

Israel's Holy War: Triggering the Palestinian Exodus?

Selected Articles

By [Julie Lévesque](#)

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Israel's latest attack on Gaza, "Operation Pillar of Cloud", was named after a passage in the Torah:

By day the Lord went ahead of them in a pillar of cloud to guide them on their way and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, so that they could travel by day or night. Neither the pillar of cloud by day nor the pillar of fire by night left its place in front of the people. Exodus 13:21-22

Far from divine guidance, however, the intentions underlying the pillars of cloud and fire Israel violently dropped on the small and densely populated territory had quite a nefarious objective: Exodus and the chasing of Palestinians out of the "Holy Land". To achieve their goal, some prominent Israeli figures even had mushroom clouds in mind:

We need to flatten entire neighborhoods in Gaza. Flatten all of Gaza. The Americans didn't stop with Hiroshima – the Japanese weren't surrendering fast enough, so they hit Nagasaki, too. (Gilad Sharon [A decisive conclusion is necessary](#), Jerusalem Post, November 18, 2012)

Nile Bowie views the latest attacks as part of the expansion of Israel's illegal settlements:

The Israeli bombardment of Gaza being perpetuated under 'Operation Pillar of Defense' comes at an interesting time. Under the leadership of Benjamin Netanyahu and Ehud Barak, the expansion of illegal Jewish settlements into Palestinian lands has increased at unprecedented rates. Netanyahu's administration has approved the construction of 850 settler homes in the occupied West Bank in June 2012, even after the Israeli parliament rejected a bill to retroactively legalize some of the existing homes in the area. [2] The number of Jewish settlers in the West Bank has almost doubled in the past 12 years, with more than 350,000 residing illegally under international law. [3] While Israel's Foreign Minister Avigdor Lieberman asserts Tel Aviv's unwillingness to permit Palestinians any right to return to their lands, emphasizing, "not even one refugee," apartheid enforced on ethnic and religious lines has become a ratified part of Israeli government policy. [4] Far-right political discourse that was once considered extremism is now the status quo in Israel. (Nile Bowie, [Gaza and the Politics of "Greater Israel"](#), November 17, 2012.)

While the Jewish state is blamed for its repeated brutal attacks on Gaza, the crimes committed against the people of Gaza would not be possible if it weren't for the broad international support of Israel, mostly from the US, but also from other Western and Middle

Eastern countries.

The last assault named Pillar of Cloud (or Pillar of Defense) would have been impossible without the U.S.' unyielding political and military assistance:

As Michel Chossudovsky notes, the U.S. not only supported Israel, the attack on Gaza, from a Command and Control point of view, was a joint US-Israeli military operation:

While reports acknowledge that president Obama, in the wake of the November 6 elections, had granted a "Green Light" to Tel Aviv, the central issue does not pertain to Washington's support but rather to the direct involvement of the US government and military in the planning and implementation of the attack on Gaza.

There is evidence that Operation "Pillar of Cloud" was implemented in close liaison with Washington in the context of the broader process of allied military planning. Senior US military officials were on location in Israel working with their IDF counterparts in the days leading up to the attack. ([The US-Israeli Attack on Gaza](#), [Prof Michel Chossudovsky](#), November 20, 2012)

Although Israel buys most of its weapons from the U.S., the European arms dealers also contribute to the Israeli war machine and are profiting from the killings of Palestinian civilians. David Cronin explains:

Haneen was 10-months-old; Omar 11 months; Ibrahim one year. For the offence of being reared in Gaza, these infants were killed with the aid of Israel's "precision-guided" missiles.

A few days before their deaths, the European Commission sponsored the "second international homeland security conference" in Tel Aviv. More of a bazaar than a talking shop, the event featured exhibits by Israel's top weapons companies.

As far as I can see, the EU's involvement in this exhibition went unnoticed by the media. That is deeply disturbing. It suggests that the Commission can endorse firms which profit from dropping bombs on Palestinian babies without anyone batting an eyelid.

The officials who rubber-stamped the EU's participation in the Tel Aviv fair cannot claim it was unrelated to the latest offensive against Gaza [...]

In June, numerous Israeli firms took part in Eurosatory, an arms fair in Paris; so did delegations from the EU and NATO. (David Cronin, [How Europe Courted Israel's Arms Industry on Eve of Gaza Attack](#), November 28, 2012.)

If this unending war relies on arms dealers, military and political support, it would not be possible without the mass propaganda in and outside Israel.

The widely accepted racist and dehumanizing view of Arabs perpetuates the war on Palestine. It was blatantly expressed by Israel's Prime Minister's father*, Benzion Netanyahu, who appealed to the misleading authority of the Bible to confirm his racist worldview:

"The Bible finds no worse image than this of the man from the desert. And why? Because he has no respect for any law. Because in the desert he can do as he pleases.

The tendency towards conflict is in the essence of the Arab. He is an enemy by essence. His personality won't allow him any compromise or agreement. It doesn't matter what kind of resistance he will meet, what price he will pay. His existence is one of perpetual war. Israel's must be the same. The two states solution doesn't exist; there are no two people here. There is a Jewish people and an Arab population... there is no Palestinian people, so you don't create a state for an imaginary nation... they only call themselves a people in order to fight the Jews." (Benzion Netanyahu, cited in Nile Bowie, [Gaza and the Politics of "Greater Israel"](#), November 17, 2012)

Palestinians are labelled as savage terrorists by Israel and various lobby groups with similar agendas and this racist portrait of a nation under occupation is never challenged by the mainstream media. Within this frame of mind, war crimes can easily be presented as collateral damages.

Prof. James F. Tracy shows which propaganda techniques are being used to "whitewash" Israel's war crimes:

The week-long Israeli onslaught against largely defenseless Palestinians in Gaza that began on November 14 provides a basis for assessing how Western corporate media whitewash the war crimes of America's foremost ally in the Middle East. There are three often intertwined techniques consciously applied to such news coverage—historical context, sourcing, and objectification of the enemy to be targeted. Such practices can readily transform journalism into propaganda that acts to abet such crimes while at the same time allowing journalistic institutions to still claim the mantle of "objectivity." Prof. James F. Tracy, [When Propaganda Masquarades as News](#), November 24, 2012.)

But Palestinian leaders are also to blame for their inaction and submission to Israel's demands. Stephen Lendman notes:

Abbas seeks nonmember observer status. With it come significant rights. Getting them requires not requesting they be excluded or omitting them from draft text language.

Full rights permit joining specialized UN agencies. They include the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), Law of the Sea Treaty (LST), NPT, International Court of Justice (ICJ), and International Criminal Court (ICC).

Membership gives Palestine control of its territorial waters and air space. Other rights are afforded.

Suing Israel (at the ICJ) and Israeli officials (at the ICC) for genocide, as well as crimes of war and against humanity is permitted. By or after 2017, Israel can also be sued for criminal aggression.

November 29 is D-Day (decision day). UN Member States will vote. Palestine will easily gain upgraded nonmember observer status. At issue is what comes with it. It depends on what's excluded.

Abbas submitted a 316-word draft. It calls for resuming peace talks with Israel. Doing so is meaningless and insulting. Abbas knows it. Going through the motions is a charade.

Peace isn't possible without a legitimate partner. Palestine never had one. It doesn't now.

Talks were stillborn from inception. One observer called them “the most spectacular deception in modern diplomatic history.” [...]

Abbas’ draft language said nothing about halting settlement construction. It doesn’t request membership in UN agencies and treaties. That’s key.

Without it, upgraded status is meaningless. Vital rights are denied. Abbas seems headed in that direction. It shouldn’t surprise. (Stephen Lendman, [Abbas Submits Weak UN Status Bid](#), November 28, 2012.)

Global Research offers its readers a list of articles on the latest assault on Gaza and related analyses.

**Edited November 29, 2012 7pm. This quote was originally attributed to Benjamin Netanyahu by mistake.*

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