

VIDEO: Noam Chomsky's Contradictions on Palestine

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I have a great deal of admiration and respect for Noam Chomsky, one of the foremost intellectuals of our time, whose work opened my eyes on a great many issues. But like many others, I have been increasingly baffled by the many inconsistencies in his views on Palestine. A few months ago, for example, I [responded](#) to his opposition to the boycott, divestment and sanctions (BDS) movement on Khalil Bendib's radio program Voices from the Middle East and North Africa.

After Chomsky was outrageously barred by Israel from traveling to the occupied West Bank over the weekend, I could not help but be struck by yet another glaring contradiction.

In his [17 May interview on Democracy Now](#) he told Amy Goodman that his planned itinerary included a meeting with [Salam Fayyad](#), the unelected US- and Israeli-backed "prime minister" of the Ramallah Palestinian Authority imposed after the US [helped overthrow](#) the Hamas-led "national unity government" that came after the 2006 election. Chomsky told Goodman:

I was going to meet with the Prime Minister [Fayyad]. Unfortunately, I couldn't. But his office called me here in Amman this morning, and we had a long discussion.

He is pursuing policies, which, in my view, are quite sensible, policies of essentially developing facts on the ground. It's almost—I think it's probably a conscious imitation of the early Zionist policies, establishing facts on the ground and hoping that the political forms that follow will be determined by them. And the policies sound to me like sensible and sound ones. The question, of course, is whether—the extent to which Israel and the United States, which is a determining factor—the extent to which they'll permit them to be implemented. But if implemented, and if, of course, Israel and the United States would terminate their systematic effort to separate Gaza from the West Bank, which is quite illegal, if that continues, yes, it could turn into a viable Palestinian state.

Really? Chomsky the great critic of US efforts to undermine democracy and impose its clients around the world is now effusively endorsing what is in effect a US-backed puppet regime? Don't take my word for it. Here's what Chomsky said about precisely the same Ramallah Palestinian Authority whose "prime minister" he now finds so "sensible" during a [lecture in Boston on 21 January 2009](#).

After describing at length Israel's plans to rob Palestinians inside Israel and the occupied territories of any remaining rights and to complete the colonization of remaining Palestinian

lands, Chomsky says:

Well, those proposals can only be implemented if there's no resistance to them. In the West Bank by now there's very little resistance, because of Israeli violence which has indeed subdued the population. And by now because of collaborationist Palestinian forces. As I'm sure you know Israel, the United States, with its allies, the Arab dictatorships — Jordan, Egypt — have trained security forces, Fatah security forces, whose main task is to subdue the population. If they have a demonstration, you know, against the atrocities in Gaza, instead of the Israeli army going in, they'll do it. That's a typical colonial pattern. The whole history of colonialism works like that. I won't run through the details but it's absolutely common, very common. Like, say, India, the population was mostly kept under control by Indian soldiers under British command. It's just a typical and natural procedure. In Chechnya today it's kept subdued and quiet and developing and so on under Chechen military forces with the Russians in the background in case anything goes wrong. It's routine and its being duplicated in the West Bank. Well, okay, so they've pretty much subdued protest in the West Bank so they can carry out their policies without disturbance, but they haven't yet subdued Gaza. In Gaza you still have resistance.

Later, Chomsky speaks about Israel reneging on the 2005 deal to keep the borders of Gaza open and its imposition of the current blockade:

A couple of months later, in January 2006, Israel rejected the agreement as did the United States. And the reason is the Palestinians had committed a really grave crime. They voted the wrong way in a free election. And you don't do that. The Godfather doesn't like that and therefore you have to be punished. And so the international community has to write uplifting articles about our yearning for democracy, so again, that's how international affairs work and how our cultural system works...

What has happened to Chomsky that he is offering his cachet, endorsement and support to what he himself has described as a colonial collaborationist regime?

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