

The War on Gaza: Might vs. Right, and the Insanity of Western Power

Part I

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Might vs. Right, and the Insanity of Western Power

Often misattributed to Albert Einstein, the famous adage that "Insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results" has rarely been more apt than in the case of the traditionally biased Western governments' position vis-à-vis the Israeli-Arab and Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Remarkably unanimous as far as the substance of the problem is concerned – even though occasionally divergent on paltry details of pure form – these governments, as well as their powerful relays among the elites and mainstream media, have invariably supported and defended loud and clear the theses and objectives of the Israeli occupier, giving themselves a clear conscience by making false promises and failed commitments to the Palestinians who in the process have steadily been uprooted from their ancestral lands.

Through hypocritical posturing and morally bankrupt double-standard language and procedures, they have thus culpably contributed to the perpetuation of both the plight of the Palestinians and a conflict that colonial Great Britain and France in particular and Nazi Germany created during the past century, and which the United States of America constantly feeds in order to serve its strategic interests[1] in a world that it has relentlessly strived to dominate and control exclusively since the end of the Second World War.

Subsequently, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has today become explosive, while its solution, on a just and lasting basis, seems to be moving further and further away, giving rise to an unprecedented degree of despair, mutual hatred and violence in an historically volatile region. The ongoing horrendous Israeli onslaught on the besieged Strip – the fifth of its kind in just 15 years – is further destabilising the whole region and gravely jeopardising

international peace and security, to say the least.

Yet, and fortunately enough, the lines are starting to move in a changing global geostrategic context, chiefly under the combined effect of the end of the dismal American unipolar dominance parenthesis, the resurgence of Russia and China on the global stage, and the gradual emergence of a Global South which legitimately claims the right to participate in the management of the affairs of our increasingly interconnected “planetary village”, most conspicuously under the aegis of the BRICS nations.

It is also worth mentioning here the worldwide rise of the *Vox Populi* as a powerful means in modern political communication, from popular street protests and demonstrations to digital platforms and social media networks, and its impact on political authority, participation and representation.

As a result of this momentous historical evolution, there are clear signs of a revolt brewing among Global South nations and peoples and a process of de-Westernization of the world – which lasted more than three centuries – coupled with a transition to a multipolar global order seem to be inexorably underway. Maybe there is, for once, a silver lining in this for the innocent, dispossessed and oppressed Palestinian people, and for the endlessly and purposefully divided and tormented part of the world they belong to, which the European colonisers once called the “Near East”, before the Americans, pursuant to strategist Alfred Thayer Mahan’s determination, decided it should rather be known as the “Middle East”. [2]

Operation “Al-Aqsa Flood”: A Mere Repetition of Past Wars?

In my book [3] published in 2014, following the bloody military operation launched by Israel on the caged Gaza Strip, I dedicated a whole chapter titled “*Palestine: the new/old face of an eternal conflict?*” in which I wrote:

“While the occupied West Bank is on the verge of explosion, perhaps a prelude to a third Intifada that the Israeli government fears above all else, the Gaza Strip is already in ruins.

For a month, aerial bombardments and shelling, by land and sea, by the “fourth most powerful army in the world” spared neither the civilian populations, nor the homes, nor the hospitals, nor the mosques, nor Gaza’s only power plant, nor other scarce vital infrastructure like universities and schools, including those run by UNRWA.

The main aim of this deluge of fire was to defeat the government of national unity which had only just been formed by the Palestinians [4] and to break any desire for resistance in this overpopulated enclave transformed into an open-air prison by an inhumane blockade imposed on a population that the “democratic West” had criticized for having democratically chosen its representatives during the 2006 legislative elections. And until the outbreak of this umpteenth Israeli aggression against the Arab States and against the Palestinians, the effects of the blockade on the people of Gaza did not seem to move most of the international community, including some neighbouring Arab States.

And what about the deafening silence of the UN Security Council, usually so quick to wield the sword of Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations to severely punish Arab and Islamic “dictators” and “terrorist organizations”, but so incredibly slow to

move – provided there is unanimity among its members of course, which is often not the case – and ultimately settle for adopting non-binding presidential declarations calling on Israel to ‘exercise restraint’? This, even though it is a question of reacting to Israel’s state terrorism and the war crimes and crimes against humanity perpetrated by its very misnamed “IDF” (Israel Defence Forces), according to the very admission of some of its members disgusted by what they see in the daily reality of colonization[5]. And what about the reaction of the moribund League of Arab States, If not to join without hesitation in the appeal launched recently by Dr Ahmed Taleb Ibrahimi, former Algerian Minister of Foreign Affairs (1984-1988)[6], to Arab leaders with a view to its pure and simple dissolution and its replacement by a new institution more in line with the demands of current times and, above all, with the real aspirations of the Arab peoples?

This genocidal and particularly destructive war[7], whose authors thought they could wage smoothly and with impunity, is in fact transforming into a real strategic and moral rout for Israel and its accomplices in the region and elsewhere, and into a victory for Palestinian resistance[8].

Even Foreign Policy and The Economist – which are from being sympathetic to Hamas or hostile to Israel – have espoused this view. Thus, in an editorial with a revealing title[9], the British magazine, after having sacrificed the customary ritual in the West – that is a necessary prior praise to Israel – believes that “it is not surprising that many Israelis have the feeling that the world is against them and believe that criticism of Israel often masks antipathy towards the Jews. But they would be wrong to ignore them completely. This is partly because public opinion matters. For a trading nation built on the idea of freedom, delegitimization is, in the words of an Israeli think tank, ‘a strategic threat’. But also because certain criticisms coming from abroad are well-founded (...) Time is not on Israel’s side. Palestinians would already outnumber Israelis in places where they live together (...) Without the two-state solution, the risk for Israel would be either a permanent and undemocratic occupation depriving Palestinians of the right to vote, or a democracy where Jews constitute a minority. Neither option would correspond to the Jewish homeland with equal rights for all that Israel’s founding fathers aspired to”. Foreign Policy considers, for its part, that “ultimately, Israel lost, notwithstanding the power of its army and its resources, because the Palestinians have a secret weapon which constitutes an asset compared to the Iron Dome: the time is in their favour. With each passing day, their population and the injustice they suffer increases. With each passing day, Israel’s arguments for delaying the establishment of this (Palestinian) state diminish”.

The Gazans are providing proof, if it were still needed, that only armed resistance is capable of making law and justice triumph in the face of an occupier who has always made brutal force the supreme virtue. The growing disapproval of Arab and international public opinion; the certainly still too timid inflection of the major Western mainstream media, until now almost entirely committed to Zionist theses; the courageous positions taken by a number of elected officials, politicians, academic circles, artists, renowned Western and Israeli authors and even survivors and descendants of victims of Nazism[10]; added to the indiscretions of the American Secretary of State, John Kerry, recently revealed by the international press[11], are the harbingers of a global awareness that is long overdue. We can only sincerely hope for it and rejoice just as much if it were to be finally confirmed. Perhaps we will then witness

the beginnings of a salutary change in the attitude of those, among Western governments, who support Israel unconditionally and thereby continue to bear a heavy responsibility for the perpetuation of the historical injustice that they did to the Palestinians. For now, however, the powerful Israeli lobby[12] and its no less powerful media arm are keeping an eye on things, particularly in the United States. How else to explain that just hours after the National Security Council spokesperson's statement that "The United States condemns the bombing of an UNRWA school in Gaza that reportedly left Palestinians dead and injured innocent people – including children – and UN employees", the Pentagon spokesperson confirmed for his part that Washington had resupplied Israel with munitions, the very ones which kill Palestinian children, declaring that "The United States United States is committed to ensuring the security of Israel, and it is crucial to American national interests to help Israel develop and maintain a strong and responsive self-defence capability (...) This arms sale is consistent with these goals"?[13] And how else can we interpret the fact that Democratic and Republican members of Congress were working hard to finalize an agreement on an additional \$225 million in funding for Israel's "Iron Dome" before their summer break?[14] And finally how can we justify the presence in Gaza, alongside Israeli soldiers, of numerous American volunteers?[15]

The same influence of this Israeli lobby is true in other Western countries. In France, for example, the testimony recounted in Pascal Boniface's latest book[16] concerning the risks run by those who dare to criticize Israel's policies is overwhelming. He states that "dealing with anti-Semitism, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and its consequences on French society by departing from the agreed discourse, and above all by taking the opposite view of the dominant positions in the circles of political powers and media, is not without risk. I have already experienced this (...) I know too many political leaders and too many journalists who do not dare to contradict the argument (of Jewish community authorities) for fear of being accused of anti-Semitism and suffering painful and serious consequences (...) When in 2003 I published "Is it permissible to criticize Israel?"[17], "l'Arche", the major monthly magazine of the Jewish community, devoted a file of several pages to me under the friendly title "Is it allowed to be anti-Semitic?". As a result, some of these personalities "are excessively harsh (towards community organizations) off the microphone, while totally approving of them in public"!

There is no doubt that what is currently happening in Gaza is closely linked to ongoing events in other parts of the Arab-Muslim world. This is one facet, among others, of the long war – both open and covert – which has continued to be waged against all Muslims for a very long time. Questioned on this subject, Dr. Ahmed Taleb Ibrahim made this reflection: "We must be aware of the fact that fifty years ago we dreamed of Arab unity and Islamic unity, whereas today, in a strange irony, we have come to fear even for the preservation of the integrity of existing entities. Proof of this is that we witnessed the official break-up of Sudan without reacting in the slightest; proof of this is also that we see a de facto partition of Iraq taking place before our eyes without us being able to move; proof of this is also the process of partition and fragmentation underway in Libya, in addition to other states waiting their turn. The renewal of this nation is only possible by being aware of these threats and making sure to avoid them."[18]

Except for a few chronological details, the content of these excerpts may be mistaken for an actual description of the horrendous events presently taking place in the occupied territories, whether it be for the atrocities committed by Israel against the Palestinian

population, epitomised by the mass civilian casualties and the wilful and systematic destruction of their homes and infrastructure, the blatant violation of international humanitarian law, the inability of the international community represented by the United Nations Security Council to impose a ceasefire, the active complicity with and unconditional support to Israel on the part of the overwhelming majority of Western governments, the betrayal of most of the Arab and Muslim leaders, the scandalously biased coverage of the war by the mainstream media in the United States and Europe, or for the way the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is affecting Western and non-Western public attitudes.

The big picture might even lead one to agree with French novelist Jean Baptiste Alphonse Karr's proverbial expression "the more things change, the more they stay the same". And yet, this war is different to the others in many important respects.

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Notes

[1] During his 18 July 2023 meeting with his Israeli counterpart in the Oval office of the White House in Washington D.C., President Joe Biden repeated a line he famously said in 1986 : **"If there were not an Israel, we'd have to invent one"**, The Conversation, 25 July 2023.

[2] Read the brilliant analysis of Chas W. Freeman Jr., **"The Middle East is Once Again West Asia"**, Remarks to the Middle East Forum at Falmouth, 6 August 2023.

[3] Amir Nour, **«L'Orient et l'Occident à l'heure d'un nouveau Sykes-Picot»**, op cit..

[4] Read: Ari Shavit, **«Top PM aide: Gaza plan aims to freeze the peace process»**, Haaretz, 6 October 2004. In this interview Dov Weisglass, a senior adviser to Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, revealed in clear terms the true and malevolent intentions of the Israeli Government in the presentation of its so-called "disengagement plan" approved in June 2004. He said that Mr. Sharon devised the disengagement plan as a means of "freezing" the peace process and ensuring that there would be no political process with the Palestinians. Weisglass further explained that "when you freeze that process, you prevent the establishment of a Palestinian state, and you prevent a discussion on the refugees, the borders and Jerusalem. Effectively, this whole package called the Palestinian state, with all that it entails, has been removed indefinitely from our agenda. And all of this with authority and permission. All with a presidential blessing and the ratification of both houses of Congress".

[5] O. K, «How an army of defense became an army of vengeance» ; Avner Gvanyahu, «I've seen how shockingly we treat Palestinians» ; Yehuda Shaul, «Un ancien officier israélien : " Notre but était de semer la peur», in Le Monde newspaper of du 22 July 2014 :

http://www.lemonde.fr/idees/article/2014/07/22/un-ancien-officier-israelien-notre-but-etait-de-semer-la-peur_4460857_3232.html, as well as the poignant testimony of Eran Efrati, «On The Wrong Side Of

History: Ex-Israeli Soldier Speaks Out»: <http://www.informationclearinghouse.info/article39261.htm>

[6] Interview with the Algerian newspaper El Khabar, 23 July 2014:
<http://www.elkhabar.com/ar/politique/416135.html>

[7] Read to that effect:

- An opinion titled «**Lever la voix face au massacre perpétré à Gaza**», by former French Prime minister and minister of foreign affairs, Dominique de Villepin, in Le Figaro magazine, 31 July 2014.
- Jess Rosenfeld: «**Israel's Campaign to Send Gaza Back to the Stone Age**», The Daily Beast, 29 July 2014.
- Amos Regev: «**Return Gaza to the Stone Age**» Israel Hayom, 9 July 2014.

[8] Ariel Ilan Roth, «**How Hamas Won : Israel's Tactical Success and Strategic Failure**», Foreign Affairs, 20 July 2014, Brent Sasle, «**Israel's Hollow Victory over Hamas**», Haaretz, 22 July 2014, Jeffrey Goldberg, «**Israel Is Winning Battles But Losing The War**», Business Insider, 28 July 2014.

[9] The Economist, «**Winning the battle, losing the war**», 2-8 August 2014.

[10] - Noam Chomsky, «**A Hideous Atrocity: on Israel's Assault on Gaza**», Democracy Now! 8 August 2014.

- Gideon Levy, «**Killing Arabs to restore quiet**», Haaretz, 13 July 2014.
- Amira Haas, «**Sans changement de politique, l'Etat d'Israël n'est pas viable**», Courrier international :
- MSN News, «**Outcry after British MP tweets he would fire rockets at Israel**»:

<http://news.in.msn.com/international/outcry-after-british-mp-tweets-he-would-fire-rockets-at-israel;>

-Democracy Now!, with Norman Finkelstein and Mouin Rabbani, «**After Palestinian Unity Deal, Did Israel Spark Violence to Prevent a New "Peace Offensive"?** », 15 July 2014.

- Information Clearing House, «**Israel Accused Of War Crimes (UK Parliament)**».

Stop Mensonges, «**Les médias mainstream sont sur le point de tomber, la vérité est surpuissante!**», 21 July 2014.

-Global research News, «**Over 300 Survivors and Descendants of Survivors of Victims of the Nazi Genocide Condemn Israel's Assault on Gaza**», 16 August 2014.

[11] - Courrier International, «**Pour John Kerry, Israël risque de "devenir un Etat d'apartheid"**», 28 April 2014.

- 20minutes.fr, «**Gaza: Kerry laisse filtrer son irritation devant un micro resté branché à son insu**», 21 July 2014.

[12] Read in this respect:

- John Mearsheimer and Stephen Walt, «**The Israel Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy** », Farrar, Straus

and Giroux, 2007.

-Alison Weir: «**Israeli Analyst Explains that the “Special Relationship” Benefits Israel, NOT the US**»:

Alison Weir is the author of «**Against Our Better Judgment: The Hidden History of How the U.S. Was Used to Create Israel**», CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2014.

-Paul Craig Roberts, «**The Moral Failure Of The West**», Information Clearing House.

- See also: <http://ifamericansknew.org/>

[13] Le Monde.fr and AFP, «**Les Etats-Unis réapprovisionnent Israël en munitions**», 31 juillet 2014.

[14] Arutz Sheva Israel National News, «**Congress Scrambling to Approve Iron Dome Boost**», 30 juillet 2014.

[15] The Daily Beast, 23 July 2014 : «**1,000 Americans Are Serving in the Israeli Army and They Aren’t Alone**».

[16] Pascal Boniface, «**La France malade du conflit israélo-palestinien**», Editions Salvator, 2014.

[17] The book was rejected by seven publishers before finally being accepted by Robert Laffont. The same goes for Michel Bôle-Ricard’s book, «**Israël, le nouvel apartheid**», which was rejected by ten publishers before its ultimate publication in 2013 by Les liens qui libèrent.

[18] Interview with El Khabar, op. cit.

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