



The Stalinist approach to peacemaking

Simple, homicidal logic: No Israel, no problem

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“Death solves all problems,” Josef Stalin is quoted as having said. “No man, no problem.” A significant number of influential people are now applying the Soviet dictator’s logic to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. Their formulation is as simple as it is homicidal: “No Israel, no problem.”

Iran’s rulers express their genocidal intentions forthrightly. “We will not back off from the annihilation of Israel, even one millimeter,” Brig. Gen. Abolfazl Shekarchi, spokesman for the regime’s armed forces, has vowed.

Hezbollah and Islamic Jihad, proxies of Tehran, have the same goal, as does Hamas, the terrorist organization that rules Gaza (also supported by the Islamist regime).

Mahmoud Abbas, president of the Palestinian Authority, which governs the West Bank, is cagier. He doesn’t call for Israeli Jews to be killed. But he does provide financial rewards to Palestinian terrorists and their families.

The featured speaker at the City University of New York’s law school graduation last month was Fatima Mousa Mohammed, who called for a “fight against capitalism, racism, imperialism and Zionism around the world.”

On social media, she has wished that “every Zionist burn in the hottest pit of hell.” To be clear: Before the establishment of Israel in 1948, a Zionist was someone who favored self-determination for Jews in part of their ancient homeland. After 1948, a Zionist became someone who favors Israel’s continuing existence.

Anti-Zionism is now common on American college campuses. Ms. Mohammed expresses it crudely. Others employ more erudite language.

For example, four well-established professors — Michael Barnett, Nathan Brown, Marc Lynch and Shibley Telhami — published an essay in the May/June issue of *Foreign Affairs*, the journal of the Council on Foreign Relations.

Elliott Abrams, a senior fellow for Middle Eastern studies at CFR, encapsulated its thesis in this headline: “As Israel Turns 75, ‘Foreign Affairs’ Publishes a Call to Eliminate It.”

To accomplish that goal, the professors would have the U.S. pressure Israel to grant citizenship to Palestinian Arabs in Gaza and the West Bank. Jews would then become a minority in Israel, presumably living under the rule of Hamas or the Palestinian Authority. What would happen to them after that? The question does not appear to interest the essay’s authors.

Roughly 20% of Israeli citizens are Arab. A recent poll by the Israel Democracy Institute found that 77% of them “feel that they are a part of Israel and share in its problems.” That percentage has been rising over recent years.

Has Israel achieved full equality for all its minorities? No, but what nation has? Arab Israelis enjoy more rights and freedoms than do non-Arab minorities — or Arab majorities — in any of the more than 20 states that identify as Arab and the more than 50 that identify as Muslim. Arab Israelis work as doctors, nurses, lawyers, judges, police officers, business owners and politicians. Some volunteer to serve in the Israeli army.

Such facts should make clear why the charge that Israeli is an “apartheid state” is ludicrous. But I’ll note a comment by Mohammed El-Kurd, a correspondent for The Nation magazine and one of Time magazine’s “100 most influential people in the world.”

During the most recent Adelaide Writers’ Week, he acknowledged that he calls Israel “apartheid” not because he believes the term is accurate but because it establishes “a cultural shift in the way people approach and talk about Palestine. ... As long as there is a conversation happening in which the villain is portrayed clearly, I think that’s good.” Perhaps for the same reason, the U.N. General Assembly and U.N. Human Rights Council condemn Israel more than all other countries combined. Regimes that threaten Israelis with genocide are neither denounced nor penalized.

To the contrary, U.N. members last week elected by acclamation the Islamic Republic of Iran as a vice president of the 78th session of the U.N. General Assembly as well as to a leadership position on the General Assembly’s committee on disarmament and international security. That’s a big win for a regime pursuing an illegal nuclear weapons program, exporting terrorism, ravaging its Middle Eastern neighbors, and oppressing its own population. A few questions occur.

Why don’t self-proclaimed champions of the “Palestinian cause” pressure Hamas and the Palestinian Authority to grant more rights and freedoms to Palestinians in Gaza and the West Bank? Why do they ignore the fact that if missile and terrorist attacks from Gaza and the West Bank ceased, counterattacks from Israel would also end? Why do they never criticize Palestinian leaders for rejecting offers of two-state solutions in 1937, 1947, 2000, 2001 and 2008? Nor do they mention that Palestinian leaders continue to reject even the possibility of a Palestinian state (which would of course identify as Arab and Muslim) coexisting alongside the Jewish state — rather than replacing the Jewish state.

“We don’t want the olive branch,” a spokesman for the military wing of Fatah, the most important faction within the Palestinian Authority, recently said. “We want the rifle, to fight the enemy of Allah and our enemy.” Do you think he’d put down his rifle if Israelis withdrew from the West Bank (which was taken from Jordan after Jordan attacked Israel in 1967)? Most Israelis don’t because, in 2005, they withdrew from Gaza (which they had taken from Egypt in that same defensive war) in the hope of facilitating a peace process. They know the disastrous results of that experiment.

In the 20th century, those who sought to eliminate Jews called themselves antisemites. In the 21st century, those who seek to eliminate the Jewish state call themselves “social justice warriors,” scholars and peacemakers. Such claims can no longer be taken seriously.

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