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## *Palestine and the World Community: What's Next?*



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It is just two weeks since U.S. President Donald Trump defied nearly the entire international community, and his own military advisors, and moved the U.S. embassy in Apartheid Israel to Jerusalem. Israel celebrated this event by killing 60 unarmed, peaceful Palestinians who were participating in a demonstration to demand their internationally-guaranteed right of return. These protesters were not on Israeli land; they were on Palestinian land, but this did not prevent Israeli snipers from shooting thousands of them.

Following this unspeakable mass murder, Israel was condemned around the world by nearly every nation, with the exception of the U.S. and Saudi Arabia. The U.S. even praised Israeli ‘restraint’: in the Orwellian world of Donald Trump, this is ‘newspeak’ at its best.

The United Nations voted to investigate possible Israeli war crimes, with Zeid Ra’ad al-Husseini, the U.N.’s top human-rights official, calling Israeli actions “wholly disproportionate”. However, in the past, Israel has refused to allow U.N. officials to enter Gaza or the West Bank, saying that it –Israel –would conduct its own investigation.

Regarding those ‘investigations’, Ryvka Barnard of England’s *War on Want* said this: “Trusting that Israel can fairly and neutrally investigate its own war crimes is an insult to any common sense definition of justice, and makes a mockery of the UK’s stated commitment to international law, human rights, and accountability.” As one might expect, those ‘investigations’ have always exonerated Israel. And there is no reason to think that Israel will allow U.N. investigators into Gaza this time around.

The U.N. Security Council voted on a resolution to condemn Israeli actions, with the U.S., again as one might expect, vetoing it.

With all this international condemnation of Israel; with worldwide outrage at such blatant and shocking criminal activity; with social networks awash with horrifying photos of medics being prevented from treating injured Palestinians by heavily-armed Israeli soldiers, will circumstances for the suffering Palestinians finally change? Will the brutal, criminal, punishing blockade of the Gaza Strip end? Will the international community force Israel to retreat to the internationally-recognized, pre-1967 borders? Will Palestinians finally be able to import and export goods, farm their own land, travel without endless checkpoints, and take their rightful place on the world stage?

Probably not. The mighty U.S. still calls the shots, and in the eyes of the current U.S. government, Israel can do no wrong. International law? Israel is exempt. Human rights? Not for Muslims, or any Christians (about 50,000) who happen to live in Palestine. Common human decency? Bah! Who needs it?

Of course, the U.S. is forever looking for any reason whatsoever to condemn Iran; it faults Syria for any perceived human-rights violations. But for Israel, all that is overlooked. But change seems to be happening, although it isn’t obvious to Palestinians. This writer is in contact with several people in Palestine, and their suffering continues unabated. Their own, traitorous, so-called ‘leader’, Mahmoud Abbas is, of course, a significant part of the

problem, but one should not blame the puppet, but rather, the puppet-master, and Abbas' strings are pulled by Israel and the U.S.

But there are some encouraging signs: when Trump paraded his corrupt and incompetent son-in-law, Jared Kushner, to speak at the embassy opening, along with the 'first daughter', the greedy and grasping Ivanka, there was nary a Democratic Congress member present.

Prior to that farce, as Israeli soldiers have been slaughtering Palestinians protesting on the border since March, *The Electronic Intifada* reported that "not one Democrat in the House or Senate has spoken up – at least on Twitter – to defend Israel's actions. This may reflect a recognition among Democratic leaders of how toxic Israel is becoming to a large segment of the party's base."

*The Times of Israel* reported the following on May 16: "Across the Atlantic, several hours after the ribbon-cutting ceremony in Jerusalem, the Israeli embassy in Washington hosted its annual event marking the anniversary of the nation's founding. It's usually a festive occasion featuring lawmakers from both sides of the aisle who go to see the ambassador and be seen. But this year, not a single currently serving Democrat was spotted in attendance."

My, my! Has some backbone somehow entered the Democratic Party? Have Democratic Party officials suddenly recognized that, yes, international law and human rights are important? Will they, in fact, do something to help Palestinians achieve them?

Again, the answer is 'probably not', at least not any time soon. As mentioned above, Democratic Party members may, indeed, be starting to recognize that the party's base abhors Israeli crimes, and no longer supports that apartheid regime. But one must wonder how long it will take for that recognition to morph into action. There are few places on the planet where progress moves more slowly than in U.S. governance. Democrats and Republicans are exactly the same where that is concerned.

This leaves Democrats with a serious dilemma. Do they respond to the demands of their base, and thus jeopardize campaign donations from pro-Israeli lobbies, the American-Israel Political Affairs Committee (AIPAC) chief among that disreputable group? Or do they let the bloody campaign dollars roll in, and their base be damned? The Party ignored its base in 2016 and cooked the books so Hillary Clinton would be the nominee instead of Bernie Sanders, and we all know how well that turned out. Can one hope that the Democrats have learned their lesson, and will respond to the wishes of those who generally vote Democratic?

When pigs fly. This writer has commented previously that the concepts of statesmanship, integrity and justice are mere words, without any substance when it comes to either of the two major parties, and the Democrats are more hypocritical about them than are the Republicans. Elected officials from each party pontificate ad nauseam about any subject that they feel will raise no controversy: such topics as ‘national security’, being ‘tough on terrorism’ and the ‘greatness’ of the U.S. can be relied upon to garner support. Any comments about institutional racism, sensible gun laws or Palestinian rights require not only a bit more thought than empty slogans, but also real work to affect change. Congress members who aren’t required to work any particular number of days a year (unlike most of the rest of us), and who would prefer to get their fifteen minutes of fame on the evening news than do any actual good, aren’t likely to make those efforts.

In a democracy, one could simply nominate better candidates, and vote out the do-nothing duds. But we are talking about the U.S. here, an oligarchy where money speaks loud and clear, and easily drowns out the voice of the people. Unless and until some semblance of democracy can be introduced into the U.S., the 1% will continue to run the show, the wishes of the 99% be damned.