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U.S., Iran, Israel, and Palestine: The Fateful Quadrangle

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Three momentous and closely related events have just occurred in quick succession: Refusing to honor the U.N. Security Council Resolution 242, Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has declared categorically that he will not allow the creation of a Palestinian state, thus killing any hope of a one-state or two-state solution in the near future. Secondly, the U.S. and five other major world powers have signed an agreement with Iran to seek a diplomatic, negotiated settlement that will allow Iran to use nuclear technology for peaceful purposes. And thirdly, Palestine has been accepted to membership of the International Criminal Court and can now bring charges of human rights violations against Israel.

Need for a new way

In view of the Israeli Prime Minister's peace-shattering words, there is an urgent need to heed the Nobel laureate and peace activist Dr. Martin Luther King's words: "We are deeply in need of a new way beyond the darkness that seems so close around us." On the bright side, President Barack Obama might have shown us a new way in this triumph of diplomacy over war by reaching the framework agreement with Iran regarding its nuclear program. Along with President Obama, leaders of five other countries, namely China, France, Russia, United Kingdom, and Germany are architects of this historic accord that would allow a shift from confrontational to conciliatory strategies based on mutual respect and mutual interests. Adoption of this principle is also imperative for cordial U.S. relations with the Islamic world and for long-term negotiated peace everywhere. The deadline to reach the final agreement is June 30, 2015. Now it is up to our Congressional leaders to carry forward this peace mission by making sure that we do not swerve away from diplomacy toward militarism. If the U.S. Congress places partisan politics above our national interest and thereby undermines President Obama's hard-won diplomatic victory, the world will find us guilty of breaking a critically important peace deal.

Quick military conquests and lingering defeats

We have learned from our involvement in so many wars, that quick military conquests too often sow seeds of lingering defeats. We definitely do not want to go that way. Shakespeare's words are applicable here: "That way madness lies." We cannot afford to alienate Iran. We need Iran to fight ISIS, to stabilize Iraq, to end the Syrian civil war, to end the incipient civil war in Yemen, in short, to maintain regional stability and world peace. In reaching this peace deal with Iran, President Obama has scored a major diplomatic victory besides winning the hearts and minds of millions of peace-loving Iranians, who welcomed this conciliatory gesture and are eager to reciprocate if given a chance.

For those of us who still might feel threatened by Iran's potential to acquire a nuclear bomb, it should be comforting to know that our government and other major countries

that are signatory to this agreement with Iran have made it impossible for Iran to assemble a nuclear device. Such a stringent and transparent program of inspections by International Atomic Energy Agency has never been put in place before. For this reason, the open letter to Iran's leadership from forty-seven U.S. senators was uncalled for and counterproductive. The senators have transgressed their limits. It is the government's executive branch, not the legislative wing, that deals with foreign powers. The senators' letter was an ill-conceived foray into unauthorized territory and received a well-deserved rebuke from Iran. Earlier, those Congressional leaders who invited Israeli Prime Minister to address the Congress to undermine the negotiations with Iran was also a serious breach of protocol. Foreign leaders are not allowed such reception and audience on the eve of elections in their home countries and, more importantly, they are not given a platform to try to derail negotiations being pursued by the head of the state (President Obama) and other world leaders.

U.S.-Iran relations

The senators' arrogance and unwarranted threat of non-cooperation with Iran show that they have forgotten the reason for the falling out between the U.S. and Iran. The main cause of this rift goes back to 1953 when the British government and American CIA overthrew the democratically elected Iranian government of the Prime Minister Dr. Mohammed Mosaddegh after Iran nationalized its oil industry. The Anglo-Persian Oil Company had been giving Iran only 16% of oil revenues. When all attempts by Iran to reach a reasonable distribution of revenues failed and British unfair policies and racist treatment of Iranians resulted in a strike in which over 200 workers were killed by government troops, Iran was left with no choice but to nationalize its oil industry. The British imposed economic sanctions on Iran and threatened military action just as the U.S. has been doing to Iran since 1979. Dr. Mosaddegh himself went before the U.N. Security Council to plead Iran's case. He pointed out the injustice of a system whereby British oil profits just for the year 1950 exceeded what Iran had received in half a century. When the majority world opinion also started favoring Iran's position, the British, in collusion with American CIA, arranged the ouster of Mosaddegh, even though the United Nations and the International Court of Justice upheld Iran's point of view.

Because of the coup, Iran's nascent democracy was squelched and the Shah's autocratic 26-year reign started. The Shah's dictatorship lasted until 1979 when the people of Iran forced him out of the country. He intended to come to the U.S. whose interests he had served while neglecting the needs of his own people. Iran's people, remembering the dreadful 1953 scenario, feared a re-play that might re-impose the Shah on them again with American help. Suspecting a network of spies operating under the protection of the U.S. embassy in Tehran, they took the staff hostage and kept them for 444 days before releasing them. This was an illegal action by Iran's students during the throes of a violence-filled period in Iran's history. To punish Iran, U.S. government froze all Iranian assets in the U.S. and imposed severe sanctions on Iran. The army, including the Shah's private army Savak, used excessive force to put down the revolution unsuccessfully.

Doing the right thing

Most Americans usually favor thrusts for freedom by the oppressed and victimized. If they knew the facts about their government's collusion with the British in 1953 to destroy Iran's democracy and shatter its reformist vision that intended to create a just society, it is unlikely that they would tolerate U.S. senators' imperialistic and colonial handling of Iran. The reforms that Mosaddegh and his government had started implementing covered all important areas of Iranians' lives: ending corruption, establishing an independent judiciary, allowing complete religious and political freedom, women's rights, help for farmers and the working class. These reforms met with opposition from the Shah, the army elite, and the landed aristocracy. Iran's current government is trying to follow Mosaddegh's vision. Criticizing Iran for not allowing sufficient freedom to its citizens is hypocritical because in post-9-11 America, American citizens have been subjected to state-sponsored surveillance, searches, arrests, and detentions without trial to an extent never before seen in this country. U.S. citizens had been proud of certain kinds of freedom and civil rights that they no longer enjoy because of just one attack on its soil. Iran, by comparison, was invaded in 1979 by the then U.S. ally Saddam Hussein of Iraq, who restarted an old but recently settled feud with Iran about the waterway, known as Shatt-al-Arab. Saddam took advantage of the U.S. desire to punish Iran for its hostage taking of the U.S. embassy staff. In that 8-year old war millions were killed. Saddam used poison gas not only on Iranian troops but also on its civilians. Covertly at first but openly toward the end of that war, the U.S. came in on the side of Iraq, forcing Iran to accept less than ideal conditions for ceasefire at the United Nations. Since then, in addition to fearing another Iraqi invasion, Iran has been under constant threats of invasion by Israel and the U.S. In that kind of climate, expecting Iranian government to allow its citizens more freedom than what is granted to U.S. citizens is unreasonable. Iran's taking of U.S. hostages in 1979 was illegal and reprehensible, but it did no damage to U.S. infrastructure and way of life, whereas the U.K.-U.S. collusion that overthrew Iran's democratic government in 1953 destroyed the country's progress toward becoming an ideal state in the Middle East. U.S. imposition of strict sanctions on Iran further damaged the country's economic well-being. It is a price that Iranians are paying to this day. A neutral observer would have to say that the punishment meted out to Iran far exceeds its transgression in taking U.S. hostages.

Mosaddegh's following words speak for the exploited and oppressed everywhere in the world, and the U.S. government should pay close attention to the appeal embedded in those words:

“. . . my sin is that I nationalized Iran's oil industry and discarded the system of economic and political exploitation by the world's greatest empire. . . . With God's blessing and the will of the people, I fought this savage and dreadful system of international espionage and colonialism. . . . I am well aware that my fate must serve as an example in the future throughout the Middle East in breaking the chains of slavery and servitude to colonial interests.”

Israel's nuclear arsenal needs attention

Just as the world's six top leaders have succeeded in putting an end to the possibility of Iran's making a nuclear bomb, justice and regional security demands that we also ask Israel – the only nuclear power in the Middle East – to declare its arsenal of over 200 nuclear bombs and agree to inspections by IAEA. It makes no sense to let one country have nuclear bombs and prevent another from acquiring that capability. Nearly 99.9 % of the world will not accept such open bias and favoritism for one and crippling sanctions and threats of invasion for another. If allowed to continue, this policy will encourage many other countries to follow the example of Israel to assemble a nuclear bomb clandestinely. Making Israel sign the United Nations' non-proliferation treaty is the only way to make the Middle East a nuclear-free zone.

Finding it unwise to link the Iran nuclear deal with requiring Iran to first recognize Israel's right to exist, President Obama has rightly rejected Israeli Prime Minister's demand that a nuclear deal with Iran must include "unambiguous Iranian recognition of Israel's right to exist." This Israeli demand is premature for another very fundamental reason: Israel has not yet declared its borders. This is the problem with the Israeli Prime Minister's demand: Which Israel does he want Iran to recognize: Israel of the U.N. Partition Plan of 1947? Or Israel that, by the armistice of 1948, increased its control of historic Palestine from the UN-mandated 53% to 78%? Or the Israel of June 1967 that seized 100% of historic Palestine? Before making such demands, Mr. Netanyahu should carefully think what he is asking for. His insistence on Iran's recognition of Israel brings us to the next piece in this fateful quadrangle. It concerns the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Israel and Palestine: Israel's suicide bombing of the peace process with Palestinians

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's statement that he will never allow a Palestinian state in historic Palestine has killed any hope for peace through negotiations with Israel because now there is nothing left to negotiate. Israel's latest move must make even the staunchest supporters of Israel skeptical about Israel's long-term survival as a state in the Middle East. Netanyahu's declaration now proves beyond any doubt the real reason for Israel's deadly assaults on Gaza in 2008, 2012, and 2014. The goal was to destroy the last source of Palestinian resistance. In the context of Israel's unprovoked 2014 invasion of Gaza on completely false pretext, in a *World Post* article titled "How Israel Can Escape the Gaza Trap," former Israeli Foreign Minister Shlomo Ben-Ami offered this assessment of Israel's precarious position:

"Contrary to what Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu believes, the main existential threat facing the country is not a nuclear-armed Iran. The real peril is to be found at home: the corrosive effect of the Palestinian problem on Israel's international standing. The devastation caused by Israel's periodic asymmetrical confrontations, combined with the continuing occupation of Palestinian lands and the ever-growing expansion of settlements, has fueled a growing campaign to undermine Israel's legitimacy" (Ben-Ami link).

In 2010, Israel's former Prime Minister Ehud Barak warned: "As long as in this territory west of the Jordan River there is only one political entity called Israel it is going to be either non-Jewish, or non-democratic. If this bloc of millions of Palestinians cannot vote, that will be an apartheid state" (Lauria link). Three years ago, another Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert repeated that warning: "If the day comes when the two-state solution collapses, and we face a South African-style struggle for equal voting rights . . . , then, as soon as that happens, the State of Israel is finished" (Lauria link). Alon Liel, former Israeli Ambassador to South Africa, is yet another prominent figure who goes a step further in calling the present state of Israel an apartheid state: "In the situation that exists today, until a Palestinian state is created, we are actually one state. This joint state - in the hope that the status quo is temporary -- is an apartheid state" (Lauria link).

Like Ben-Ami, Ehud Barak, Ehud Olmert, and Alon Liel, Israel's supporters and well-wishers, including President Barack Obama and former US President Jimmy Carter, are rightly concerned that the present state of affairs in Israel/Palestine is not sustainable. Much before Ben-Ami and other Israeli leaders, Carter had articulated this problem of the real threat to Israel in his book *Palestine Peace Not Apartheid*:

“The bottom line is this: Peace will come to Israel and the Middle East only when the Israeli government is willing to comply with international law, with the Roadmap for Peace, with official American policy, with the wishes of a majority of its own citizens – and honor its own previous commitments – by accepting its legal borders. All Arab neighbors must pledge to honor Israel's right to live in peace under these conditions. The United States is squandering international prestige and goodwill and intensifying global anti-American terrorism by unofficially condoning or abetting the Israeli confiscation and colonization of Palestinian territories” (Carter 216).

In his article “When Israel Would Give Up the Bomb,” Joe Lauria does not rule out the possibility of apartheid Israel repeating apartheid South Africa's example as a result of its isolation and the boycott, divestment and sanctions movement forcing Israel out of power: “A one-state solution, in which all Palestinians would have a vote, would almost certainly mean the election of a Palestinian government to rule both Arabs and Israelis, much as a black South African government rules blacks and whites. Despite its violent past, South Africa has shown how the communities could coexist” (Lauria link).

Israel's future plans and why Israel has occupied 100% of Palestine against the UN Partition Plan

We now know that Israel has chosen to be an apartheid state, with Jewish minority ruling over the Arab Palestinian majority. It is necessary to understand why Israel has chosen this path, how it has been able to defy the world successfully in its genocidal policies toward Palestinians since 1948, and, most importantly, how Israel can be forced into peace. We often hear the usual excuses used by Israel to justify its aggressive seizure of Palestinian land – excuses such as Arab countries' and some Palestinian leaders' refusal

to accept Israel's creation in Palestine, Palestinians' acts of terrorism against Israel, and the perceived threat to Israel's security. These Arab actions might have contributed to hostilities between the Israelis and Palestinians but have hardly any relevance to Israel's grand scheme of conquest and expulsion of Palestinians. If total expulsion became difficult, then colonization of Palestine was the back-up plan. Since Israel did not succeed in expelling all Palestinians, it has now made official and public its back-up plan to colonize Palestine. So far hidden from the public view this has been the real reason for Israel's expansionist colonial policies.

If Americans knew: Little-known essential historical facts about U.S. policies, Israeli atrocities, and the founding of Israel

Since the U.S. has been considered a dishonest broker in the so-called peace process and has given military, financial, and diplomatic support to Israel, even letting the Jewish state keep over 200 nuclear bombs, it is seen as the primary cause of the Palestinian tragedy. In fact, the 9-11 Commission found Palestine to be the No. 1 reason for the 9-11 attacks on America. For that reason, it is essential for American citizens to know the truth about their government's role in creating worldwide anti-America feelings and the causes of its "spectacular failure" (Avi Shlaim's words) in all of its campaigns and operations in the Middle East, Afghanistan, and Pakistan.

One can get factual information outside the U.S., but inside the country, because of almost complete media control, all Israel-related news has to pass through several filters, including Israel lobbies in the U.S. and the government of Israel, before it reaches the American people. A scholarly documentary titled *Peace, Propaganda & the Promised Land*, produced by Media Education Foundation, shows exactly how public opinion is formed in the U.S. on all Israel-related issues. This phenomenon, singlehandedly, has been the cause of distorted and inaccurate American public opinion, which, in turn, is exploited by American politicians in order to win elections with generous financial backing by AIPAC (American Israel Public Affairs Committee) and other pro-Israel lobbies. Books such as *They Dare to Speak Out* by former Congressman Paul Findley and *The Israel Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy* by John Mearsheimer and Stephen Walt offer compelling evidence of Israeli lobby's control of U.S. Congress and the media.

Moreover, there is a huge difference between coverage of Israeli and Palestinian terrorism. In his book *Unholy War: Terror in the Name of Islam*, John Esposito describes the difference:

"While average Americans might see the latest explosive headline event such as a spectacular terrorist attack in Israel, they are not bombarded daily with images of acts of Israeli violence and brutality, the disproportionate firepower, the number of Palestinian deaths and casualties, the use of American weapons including F-16s and Apache helicopters provided to Israel and used against Palestinians, including civilians, in the occupied territories" (Esposito 154)

Zionists' real intention from the start was occupying the entire Palestine

Facts about the process of Israel's creation are also little known. The prevalent but totally false narrative (as evidenced below) has been that Israel and Palestine could have been two states if Arabs and Palestinians had accepted the UN Partition of Palestine. The truth is that Zionists never had in their plans to allow a state of Palestine to come into existence from the time that the founder of Zionism Theodor Herzl, at the end of the nineteenth century, conceived the idea of a Jewish state in Palestine in his book *The Jewish State*. Israel's Mr. Netanyahu has simply made public what has all along been the undeclared racist and exclusivist Zionist policy. Herzl envisioned a European Jewish state, not a Middle Eastern state in Palestine. That Jewish state was designed to serve as a "rampart of Europe against Asia, an outpost of civilization against barbarism" (Palmer 93). True to the racist Zionist ideology, Herzl thought that only Europeans were civilized and others were barbarians.

In view of such openly racist remarks, "Arab nationalists viewed the Jewish state as an extension of Western imperialism in the heart of the Arab world" (Palmer 93). John Esposito has also pointed out that Israel is viewed as an extension of European colonialism – "as a Trojan horse of the West" (91) in Arab heartland. Arabs saw the Zionist plan as "a dangerous imperialist bridgehead . . . in Palestine" (Shlaim 17). Following in the footsteps of Herzl, Israel's first head of state David Ben-Gurion chalked out a careful plan to take over entire Palestine by ending the U.N. Partition and ethnically cleansing Palestine of Palestinians. He repeatedly said that the Zionist leaders were accepting what the UN gave them as the down payment on the rest of Palestine.

By making use of declassified Israeli documents, Israel's own historian Ilan Pappé and other scholars, such as Nur Masalha and Ibrahim Abu Lughod, have made some startling revelations. The world was kept mostly unaware of the Zionist plans, but they were known to Palestinians and neighboring Arab countries. That was one of the reasons why they did not accept the U.N. Partition Plan. They wanted to bring the matter before the International Court of Justice to challenge United Nations' violation of its own principle of letting a nation decide its future through self-determination. That Palestinian move was not allowed.

Zionists' Nazi-style brutality

Only a handful of people know about the Nazi-style planned brutality that Zionists unleashed on defenseless Palestinians. Pappé's *The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine* debunks the myth of poor little Israel defending itself against giant Arab powers. Space does not permit more than just a few examples of Zionists' planned expulsion of Palestinians from Palestine. This is how Theodor Herzl, the founder of Zionism, envisioned the expulsion of Palestinians:

"We shall try to spirit the penniless population across the border by procuring employment for them in the transit countries while denying any employment in our country. Both the process of expropriation and the removal of the poor must be carried out discretely [sic] and circumspectly" (Patai 88, Baltzer 382).

Even before the creation of the state of Israel, this is how David Ben-Gurion, the man who was to become its first Prime Minister, planned systematic expulsion of Palestinians:

“We must expel the Arabs and take their places and if we have to use force to guarantee our own right to settle in those places – then we have force at our disposal. . . . I support compulsory transfer. I do not see in it anything immoral. . . . The Arabs will have to go, but one needs an opportune moment for making it happen, such as a war. . . . In the Negev we will not buy land. We will conquer it. . . . The debate has not been for or against the indivisibility of Eretz Israel [the “Land of Israel,” including the West Bank and Gaza]. No Zionist can forego the smallest portion of Eretz Israel. The debate was over which of two routes would lead quicker to the common goal. I have no doubt that our army will be among the world’s outstanding – and so I am certain that we won’t be constrained from settling in the rest of the country, whether out of accord and mutual understanding with the Arab neighbors or otherwise. [By “Arab neighbors,” Ben-Gurion meant the neighboring Arab countries, not the Palestinians.] . . . *After the formation of a large army in the wake of the establishment of the state, we will abolish partition and expand to the whole of Palestine*” (Italics for emphasis, Baltzer 382-383).

Albert Einstein on the Deir Yassin Massacre

In a letter published on December 4, 1948, in *The New York Times*, Einstein and 27 other prominent Jews condemned the massacre of Deir Yassin:

“. . . terrorist bands [i.e. Begin’s Irgun] attacked this peaceful village, which was not a military objective in the fighting, killed most of its inhabitants – 240 men, women, and children – and kept a few of them alive to parade as captives through the streets of Jerusalem. Most of the Jewish community was horrified at the deed. . . . But the terrorists, far from being ashamed of their act, were proud of this massacre, publicized it widely, and invited all the foreign correspondents present in the country to view the heaped corpses and the general havoc at Deir Yassin” (Pappe 272).

Before the creation of the state of Israel in 1948, Einstein was approached by Stern Gang through American Friends of the Fighters for the Freedom of Israel. He was asked for his help in raising funds for the Zionist cause. Whereas thousands of Americans gave millions of dollars as donations, Einstein chose a principled rejection. His letter of April 10, 1948, is worth quoting: “When a real and final catastrophe should befall us in Palestine the first responsible for it would be the British and the second responsible for it the Terrorist organizations build up from our own ranks. I am not willing to see anybody associated with those misled and criminal people.”

Through many planned and brutally executed massacres of defenseless Palestinians and with the help of U.S. diplomatic, military, and economic support, the Zionists have been able to occupy the entire Palestine. Through sheer desperation and when neglected by the world, Palestinians have occasionally resorted to terrorism, which did not serve them well because it turned the world opinion against them, as all acts of terrorism, including state

terrorism, should do. Terrorism by Palestinians also invited the wrath of the occupying super power Israel that has continued to use F-16s, Apache helicopters, tanks, and the latest arsenal, supplied by the U.S., to kill thousands of civilians in Palestinian cities, villages, and even in refugee camps. All acts of terror are equally reprehensible. However, those committed by Palestinians come nowhere near Israel's barbarity in making it a state policy to target children and civilians.

Purposely targeting children and civilians and use of disproportionate force by design

Because of a very high number of Palestinian children killed by Israel in each of its assaults, Israel has earned the notoriety of child-killing specialists. In its latest invasion of Gaza, Israel killed over 300 children. The murder of young Palestinian boys while they were playing soccer on a beach in Gaza is well-known. And perhaps one of the most horrendous examples since the Nazis' gas chambers was the tragic incident in which some Israeli settlers kidnaped a 16-year old Palestinian boy, forced him to drink gasoline, and then burned him alive. This barbaric act was carried out supposedly as a revenge for the heinous and tragic kidnaping and murder of the three Israeli settlers. What did this innocent teenager had to do with the murder of the three Israelis? This fact is known to the entire world as it is very recent. Killing innocent children and civilians in the heat of a battle is still a heinous and barbaric crime, but making it an official policy is beyond heinous and barbaric. It vies Hitler and the Nazis in its cold-blooded and planned murder of innocent people.

In 2001, the famous award-winning journalist Chris Hedges was sent by *New York Times* on an assignment in Khan Younis (Gaza). This is how he describes Israeli soldiers enticing Palestinian children and then wantonly killing them:

"Children have been shot in other conflicts I have covered -- death squads gunned them down in El Salvador and Guatemala, mothers with infants were lined up and massacred in Algeria, and Serb snipers put children in their sights and watched them crumple onto the pavement in Sarajevo -- but I have never before watched **soldiers entice children like mice into a trap and murder them for sport**" (Makdisi 267; bold letters for emphasis).

As reported in the July 18, 2014, broadcast of *Democracy Now*, during Israel's July 2014 Gaza invasion that Israelis call "mowing the lawn" in their parlance, Israeli soldiers called Dr. Alashi of Al-Wafa Hospital in Gaza and asked him to evacuate. He explained to them that it was impossible to move so many patients who were paralyzed and disabled. Israel still chose to bomb that hospital a few minutes after that conversation. In "USrael: The Democracidal Minotaur In The Cesspool of Imagination," Gary Corseri has reported many Israeli atrocities and crimes against humanity. Brief details of two of them give us an idea of the extent of their barbarism:

"Two bits of truth did leak out while I scavenged among the rubble of the MSM: one news clip showed a Palestinian girl of ten who had awakened paralyzed in a hospital after her family had been killed by Israeli bombs. When she could not feel her limbs, she

thought she had died. Actually, she had died... the life she might have had, had died forever. Another bit of truth showed another Palestinian girl, also ten. She had just witnessed her grandmother and three uncles being blown apart by Israeli bombs. She held her palms to her head and kept crying, "Enough! Enough! Enough!" (Corseri link).

Shocking confessions by Israel's own soldiers

In Israel's assault on Gaza in July, 2014, 2200 Palestinians (mostly civilians) were killed. A total of 73 Israelis (six of them civilians) lost their lives. Compelled by qualms of conscience and traumatized by their own actions, over sixty Israeli soldiers and officers have confessed to indiscriminate slaughter of Palestinian civilians. They were told by their commanders that "there are no innocent civilians" and that anyone within 200 to 400 meters range was to be considered an enemy and shot (Gvanyahu video). The testimonies of these soldiers have been recorded in *Breaking the Silence*, a video produced by Avner Gvanyahu, a former Israeli soldier. All these soldiers have spoken out at huge risk to their careers and well-being (*Democracy Now* 5-6-15 link).

Systematic Zionist campaign to erase their 1948 atrocities

Public memory is short-lived, and media control wins out in the propaganda battle. Ilan Pappé points to the discrepancy between the truth and systematically orchestrated false propaganda when it comes to the matter of ethnic cleansing of Palestinians in 1948:

"... it is the deep chasm between reality and representation that is most bewildering in the case of Palestine. It is indeed hard to understand... why a crime that was perpetrated in modern times and at a juncture in history that called for foreign reporters and UN observers to be present, should have been so totally ignored. And yet, there is no denying that the ethnic cleansing of 1948 has been eradicated almost totally from the collective global memory and erased from the world's conscience" (Pappé 9).

The Last Straw: Netanyahu's declaration to disallow creation of a Palestinian state makes Israel an apartheid state

Netanyahu has just completed the task that Israel's first Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion started to end the U.N. mandated partition of Palestine into two states. All these years since 1947, Israel has been able to hoodwink the world with U.S. connivance. A state founded on such planned genocide of the indigenous people could be seen as having abrogated its legitimacy as a state. However, even after committing numerous massacres, that have continued to the present day, Israel did have a chance, under the two-state solution, to coexist with Palestinians as a democratic state. According to Jimmy Carter's figures in his 2006 book *Palestine Peace Not Apartheid*, nearly 80% of Palestinians and over 60% Israelis favored a two-state solution according to the UN resolutions. Even after the latest unprovoked Israeli assault on Gaza in July 2014, a majority of Israelis and Palestinians favored the two-state solution. However, with Israeli Prime Minister's latest categorical declaration to never allow a Palestinian state, that opportunity seems to have slipped away. Israel could have chosen the path of peace and mutual coexistence but tragically for Palestinians and for peace-desiring Jews in Israel and elsewhere, it chose endless war, endless insecurity, and endless problems not only for Palestinians but also

for innocent Jews around the world as evidenced by the rising and totally unjustified and illogical anti-Semitism everywhere. On Israel's unfortunate choice, the Israeli historian Ilan Pappé has stated that Israel has made itself a "racist apartheid state with US support":

"Israel was in a junction where it had to decide finally whether it wants to be a democracy or to be a racist and apartheid state, given the realities on the ground. I think Israel, in 2014, made a decision that it prefers to be a racist apartheid state and not a democracy, and it still hopes that the United States would license this decision and provide it with the immunity to continue with the necessary implication of such a policy vis-à-vis the Palestinians, wherever they are. . . . [The US is] providing an unconditional support for a regime that systematically abuses the human rights and the civil rights of anyone who is not a Jew" (Pappé link).

Like apartheid South Africa where minority whites ruled over the country's black majority, Israel has now completed the process of making itself into an apartheid state where the Jewish minority rules over the Palestinian Arab majority.

Is Israel operating as a Middle Eastern state or as a European colonizing power that does not belong there?

Since 1967, when Israel completed its occupation of 100% of historic Palestine, Israel has been operating in the region as a colonial power, treating Palestinians in occupied territories as second-class citizens. Road blocks to restrict Palestinians' movement, imprisonment without charges for indefinite terms, routine killing of unarmed, peaceful protestors against occupation, separate roads for Palestinians and Israelis, invading and destroying Gaza and its inhabitants every one or two years, and imposing the illegal siege of Gaza by land, air, and sea since 2006 are just a few examples of Israel's brutal colonialism and apartheid policies. Even President Obama, a true friend and avid supporter of Israel, has stated that with its rejection of the two-state solution, Israel has put at risk its own legitimacy as a state. The international community has now to decide whether it needs to continue indulging and appeasing Israel. Many observers have called what Israel has been doing to Palestinians since 1948 a Holocaust in slow motion. The difference is that this time it is not the Nazis but some Israelis who are carrying it out. Instead of putting an end to this tragedy, US government's continued protection of Israel's aggression with diplomatic, military, and financial support and hollow statements about the two-state solution have made matters worse.

During the past half century, the U.S. government has been periodically repeating its official policy against Israeli settlements in the occupied territories but never cut off or even suspended its huge aid to Israel. In his book *The Fateful Triangle*, Noam Chomsky has well articulated Israel's hold on the U.S. Congress:

"Complaints and accusations are indeed hypocritical as long as material assistance is provided in an unending and ever-expanding flow, along with diplomatic and ideological support, the latter, by shaping the facts of history in a convenient form. Even if the occasional tempered criticisms from Washington or in editorial

commentary are seriously intended, there is little reason for any Israeli government to pay any attention to them. The historical practice over many years has trained Israeli leaders to assume that U.S. "opinion makers" and political elites will stand behind them whatever they do" (Chomsky 2).

Former Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's following words from an October 3, 2001, speech are an example of Chomsky's point: "Every time we do something you tell me America will do this and will do that. . . . I want to tell you something very clear: **Don't worry about American pressure on Israel. We, the Jewish people, control America, and the Americans know it**" (Bold letters for emphasis). This control of Israel over the U.S. is also evident in Israel's defiance of President Obama's numerous calls to halt settlement building and in its anti-U.S. and anti-U.N. declaration to never allow a Palestinian state.

Two options to solve the problem: One state or two states?

Now that Israel has terminated the 1947 partition of Palestine, the U.S. and the international community must decide between one-state or two-state solutions. The United Nations can step in to establish just one democratic state where all citizens are equal regardless of their religion or ethnicity. The name of the state could be Palis or Ispal (combining the two nations of Palestine and Israel). As Ali Abunimah has suggested in his book *One Country: A Bold Proposal to End the Israeli-Palestinian Impasse*, the name of this new democratic country for all could be decided with a coin toss under U.N. supervision. This idea of one country blends in with how Palestine was before the partition and before the Zionist-European enterprise seized the region. As a direct result of Israel's recent declaration to never allow a Palestinian state in Palestine, an overwhelming majority of those who had been supporters of the two-state solution seem to have changed their mind and now favor the one-state solution. This seems to be a logical and viable option to solve the problem and is likely to prove more enduring than the two-state solution, given Israel's intentions.

However, if enforcing this option is not possible because of entrenched vested interests, then the two-state solution would be the only way forward to preserve Israel as a state and create a viable Palestinian state. The border between the two states will have to be according to the original United Nations' partition of Palestine (U.N. Resolution 191) that gave Israel 53% of historic Palestine, with Palestinians getting 46%, and 1% (Jerusalem and surrounding area) to be an international zone shared by both sides. There are some advantages to Israel if it agrees to the 1947 partition plan. It will no longer have to worry about two of its major problems. The first problem is that compliance with UN Resolution 194 requires Israel to allow the right of return to all those Palestinians who were driven from their homes in 1948. The number of refugees has increased dramatically since 1948 if we include the refugees' offspring. Israel may no longer be required to follow that UN Resolution, since Palestinians will be able to accommodate those refugees if they get 46% of historic Palestine instead of the ridiculously unfair 22% where they now barely exist under Israel's apartheid rule.

The second major benefit to Israel if it accepts the original partition plan is that it can then fulfill its long-cherished dream of being a Jewish only state. The 20% Arab citizens of Israel may choose to either remain in Israel – an unlikely choice for them to make in view of rampant discrimination against them in Israel – or they may go to Palestine. This is a point on which the two sides can negotiate. The original UN Partition Resolution 181 should now be reintroduced before the Security Council. It was never implemented because the civil war broke out as soon as the partition plan was announced.

This way the long-festering tragic conflict between Israel and Palestine can be brought to an end. It has resulted in thousands of avoidable deaths on both sides, many more on the Palestinian side because of Israel's asymmetrical fire and defense power. Israel needs to be told in clear terms that, to quote Dr. Martin Luther King's words, "we still have a choice today: nonviolent coexistence or violent co-annihilation" and that "power without compassion, might without morality, and strength without sight" are a recipe for disaster.

Israel will never make peace on its own. It has to be forced to do so.

As long as Israel manages to defend itself with US-provided Iron Dome and other means of defense and can kill thousands of Palestinians with US-provided F-16s and Apache helicopters in exchange for only a few Israelis killed, Israel will never think twice about invading Gaza or any other country at will. To protect its own global interests, the U.S. may abandon its blind and self-destructive support of Israel. It may take seriously the words of the former Chair of Joint Chiefs of Staff, David Petraeus, who warned that **U.S. support of Israel's intransigence endangers American lives at home and abroad.** U.S. politicians may finally wake up to the reality that Israel has become an albatross around America's neck. When the American people know the verifiable facts, they will certainly pressure their political leaders to formulate a just policy. Our government keeps touting Israel as "the only democracy in the Middle East" when in fact 4.5 million Palestinians in the West Bank, East Jerusalem, and Gaza (over 36% of the people living under Israel's rule) are denied the right to vote. If the US government doesn't align its policies with justice, other countries will. The U.S. will then go down in history as a country that provided the means for the annihilation of Palestinian people because Israel could never have been able to carry out the destruction of Palestine without U.S. diplomatic, military, and financial backing.

Sweden became the first country in the European Union to accept Palestine as a state. Announcing support for Palestine's right to self-determination, Margot Wallstrom, Swedish Minister of Foreign Affairs, said: "Some will say today's decision comes too soon. I'm afraid, rather, that it is too late." On her visit to Gaza, Federica Mogherini, European Union's Foreign Minister, has also strongly supported Palestine's statehood: "We need a Palestinian state – that is the ultimate goal and this is the position of all of the European Union." The world cannot afford another war in Gaza, she said. A major recent development is Pope Francis's declaration to recognize Palestine as a state. The Pope's words and actions carry a lot of weight worldwide. Since 1988 when the Palestine Liberation Organization declared statehood, 136 nations have recognized Palestine as a state. The global Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions movement against companies profiting from Israel's

occupation of Palestine is becoming stronger by the day. It was such a movement that brought the South African apartheid state to its knees. As Noam Chomsky has noted, "There has been a very clear shift in recent years – on U. S. campuses and with general audience as well. . . . Apologists for Israeli violence now tend often to be defensive and desperate, rather than arrogant and overbearing" (Chomsky and Pappé 146). Powerful US groups, such as Jewish Voice for Peace, End the Occupation, and Center for National Interest Foundation, are offering stiff resistance to the so far almighty Israeli lobby known as AIPAC. Adding to the rising chorus of voices supporting Palestine's statehood are many internationally respected authors, scholars, scientists, sports heroes, musicians, and movie stars. More than 50% of Israelis also support the idea of a viable Palestinian state.

After successfully initiating steps toward a diplomatic solution to the stand-off with Iran, the other related and very pressing need is to prevent further carnage in Israel/Palestine by implementing the U.N. Resolution 181 of 1947. If Israel does not accept the one-state solution, honoring the original partition plan is the only other way for Israel to safeguard its security. Once this issue is resolved, Israel will be recognized by the world and will no longer need to suffer from the disabling phobia of Iran's interference on behalf of the Palestinians. However, if Israel continues to refuse cooperation, the same kind of sanctions should be imposed on it as were imposed on Iraq and Iran when those countries broke international law. In addressing these pressing issues of our times, let us not forget these cautionary words of former U.S. President John F. Kennedy and adopt them as our motto: "Those who make peaceful revolution impossible will make violent revolution inevitable."

As the world's richest and most powerful country, in this fast-changing and deeply troubled world, it is America's duty to lead the way by promoting diplomatic solutions to the world's myriad problems and by putting itself squarely on the right side of history. President Obama might have initiated that desperately needed New World Order with his triumphant diplomacy through impressive collaborative efforts with five other top world leaders and with Iran. What now needs to be done is applying the same principled and decisive approach to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict to end what has begun to look more and more like a Holocaust in slow motion, the victims this time being the Palestinians.

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