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## US-Israeli Regional Hegemony

### *Partners in Extermination*

by NORMAN POLLACK

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Alliance systems can be a perfidious or at least unscrupulous thing, entered into by the parties, whether two or more, in the hope of maximizing each's national self-interest covering a multitude of purposes—military, political, ideological, defensive, offensive, in character, addressed to power, the expansion of political economy, spheres of influence, financial-commercial penetration, frequently all of the above, and intensified under conditions of wartime—particularly perfidious or unscrupulous when the parties are unevenly matched in power, dominance by one often (but not always!) resulting to the detriment of the other(s). In the 20th century the US-British “special relationship” or, serving both in two world wars and postwar reconstruction after the second, the Anglo-American Entente, illustrates convenience in the quest for HEGEMONY, America benefiting from British military cooperation and, beyond, a world trading structure facilitating open markets, the reduction of tariff barriers, and a stable international monetary system, as meanwhile, despite this seemingly close embrace, the US, during and following the war, made steady progress in weakening then dismantling the Imperial Preference System and consequently eroded the power of the British Empire (America's chief competitor in world trade, and a main obstacle to its leadership of capitalism as a global system). No holds barred, where power and political economy are conjoined, at which point ideology comes into play in the effort to redefine the world order, i.e., the Cold War, the Free World,

American Exceptionalism in full bloom as exemplar, protagonist, vehicle for achieving Democracy in the face of the threat posed by modern day Bolshevism, Russia to the West and China to the East.

The 20th century mindset remains with us, outfitted in new clothing, yet with surprisingly little changes as viewed from the American perspective, Russia and China still demonized for purposes of maintaining the military foundations of the American polity (in spite of the capitalist inroads made into the societies and cultures of each), US hegemonic aspirations based on unilateralism still ever popular and intact, yet now facing grave obstacles, perhaps greater than at any time since the 1960s, because the world power system is becoming decentralized, manifested not only in the obvious quarters, Russia, China, the EU as a concert of powers, and the industrialization of the Third World, but also conflicting currents within the preceding and a ripening of discontent affecting the world order, which, as it shakes down, can yield any number of possible outcomes, as for example, military dictatorships, popular awakenings and overthrow of despotic regimes, the regrouping of international relations (chiefly, a rapprochement between Russia and China overcoming historical mistrust over decades, brought together through American policies and actions—most recent, Ukraine and NATO/Pacific-first strategy and TPP-directed against both), together suggesting a world in tension at knife's point. One further constant from the American perspective is its close relationship to Israel, every way germane—more so than ever, given the reshaping of the world structure—to the attempted perpetuation of US global hegemony.

Perfidiousness still holds, on both sides, despite which, the alliance because of mutual convenience and underlying ideological propinquity, remains rock-solid, as each pursues comparable policies of military and/or political-economic conquest generally not in each other's way (and if anything, complementing one the other). For each, the world becoming, as brought on by their actions, more menacing, has the result of creating a siege mentality elevated to matter-of-fact desensitization through colossal arrogance toward the commission of war crimes against others, increasingly taking on the proportions of genocide. America and Israel alike, one the supplier of funds, arms-and-ammunition, and diplomatic cover at the UN, the other the faithful executioner of disproportionate often overwhelming force as though in the service of a Higher Being, yet pursuant to concrete purposes of domination, exploitation, and territory, have together staked out the Middle East as a crucial sphere of influence, America piggy-backing over Israel to enlarge the sphere as in its own right making possible the exercise of control covering an arc from Southern and Eastern Europe, the Mediterranean, the Near East, and North Africa, while for Israel itself the immediate region and neutralizing prospective power-blocs will do. A perfect match-up on the altar of POWER reified to the extent of impunity in its exercise—with extermination the end point on a continuum consonant with and created for the purpose of expansion and subjugation, humans standing in the way no more than fly specks.

Domination, in its geopolitical, geostrategic, and, not usually recognized, geopsychological, form, is on a slippery slope, extermination—an outcome not predetermined, arising from historical circumstances and structural context—being the product of authoritarian values rooted in the society's political culture and its ideological expression, in America, the hierarchical-class overlay on nominal equalitarianism, in which both wealth and power have been disguised as democratic, lending credence to and legitimating upper-groups' superior position and right to

rule, while in Israel, the formulaic hierarchy resides in a religious-sourced chosen-people doctrine overlaid on a militaristic underpinning anything but nominal, applied to the Outsider, and internally, a political-military leadership system to a large extent acting independent of, though in the name of, civil and religious institutions. In both cases, the US and Israel, counterforces to the exercise of military power are weak to nonexistent (still retaining formalistic democracy in order, consciously or not, to hide hegemonic purpose, internal social discipline, and boundaries of dissent, as needed to ensure popular approval and/or complicity in a course of permanent war, the preparation for war, or the status of recognized command wherever its military reach extends).

For the US, as if the world could be flattened and neatly demarcated into territorial squares of varying size, control has always meant a process of as near TOTAL the coverage of these separable spheres of influence, the more secure—by definition—America would be, lest eruption, or worse, omission, in one place, lead to the toppling of predominance elsewhere. “Prestige,” that seemingly silly justification for war readiness, military budgets, enforced patriotism, is actually code for the pragmatic realization that domination, as Americans see it, is a zero-sum game, interlaced with an extreme fear of societal decline, in which the falling-domino effect is integral to the quest for hegemony, particularly its unilateral form. Thus, every square to be covered, accounted for, the Middle East especially attractive and necessary for obvious reasons, OIL, and less obvious ones, the geopolitical-geostrategic framework alluded to in that regional context, not only the territorial access from Spain to Turkey and the upper portion of Africa, but also slightly distanced pressure points on Russia and China. If for no other reason, Israel would then be seen as indispensable in completing the military paradigm of critical spheres of influences also matched elsewhere throughout the world.

But in fact there are other if not as compelling reasons for championing the cause of Israel, concretized in the near-integration of their respective military, intelligence, and planning/think tank communities. Israel behaves toward its neighbors the way America does to the world, waving an ideological banner of repression and force that gives courage, reinforcement, consolation, and legitimacy to America doing the same thing. Mossad’s skill at assassination is the envy of Washington, creating a pathway for CIA and Special Ops to act similarly; likewise, raising “collateral damage” to a high art through terrorizing civilian populations (for the US, drone warfare, even beyond casualties the constant buzzing overhead, those below not knowing where and when the sudden strike) and carpet-bombing/shelling—an uncanny accuracy in Gaza for hitting UN schools serving as shelters for a large, helpless population, a back-and-forth saga of military cruelty and destruction, first, America taking the lead, then Israel, each learning from the other and all the while improving lethality and psych ops. In this light, the US needs Israel as instructor par excellence in the ways of warfare and hegemony, a shining ideological example by which to toughen up the American spirit, all of this in addition to furnishing a beacon of light in the ways of domination per se: how to treat those below (no coincidence that the Ferguson, MO., police had sent one of its officers to Israel for special training), a process of social control beginning seemingly to find disfavor in America, so that Israel’s own methods of crowd control, population displacement, and use of heavy-handed instruments of persuasion undoubtedly have provided a boost, a sense of psychological well-being, to those beginning to lose confidence in the majesty of force.

America has been on that slippery slope before, scorched-earth policies and programs in Vietnam perhaps compensating in full to Israelis, a quid pro quo of brutality, for the lessons they have taught, evening the scale of indebtedness so that both could proceed in friendly competition to determine who best is the practitioner of violence, each thereby giving latitude to the other in filling out the grounds of permissible torture and deprivation. How doubt, even for a moment, the benefits of such an alliance, except that each simultaneously is in pursuit of its own agenda. Although Obama and Netanyahu may be interchangeable, as for political slickness raised to the highest power (Bush and Sharon, for example, still prekindergarten by comparison), their levels of operational activity give the nod to Obama in the scope of genocide each can reasonably be expected to pursue and achieve. Presently, Israel is America in microcosm, content to create absolute devastation in Gaza (actually, not content, until every house is leveled, ditto, hospitals, infrastructure—the land vacated and rendered uninhabitable, the people, made to suffer), and America, Israel in magnification, content to bully its way back into unilateral domination of the world system, if need be, at the risk of war with Russia, China, or both, a risk that could see the planet returned to the beginning of time via nuclear annihilation.

That there is increasingly less reticence about extermination, Gaza, serving as a focal point, an emblem of human cowardice and cruelty, few in the world coming to the defense of its people, and with that as precedent for the future, America and Israel may enjoy still closer relations, vibrating as one, until the Awakening occurs, if it ever will, and social justice trumps domination. But today, nothing of the kind. I have before me Jodi Rudoren's New York Times article, "In Torn Gaza, if Roof Stands, It's Now Home," (Aug. 18), which must be read with an understanding of how much America has aided Israel across the board, and here, where extermination, although not complete, has already left its dirty hands and choke hold of genocide. Her first sentence says it all: "Telltale signs of the displaced are everywhere in Gaza." No running water, electricity; people crowded into tiny spaces, i.e., where roofs stand, and many, where they do not, 10-13 to a room. She reports: "Scores of families have hung sheets and scarves from every available tree and pole to create shady spaces on the grounds of Al Shifa Hospital; in the unauthorized camp, a 3-month-old slept one recent morning in a wire crib lined with cardboard." "On Sunday [the 17th]," she continues, "more than 235,000 people were still crammed into 81 of the United Nations' 156 schools, where classes are supposed to start next Sunday." No chance of that. (As I wrote previously, these UN schools/shelters appear to be favorite targets of Israeli land, sea, and air power, with civilian casualties running high.) One mother of eight, Alia Kamal Elaf, stated, "Our fate at the end will be in the street." Perhaps terms such as "extermination" and "genocide" should be applied to the living as well, when life itself becomes a living death.

No showers. Already the UN "is placing a nurse and health educator at each site in the hope of staving off outbreaks of meningitis, lice and scabies.... People at the schools complain of incessant flies and fetid bathrooms." Elaf said, "she has but one mattress for her eight children, ages 8 to 16." On the grounds of Shifa Hospital, Rudoren writes, "[c]onditions are worse... where neither food nor water is provided to the makeshift camp that sprawls outside the internal medicine building, next to the X-ray department, between the emergency room, the morgue and the maternity ward." Abdullah Hamouda, in his tent: "Here each day equals a year." And Adel al-Goula, who "has already pitched a tent of sorts, in front of the pile of debris that used to be the home where he lived from the age of 13.... [t]he date, grape, olive, fig, walnut and lemon

trees...all gone,” put up a sign, “Home of the al-Ghoula Family,” and declared in the eloquent words of one who has seen suffering in the world, “We must rent a place, but we should still come here every day and sit here. To receive people. To tell the world: We are rooted in our land, until death.”