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Obama betrays Palestinians, stepping deeper into Zionist trap

by James Petras, Bartle
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President Barack Obama's groveling before Israel at the UN General Assembly is already paying off as Zionist funds pour into his re-election campaign coffers. However, sacrificing the Palestinians is not the only service that his Zionist patrons will demand of him. Their laundry list, as James Petras suggests, is also likely to include the liberation of U.S. intelligence analyst Jonathan Pollack, convicted in 1987 of spying for Israel.

Introduction

There are two views of Obama's speech to the General Assembly on September 21, 2011, and his opposition to the recognition of Palestine as a sovereign state and its admission to the UN. The common opinion of foreign policy experts was that Obama led the US to an ignominious diplomatic defeat, deepening US isolation in the international system.

The White House's blatant parroting of Israel's position to continue bilateral negotiations, while Tel Aviv continued to colonize Palestinian land and forcibly evict its residents, alienated the 1.5 billion Muslims throughout the world. Obama's refusal to even mention the return to the 1967 borders as a basis for a "peace settlement", totally undermined any pretext that the US could act as an "honest broker" in Mid-East peace negotiations, even in the eyes of its most slavish supporters in the PLO. His one-sided reference to Israel's minimal casualties in maintaining the Occupation, while omitting any mention of the 12,000 Palestinian political prisoners, thousands

of assassinations, everyday humiliation, routine torture of suspects and frequent defacement of Palestinian religious centers (mosques and churches, cemeteries and shrines), undermined any US effort to win favor among the millions of people involved in the pro-democracy social movements sweeping the Arab world from Tunisia, Egypt to the Gulf states.

Washington's insistence that its NATO allies line-up with it in supporting continued "bilateral" negotiations, has led to the German government's public humiliation when it followed Obama's line of pressuring Abbas back to 'negotiations' only to have the Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu announce the construction of 1,100 illegal Jews-only housing units in occupied Palestinian East Jerusalem.

Obama's blatant and overt pandering to Israel before the representative of 193 independent nations, which had followed the standing ovation for Abbas' call for Palestinian recognition, highlights one of the greatest US diplomatic defeats since the founding of the UN over 60 years ago.

But was Obama's groveling before Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu really a 'failure' in the eyes of the White House? Or was his speech really a carefully crafted appeal to a domestic audience in order to raise hundreds of millions of dollars from pro-Israel billionaires to finance his re-election campaign?

There is a wealth of documentary evidence showing that Obama deliberately and forcefully sacrificed US international standing, in order to satisfy the major American Jewish organizations who were demanding nothing less than total and unconditional backing for Netanyahu's phony position of "peace negotiations" and colonization from Obama.

From the angle of satisfying the US Zionist power configuration (ZPC) and securing a massive flow of re-election financing, Obama's UN speech was a smashing success.

Obama's Rejection of World Opinion and the Zionist Payoff

Obama's re-election campaign from April to the end of September has received tens of millions of dollars from wealthy pro-Israeli Jewish fund raisers and contributors, as well as endorsements from rightwing US Jewish and Israeli politicians.

In the run-up to Obama's UN speech, Zionist lobbyists adopted "good cop bad cop" tactics. Liberal Zionist Democratic Party advisers emphasized that he was "losing the Jewish vote and funding", highlighting the recent resignation of a disgraced Democratic Congressman from a district of Orthodox Jews because of his internet porno-exhibitionism as a sign of Obama's growing unpopularity among Jews. Some campaign strategists emphasized the "crucial Jewish vote in swing states" like Ohio and Pennsylvania (where non-Jews, who represent well over 80% of the voters, are not "crucial" in the eyes of these election experts!).

The 52 Presidents of the Major American Jewish Organizations took turns accusing Obama of "slandering Israel", for disobeying Netanyahu and "backing the Arabs" for protesting Israeli land grabs, even as Obama raised US government aid to Israel to an unparalleled \$3 billion per

annum, in the midst of a US economic recession with 18% of American workers unemployed or underemployed. Obama's pro-Israel critics overlooked his \$205 million gift to Tel Aviv to build the Iron Dome rocket defense system together with the US military's latest fighter jets. The Zionist power configuration demanded total surrender even as they extracted more political and economic concessions. They ignored the enormous military imbalances in the Middle East in Israel's favor and the degradation of US standing in the region.

Hardball threats to end Jewish financial support by the rightwing Zionists was "complemented" by fund raising by liberal Zionists and promises of more to come if Obama ended his "public feuding" with Israel and vetoed Palestinian admission to the UN. Obama performed his well-rehearsed shuffle and song routine of the "absolute defender", now and forever, of every Israeli violation of Palestinian human rights.

Obama's Rush for the Gold

On June 20, 2011, months prior to Obama's speech opposing Palestinian admission to the UN, a pro-Israel Washington fund raising event for his re-election campaign raised over \$1.5 million, assuring Obama that "Jewish donors" were not wavering, as long as he followed Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu's line of peace negotiations and land grabs (Forward, June 29 2011). During the fund raiser Obama reiterated his unconditional support for Israel's policies, including the settlements in the Palestinian West Bank. Following the dinner he met behind closed doors to elaborate on how far he was willing to go in opposing the Palestinian initiative at the UN, (Forward, June 29, 2011). A month earlier on May 22, 2011, Obama spoke at the annual meeting of the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC), directly appealing for funds in exchange for the United States' total submission to the AIPAC agenda.

Obama's dependence on Zionist funding was evident between April to June 2011: Of the \$68 million raised for his campaign, \$37 million was raised by 244 "big cash bundlers" – individuals who round up multi-millionaire contributors. According to one count of the 244 bundlers approximately 120 were identified as pro-Israel Jews. Among the Zionist "bundlers" are Penny Pritzker bagging contributions between \$100,000 - \$200,000, Jeffrey Katzenberg putting the touch on contributors for \$500,000 plus; Mark Gilbert \$500,000 plus, and Mark Stanley \$100,000 to \$200,000.

Obama's fund raising and organizational success among Israeli right wingers and US Zionists multiplied following his UN speech opposing the recognition of Palestine. As the New York Times (September 30, 2011) noted "... Democratic officials maintain that they do not think that Mr. Obama is in danger of losing the Jewish vote – particularly given the President's muscular defense of Israel at the United Nations General Assembly last week".

Following his UN speech Obama raised several million from wealthy Zionists in Manhattan and Hollywood at dinners ranging up to \$35,800 a plate. The extremist right wing Israeli Foreign Minister, Avigdor Lieberman (influential among billionaire US Zionists), signaled his enthusiastic support for Obama, as did Abe Foxman, the notorious Israeli Firster and head of the Anti-Defamation League, and former-New York City Mayor Ed Koch, another fanatical-Zionist (NY Times, Sept. 30, 2011). Thanks to pro-Israel bundlers and hustlers, Obama had out-fund

raised the leading Republican candidate, former Massachusetts Governor Mitt Romney, by more than a 4 to 1 margin by September 2011, (Reuters, September 27, 2011).

The Consequences of Obama's Embrace of Netanyahu and Rejection of World Opinion

Immediately following Obama's UN speech, Netanyahu announced that Israel would build 1,100 new 'Jews-only' housing units in occupied Arab East Jerusalem with additional plans to displace tens of thousands of Bedouins from their villages to make way for new Jewish settlements. With firm assurances that American Zionist Jews have the American Presidency and Congress in their pocket, Netanyahu feels free to advance his long-stated policy of ethnic cleansing. Violent extremist Jewish colonial settlers, funded by millionaire US donors to Obama, feel free to continue their practice of defacing and burning mosques and subjecting Palestinians to daily humiliations. The US Congress and AIPAC wrote legislations eliminating \$200 million dollars in funding to the Palestinian Authority because of its 'crime' of seeking admission for the Palestinian people to the United Nations. Obama's "muscular" knee bends for Israel at the UN have opened the door to more intense and brutal Israeli aggression against the Palestinians, new military threats toward Iran and increased pressure on Egypt's military rulers.

The White House's goal is to raise a billion dollars for the re-election campaign. This involves keeping the spigot open for big bucks from Zionist millionaires in Hollywood and Silicon Valley, as well as from smaller contributors among lawyers, dentists, doctors, professors and local business people in Florida, Pennsylvania, Ohio and elsewhere. Obama's strategy at the UN is designed to maximize Zionist loyalty and fund raising for his re-election. The White House has organized a campaign to delay any Security Council decision, removing the Palestinian issue from the limelight and putting it behind closed doors via procedural haggling. At the same time, Washington is pressuring Security Council members, especially Bosnia and Colombia, to block a three-fifths majority vote, which would then force the US to use its veto. If the White House does not secure the votes, Obama has promised Zionist fundraisers he will use the US veto to exclude Palestine from admission to the UN.

Obama will focus on his power to use the UN veto in order to increase fund raising among wealthy Zionists and to activate the Presidents of the 52 Major American Jewish Organizations to "get out the vote" among the electorate at large. The re-election campaign will remind Zionist mass media pundits (CNN, FOX, CBS, NBC) of how Obama "courageously stood up to" world public opinion – including that of leaders representing 90% of the world's population – in order to "defend Israel".

If foreign policy is an extension of domestic policy, as is clearly illustrated by Obama's truckling to Zionist fund-raisers by acting on behalf of Israel in the United Nations, so too is domestic policy an extension of foreign policy. US overseas businesses cannot expect any "favored treatment" in Muslim countries. Increased political hostility to the US and Israel will result in greater military spending leading to more fiscal deficits and more painful cuts in domestic social programs for the American people. This will increase domestic social and political polarization. In the short-run, Obama's sell-out to the Zionist power configuration has succeeded in filling the coffers of his re-election campaign. But in the near future it has raised insurmountable difficulties in dealing with overseas political conflicts and domestic economic crises.

Above all, Obama's game of mutual manipulation with the Zionist Lobby has further degraded US democratic political institutions and our international standing as a free and independent country.

The Freeing of Jonathan Pollard and Obama's Re-election: The Dirtiest Quid Pro Quo

In his gross servility to Israel and the American Zionist Lobby, President Barak Obama has surpassed all four of his predecessors with regard to the most egregious episode in Israel's many violations of US security. According to recent news reports, Vice-President Joe Biden announced that "President Obama was considering clemency for Jonathan Pollard" (New York Times, September 30, 2011; Jerusalem Post, October 2, 2011). While Biden originally claimed to have initially opposed this move, a week later, under intense pressure from Obama, he agreed to meet and discuss Pollard's release with American Jewish leaders, including the executive vice chairman of the Presidents of the Major American Jewish Organizations, Malcolm Hoenlein (Globe, October 8, 2011 – a major Israeli business publication.)

Reagan, Bush-Senior and Junior and Clinton, all refused to re-open the Pollard case because the confessed American spy for Israel (who was awarded Israeli citizenship and a high military rank while in US Federal prison) did more damage to US national security than any spy in our history. At his trial, the FBI and Naval Intelligence revealed that Pollard, then a High Security Naval Intelligence analyst, had turned over tens of thousands of classified documents to his Israeli handler. Many were 'sold' to the Soviet Union. For his 'service to the Jewish State of Israel', a building, illegally built in occupied Arab East Jerusalem, is named Beit Yonatan.

All Israeli leaders, from Rabin to Netanyahu, have pressed US Presidents to free their spy. But threats of mass protests and resignation from the US intelligence community prevented any serious discussion of releasing the traitor. Now, the entire spectrum of Zionist opinion – from 'left to right' – from 'liberal' Congressman Barney Frank to extremist Israel Firster, Alan Dershowitz of Harvard, and including hundreds of Rabbis are pressuring Obama to free their 'hero'. Only a few prominent American Jews, like former US Navy Admiral Shapiro are outraged and chagrined by the 'Jewish Community's defense of a traitor'.

In a tight presidential election this 2012 we can expect Obama to trade on Pollard's release, in exchange for a big cash injection by Zionist contributors to fund his last-minute media blitz. After all, if Obama can sell out US integrity in front of the 193 nations of the UN, what is to stop him from freeing a master Israeli spy, who imperiled US security, in order to gain a few thousand sound bites and TV slots in the run-up to the November 2012 elections?