

*Israel Has No Intention of Granting a Palestinian State*

## **If Hamas Did Not Exist**

By JENNIFER LOEWENSTEIN

Let us get one thing perfectly straight. If the wholesale mutilation and degradation of the Gaza Strip is going to continue; if Israel's will is at one with that of the United States; if the European Union, Russia, the United Nations and all the international legal agencies and organizations spread across the globe are going to continue to sit by like hollow mannequins doing nothing but making repeated "calls" for a "ceasefire" on "both sides"; if the cowardly, obsequious and supine Arab States are going to stand by watching their brethren get slaughtered by the hour while the world's bullying Superpower eyes them threateningly from Washington lest they say something a little to their disliking; then let us at least tell the truth why this hell on earth is taking place.

The state terror unleashed from the skies and on the ground against the Gaza Strip as we speak has nothing to do with Hamas. It has nothing to do with "Terror". It has nothing to do with the long-term "security" of the Jewish State or with Hizbullah or Syria or Iran except insofar as it is aggravating the conditions that have led up to this crisis today. It has nothing to do with some conjured-up "war" – a cynical and overused euphemism that amounts to little more the wholesale enslavement of any nation that dares claim its sovereign rights; that dares assert that its resources are its own; that doesn't want one of the Empire's obscene military bases sitting on its cherished land.

This crisis has nothing to do with freedom, democracy, justice or peace. It is not about Mahmoud Zahhar or Khalid Mash'al or Ismail Haniyeh. It is not about Hassan Nasrallah or Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. These are all circumstantial players who have gained a role in the current tempest only *now that the situation has been allowed for 61 years to develop into the catastrophe that it is today*. The Islamist factor has colored and will continue to color the atmosphere of the crisis; it has enlisted the current leaders and mobilized wide sectors of the world's population. The primary symbols today are Islamic – the mosques, the Qur'an, the references to the Prophet Muhammad and to Jihad. But these symbols could disappear and the impasse would continue.

There was a time when Fatah and the PFLP held the day; when few Palestinians wanted anything to do with Islamist policies and politics. Such politics have nothing to do with primitive rockets being fired over the border, or smuggling tunnels and black-market

weapons; just as Arafat's Fatah had little to do with stones and suicide bombings. The associations are coincidental; the creations of a given political environment. They are the result of something entirely different than what the lying politicians and their analysts are telling you. They have become part of the landscape of human events in the modern Middle East today; but incidentals wholly as lethal, or as recalcitrant, deadly, angry or incorrigible could just as soon have been in their places.

Strip away the clichés and the vacuous newspeak blaring out across the servile media and its pathetic corps of voluntary state servants in the Western world and what you will find is the naked desire for hegemony; for power over the weak and dominion over the world's wealth. Worse yet you will find that the selfishness, the hatred and indifference, the racism and bigotry, the egotism and hedonism that we try so hard to cover up with our sophisticated jargon, our refined academic theories and models actually help to guide our basest and ugliest desires. The callousness with which we indulge in them all are endemic to our very culture; thriving here like flies on a corpse.

Strip away the current symbols and language of the victims of our selfish and devastating whims and you will find the simple, impassioned and unaffected cries of the downtrodden; of the 'wretched of the earth' begging you to cease your cold aggression against their children and their homes; their families and their villages; begging you to leave them alone to have their fish and their bread, their oranges, their olives and their thyme; asking you first politely and then with increasing disbelief why you cannot let them live undisturbed on the land of their ancestors; unexploited, free of the fear of expulsion; of ravishment and devastation; free of permits and roadblocks and checkpoints and crossings; of monstrous concrete walls, guard towers, concrete bunkers, and barbed wire; of tanks and prisons and torture and death. Why is life without these policies and instruments of hell impossible?

The answer is because Israel has no intention of allowing a viable, sovereign Palestinian state on its borders. It had no intention of allowing it in 1948 when it grabbed 24 per cent more land than what it was allotted legally, if unfairly, by UN Resolution 181. It had no intention of allowing it throughout the massacres and ploys of the 1950s. It had no intention of allowing two states when it conquered the remaining 22 per cent of historic Palestine in 1967 and reinterpreted UN Security Council Resolution 248 to its own liking despite the overwhelming international consensus stating that Israel would receive full international recognition within secure and recognized borders if it withdrew from the lands it had only recently occupied.

It had no intention of acknowledging Palestinian national rights at the United Nations in 1974, when –alone with the United States—it voted against a two-state solution. It had no intention of allowing a comprehensive peace settlement when Egypt stood ready to deliver but received, and obediently accepted, a separate peace exclusive of the rights of Palestinians and the remaining peoples of the region. It had no intention of working toward a just two-state solution in 1978 or 1982 when it invaded, fire-bombed, blasted and bulldozed Beirut so that it might annex the West Bank without hassle. It had no intention of granting a Palestinian state in 1987 when the first Intifada spread across occupied Palestine, into the Diaspora and the into the spirits of the global dispossessed, or when Israel deliberately aided the newly formed Hamas movement so that it might undermine the strength of the more secular-nationalist factions.

Israel had no intention of granting a Palestinian state at Madrid or at Oslo where the PLO was superseded by the quivering, quivering Palestinian Authority, too many of whose cronies grasped at the wealth and prestige it gave them at the expense of their own kin. As Israel beamed into the world's satellites and microphones its desire for peace and a two-state solution, it more than doubled the number of illegal Jewish settlements on the ground in the West Bank and around East Jerusalem, annexing them as it built and continues to build a superstructure of bypass roads and highways over the remaining, severed cities and villages of earthly Palestine. It has annexed the Jordan valley, the international border of Jordan, expelling any 'locals' inhabiting that land. It speaks with a viper's tongue over the multiple amputee of Palestine whose head shall soon be severed from its body in the name of justice, peace and security.

Through the home demolitions, the assaults on civil society that attempted to cast Palestinian history and culture into a chasm of oblivion; through the unspeakable destruction of the refugee camp sieges and infrastructure bombardments of the second Intifada, through assassinations and summary executions, past the grandiose farce of disengagement and up to the nullification of free, fair and democratic Palestinian elections Israel has made its view known again and again in the strongest possible language, the language of military might, of threats, intimidation, harassment, defamation and degradation.

Israel, with the unconditional and approving support of the United States, has made it dramatically clear to the entire world over and over and over again, repeating in action after action that it will accept no viable Palestinian state next to its borders. What will it

take for the rest of us to hear? What will it take to end the criminal silence of the 'international community'? What will it take to see past the lies and indoctrination to what is taking place before us day after day in full view of the eyes of the world? The more horrific the actions on the ground, the more insistent are the words of peace. To listen and watch without hearing or seeing allows the indifference, the ignorance and complicity to continue and deepens with each grave our collective shame.

The destruction of Gaza has nothing to do with Hamas. Israel will accept no authority in the Palestinian territories that it does not ultimately control. Any individual, leader, faction or movement that fails to accede to Israel's demands or that seeks genuine sovereignty and the equality of all nations in the region; any government or popular movement that demands the applicability of international humanitarian law and of the universal declaration of human rights for its own people will be unacceptable for the Jewish State. Those dreaming of one state must be forced to ask themselves what Israel would do to a population of 4 million Palestinians *within* its borders when it commits on a daily, if not hourly basis, crimes against their collective humanity while they live *alongside* its borders? What will suddenly make the *raison d'être*, the self-proclaimed purpose of Israel's reason for being change if the Palestinian territories are annexed to it outright?

The lifeblood of the Palestinian National Movement flows through the streets of Gaza today. Every drop that falls waters the soil of vengeance, bitterness and hatred not only in Palestine but across the Middle East and much of the world. We do have a choice over whether or not this should continue. Now is the time to make it.

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