



Israel: Perpetrator or self-proclaimed victim?

Besides the fighting between the Israeli army and Hamas (Islamist Resistance Movement) a “war of opinions” has broken out over the issue who’s the perpetrator and who is the victim. Western media outlets have already made up their mind and put the sole blame on Hamas. The Israeli military attacks against a defenseless population have been going on since 1948 and follow usually the same pattern, especially, after Israel occupied and colonized the rest of Palestine after 1967. The decades-long occupation is the real cause of the conflict. Would the Israeli government not object to the right of self-determination of the Palestinian people, withdraw its troops and its colonizers from the occupied territories and let the Palestinians live their life in freedom, the conflict could be

resolved in a minute.

The population in the Gaza Strip has always been harder hit than the rest of the Palestinian people. The closure of the Strip, put in affect by the government of the late Yitzhak Rabin in 1993, hasn’t been lifted ever since. Even PLO chairman Yasser Arafat needed an Israel permit when leaving the imprisoned Strip. The strangulation of the people of Gaza got even more severe after Hamas took power in 2007, after a US and Israeli instigated coup led by their warlord Mohammed Dahlan failed. His collaboration with the occupation forces was notorious.

Although, Hamas was the only democratically elected government in Palestine so far, they were stigmatized as a terrorist organization by Israel. The Israeli patron, the US, and its clients in Europe borrowed this Israeli classification. Having adopted this propaganda tool, they put themselves in political chains and became politically immobile. This holds also true for the actual Israeli attack. US President Barack Obama, the German Chancellor Angela Merkel and other European political leaders put all the blame on Hamas, simultaneously stressing Israel’s right of self-defense. They have totally forgotten that Israel is an occupying power. None other than Noam Chomsky has pointed to this contradiction: “When Israelis in the occupied territories now claim that they have to defend themselves, they are defending themselves in the sense that any military occupier has to defend itself against the population they are crushing. You can’t defend yourself when you’re militarily occupying someone else’s land. That’s not defense. Call it what you like, it’s not defense.”

None of the political leaders have ever investigated the real causes that led to the Israeli onslaught. Like in December and January 2008/09, when Israel killed 1 400 people in Gaza, two-third of them women and children, or currently under the so-called military operation “Pillar of Defense” (!), none of these leaders are interested in the horrific circumstances that caused the fighting: Israel’s long-lasting occupation of Palestinian lands.

In November 2008, after a long truce between Israel and Hamas, the Israeli military killed four Hamas militants without reason. After Hamas retaliated with home-made Kassam rockets, Israel started its brutal military assault called “operation cast lead”. The then little Bush called the result of the massacre an act of self-defense, and the just newly elected Obama played golf on Hawaii. This massacre took place before the upcoming Israeli elections. It’s like déjà vu again; on January 22, 2013 the Israelis are called to the polls again. Probably, this attack will boost the hawkish right-wing parties. This time again, the Israeli government broke the cease-fire.

On November 13, 2012, Israel exerted pressure on Hamas, which led to a pre-formulated truce agreement; however, the assassination of Ahmed Jabari on 14 November 2012, head of the Hamas resistance forces, was the justification of Israel’s full-scale warfare. The script looked very familiar to the prelude of the massacre of 2008/09, and the consequences will be more of the same: death and destruction.

One should never have any illusions about the “Nobel Peace Prize Laureate”. He is just a leader of an Empire. It makes no difference whether he is white, black, brown or yellow. He decides according to the rules that are set by political interest groups and the military and financial power agglomeration in the US. As

predicated in an article after the US elections, his policy towards Israel would not change one jota. His support of Israel's aggression is ironclad and wholeheartedly. And during his second term he might even start the long desired war against Iran. Why should a US President criticize Israel's assassination policy while he presides personally over his own drone "kill list" and orders the killing of suspects in several countries on a daily basis? "Terrorists" and even American citizens are pulverized without due process.

The Netanyahu government plays with the Obama administration cat and mouse. *First*, the forced colonization of the West Bank and East Jerusalem was taken off the international agenda by the clamor over Iran's alleged nuclear program. *Second*, the attack on the people of Gaza should foil the secret negotiations between the US and the Iranian government over the nuclear issue. *Third*, Netanyahu tries to undermine the bid of the Palestinian Authority to gain a better status at the United Nations by writing letters or making phone calls in order to pressure other heads of states not to dare to vote for the Palestinian motion. *And finally*, it gives the Palestinian a taste of what will come if they do not withdraw their request to the United Nations. This is contrary to American interests. Can an Empire allow a tiny client state to preside over its national interest and damage its credibility internationally?

With its unilateral withdrawal from the Gaza Strip in 2005, Israel's occupation under the Geneva Convention did not end. According to international law, the Israeli government is still responsible for the well-being of the population in the occupied Gaza Strip. Instead bothering, the Israelis put them on a diet, which just prevents the population from starvation, and they are collectively punished by the siege by land, water and air. Or is Israel's final goal to bomb the Gaza Strip into oblivion? At least, the statement made by Eli Yishai, Israel's Minister of the Interior, could be understood like this: "The goal of the operation is to send Gaza back to the middle Ages. Only then will Israel be calm for forty years." If that holds true we could see a fight between the Israeli version of "enlightenment" and the Palestinian "forces of darkness". That the "sophisticated" West doesn't reject this rhetoric nonsense outright should make the audience wonder. The future of the Near and the Middle East will be brighter than ever.

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