise Israel, and endorse its invasion and its merciless air strikes, and committed America to a motion "Recognizing Israel's right to defend itself against attacks from Gaza, reaffirming the United States' strong support for Israel, and supporting the Israeli-Palestinian peace process."

Not many Americans know anything about the hideous barbarity in Gaza, because US cable networks and newspapers rarely carry pictures of disfigured blood-splashed children who have been killed, maimed or orphaned by the Israelis. But here in Europe we have access to some TV channels and newspapers that are very different from the

pliant pro-Zion patsies of the major news outlets across the Atlantic.

And if US television channels carried pictures like the ones we see, there would be such outbursts of horror and indignation that even the US Congress might be forced to condemn the Israeli fascists for their barbarity. But the all-powerful Israel lobby makes sure that little of the sort will appear.

Who runs America?

The only honorable members of the House, voting against unconditional support for Israeli killing of Palestinian children, were Democrats Dennis Kucinich (Ohio), Maxine Waters (California), Gwen Moore (Wisconsin), and Nick Rahall (West Virginia), along with Texas Republican Ron Paul. And Mr Kucinich put the whole case for their vote when he said

"In Gaza, the United Nations gave the Israeli army the coordinates of a UN school, and the school was then hit by Israeli tank fire, killing about 40. The UN put flags on emergency vehicles, coordinating the movements of those vehicles with the Israeli military, and the vehicles came under attack, killing emergency workers. The Israeli army evacuated 100 Palestinians to shelter, and then bombed the shelter, killing 30 people."

Blunt stuff – but it cut no ice with the 390 members of the House who voted for Israel to continue its killing.

The Israelis have killed over a thousand Palestinians, and the UN reports that at least 500 of these deaths were civilians, and that half of these were women and children. One million of Gaza's 1.5 million people have no electricity, and about 750,000 are without water. They are existing in conditions of appalling squalor and fear, with US-supplied helicopter gunships and F-16s striking at will, and tanks and artillery destroying their houses and killing their children.

Yet the House votes for Israel. And the President of the United States of America jumps to obey the Israeli prime minister. But will there be any change under Obama and Clinton?

A year ago Hillary Clinton told the American Israeli Committee that "we stand with Israel because of our shared values and our shared belief in the dignity of men and women and the right to live without fear or oppression."

Last June Barack Obama told the American Israeli Committee "Now is the time to be vigilant in facing down every foe, just as we move forward in seeking a future of peace for the children of Israel, and for all children. Now is the time to stand by Israel . . ."

Will they continue to support Israel, the country that has laid waste a land and murdered over 200 women and children?

If they do, the question must be asked: Who runs America?

Brian Cloughley's book about the Pakistan army, *War, Coups and Terror*, has just been published by Pen & Sword Books (UK) and will be published in the US in May by Skyhorse (New York). This article appeared in [CounterPunch.org](#).

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