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Three U.S. Lies About Israel and Palestine

The Last Guest at the Table of Justice

by ROBERT FANTINA

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For decades United States' spokespeople, from presidents to members of Congress, have, with a straight face, told the most far-fetched lies about Israel and Palestine. Such things as Israel having a moral army, despite its ongoing genocide of men, women and children, or proclaiming it the only democracy in the Middle East, regardless of the institutional racism so prevalent there, have been staples of U.S. proclamations and news conferences. But as is true of many of the fairy tales spun by U.S. public relations forces, these have hardly been believed outside of U.S. borders. And increasingly, they are being met with skepticism even there.

With so many bizarre fabrications to choose from, and time and space being somewhat limited, it might be useful to look at just three of them, two old and one fairly new, and see what additional holes can be poked in them.

1. Israeli security is under constant threat. This one is old and stale, but the U.S. keeps trotting it out, whenever Palestinians ask that their basic human rights be considered. In the summer of 2014, when Israel was using the advanced weaponry provided by the U.S. to bomb the Gaza Strip and kill over 2,000 people, including over 500 children, the U.S. justified it all, saying that Israel has a 'right to defend itself'. One supposes that it does, but this was not defense. An occupied nation, according to international law, has every right to resist the occupier. It is

illogical to think that the occupier is ‘defending itself’ from the nation it occupies. Goliath did not defend himself from David. When the U.S. was occupying Iraq and killing Iraqi freedom fighters, it wasn’t ‘defending’ itself. It was merely enforcing the occupation. It is the same with Israel and Palestine.

When the U.S. voted, in December of 2014, against a U.N. resolution recognizing Palestine and calling for the end of the Israeli occupation by 2017, it again rolled out the ‘Israeli security’ mantra that it is forever chanting, saying that the resolution did not address Israeli security concerns. This writer would love to hear a member of the U.S. government ever speak the words ‘Palestinian security concerns’. He does not expect that phrase to be uttered by anyone in U.S. governance during his lifetime.

2. Palestine’s threat to join UN organizations caused the most recent peace talks to collapse. This is a new one, introduced recently, probably because when one gets desperate, one will say anything. After Palestine signed the necessary papers to join the International Criminal Court and several United Nations organizations, the U.S. condemned the move, and blamed the failure of peace ‘negotiations’ on the Palestinians. The threat that Palestine had made to join such organizations, it was stated, caused Israel to withdraw. Oh, and by the way, one spokesperson mentioned, Israel’s increased illegal settlement construction probably didn’t help all that much either.

3. Negotiations will lead to a just peace. This is another oldie but goodie, at least in the White House, the halls of Congress, and the Israeli government. All Palestine and Israel have to do, this old bromide says, is sit down together, determine what each wants and what each is willing to surrender in order to get it. Well, that’s all well and good, but in reality, one must ask why Israel would agree to do this, since it has been able to take whatever it wants for generations without ever giving anything up. As long as the goose is owned by the U.S., and all the golden eggs go to Israel, why change anything?

And why are negotiations even suggested? Let us look at a parallel, hypothetical situation, and see who might recommend negotiations. Suppose for a moment a man walks into a bank, forces a teller to empty the safe, and then walks out with millions of dollars. He has no mask on; everyone knows who he is. Would one imagine the police going to his home, and then contacting the bank manager and suggesting that he and the bank robber sit down together to make a deal? Would the police suggest that the bank manager negotiate with the bank robber for the return of part of the money? What, one wonders, would the police suggest that that bank manager surrender, in order to get back some of the money that was stolen from his bank? And then let us assume that the following day, the bank robber strikes again. Really now, must we negotiate with him to get him to stop all this stealing? No, in this case, he would be arrested, incarcerated, and the money all returned to the bank.

Israeli settlements are in violation of international law, so there is nothing to negotiate. The world, if it were doing anything close to its duty, would simply force Israel to vacate the settlements, and retreat to the internationally-recognized, pre-1967 borders. If Palestine had a powerful U.S. lobby, the U.S. would long ago have gone to the United Nations, cited the various international laws and U.N. resolutions Israel violates, arranged a multi-national military force,

comprised overwhelmingly of U.S. soldiers, and invaded the West Bank, driven all the settlers out, and then left a 'peacekeeping' force to assure that Israel maintained its internationally-recognized borders. It would pour billions of dollars into the Palestinian economy, and turn it into a prosperous nation, able to defend itself militarily with weaponry and technology provided for free by the U.S. taxpayers.

But instead, the U.S. chooses to mouth the lies that please Israel and increase hatred of the U.S. around the world. It finances an apartheid regime, as it supported South Africa a generation ago, caring nothing for the basic right of self-determination for the Palestinians that it hypocritically proclaims is a human right for all. As the world changes around it, and more and more nations support Palestine and ostracize Israel, the U.S. will be left alone, an outlier, continuing to value profits and power over human rights, but unable, ultimately, to give Israel what it wants, which is all of Palestine.

The people of Palestine today are suffering from the effects of illegal occupation and blockade, the results of last summer's devastating bombing, and this includes homelessness for thousands. And now, weather conditions in the Gaza Strip are making conditions even worse. Help is not forthcoming, because Israel blocks other nations from sending aid. Additionally, again in violation of international law, Israel is withholding tax revenues that are legally Palestine's, this in collective punishment for Palestine joining the International Criminal Court.

But Palestinians are accustomed to these hardships, and are now receiving some encouragement, as their president, Mahmoud Abbas suddenly seems to have awakened from an Israeli-induced sleep, and has recognized that Israel is more than content with worthless negotiations as it continues to steal land, and kill Palestinians. The world is rallying around Palestine like never before. The U.S., as usual, will be the last guest at the table of justice.