

BOLSTERED BY A SYMPATHETIC U.S., MEDIA, “PRO-PALESTINIANS,” & “TERROR TUNNELS”—HAMAS “HOLDS OUT”

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Isranet Daily Briefing, July 31, 2014

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JOHN KERRY HAS HAMAS' BACK: SO, WHO HAS ISRAEL'S?

Lee Smith

[*Tablet*](#), July 30, 2014

You know there's something going on when *Ha'aretz*, the flagship of the Israeli left, reads like it's being edited by Dick Cheney. Last Friday Secretary of State John Kerry presented the Israeli cabinet with a draft of a ceasefire agreement that, in the words of *Ha'aretz* columnist Barak Ravid, “could have been penned by Khaled Meshal. It was everything Hamas could have hoped for.” The draft, Ravid explained, “recognized Hamas' position in the Gaza Strip, promised the organization billions in donation funds and demanded no dismantling of rockets, tunnels or other heavy weaponry at Hamas' disposal.” Accordingly, wrote another *Ha'aretz* columnist, Ari Shavit: “The Obama Administration proved once again that it is the best friend of its enemies, and the biggest enemy of its friends.”

The fact is that *Ha'aretz* is simply in step with Israeli public opinion. One poll, conducted by Israel's *Channel 10*, showed that 87 percent of Israelis were in favor continuing the operation in Gaza, with another 69 percent in favor of toppling the organization that the White House wants to save. Another poll showed that 86.5 percent are against a ceasefire right now because “Hamas continues firing missiles on Israel, not all the tunnels have been found, and Hamas has not surrendered.” Therefore, explained one pollster, Netanyahu would be confronting the vast majority of Israel if he accepted, as Obama reportedly demanded in a phone call Sunday, an immediate ceasefire. “Qatar and Turkey are the biggest supporters of Hamas,” Netanyahu told President Obama, according to an Israeli transcript of a recording of the phone call. (A transcript the White House and prime minister's office now claim is false.) “It's impossible to rely on them to be fair mediators.” To which Obama snidely responded: “I trust Qatar and Turkey. Israel is not in the position that it can choose its mediators.” When Netanyahu objected to Obama's high-school mean-girl treatment—“I protest because Hamas can continue to launch rockets and use tunnels for terror attacks”—the president of the United States simply ignored him: “The ball's in Israel's court, and it must

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end all its military activities.”

Obama’s big theory of the Middle East seems to be that Israel is the least popular kid in the lunchroom, which means that it is lucky to have the United States as any kind of friend at all. But what neither the president nor his peripatetic secretary of State appear to have noticed is that the least popular kid among Middle Eastern leaders isn’t Bibi—it’s Obama. While self-infatuated posturing may be the key to popularity among a certain segment of the president’s daughters’ peer group, it tends to go over badly with world leaders who face real threats—and who feel that America regularly lies to them. According to reports, Cairo was so angry that Kerry involved its regional rivals Qatar and Turkey in discussions over what new Egyptian president Abdel Fattah al-Sisi considers a vital national interest that it refused to send its foreign minister to meet with Kerry in Paris. Not surprisingly, the Palestinian Authority, in whose name Obama and Kerry are supposedly acting, was also furious with the administration. Mahmoud Abbas’ Fatah party released a statement critical of the White House as well as his intra-Palestinian rivals: “Those who want Qatar or Turkey to represent them should leave and go live there.” The reality is that the ceasefire makes plain what the United States’ traditional regional partners have long feared: Obama is lining up against America’s traditional friends in the Middle East, with Jerusalem directly in the crosshairs.

It’s at times like this that Israel could use a powerful friend in Washington. When Israel is at war with a terrorist group that plotted to send hundreds of its members through tunnels to slaughter and kidnap thousands of Israelis this coming Rosh Hashanah, and the White House proposes a ceasefire agreement that works to the advantage of the terrorists, it makes you wish there was a large, well-funded lobbying organization that wasn’t afraid to remind the White House of the overwhelming American support for Israel among both Jews and Christians...Of course, the pro-Israel community does have an organization like that—or it did. Sure, AIPAC gets House and Senate members to sign letters supportive of Israel and makes statements of its own. On Monday, for instance, AIPAC President Robert Cohen said, “It is essential that the United States works closely with our democratic and indispensable ally, Israel, to ensure Jerusalem is able to keep its citizens safe from terror.” But it’s crunch time for Israel, and thus also for the organization that is supposed to represent most potently the U.S.-Israel

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friendship, a relationship Obama is crashing on behalf of Israel’s adversaries. So, the question is why won’t AIPAC say out loud what everyone, including the Israeli left, now sees plainly? Regardless of what Obama may feel in his “kishkes” about the Jewish state, his policies are hostile to Israel.

John Kerry was determined to broker a deal that would not only bring about a ceasefire but also preserve his failed peace process. The problem with his attempt to rescue his own public profile and salve his wounded ego was that he didn’t study the region carefully enough: Both Israel and Egypt consider the Muslim Brotherhood and its Palestinian iteration Hamas to be serious threats to their own national security, and it is hard to say that the fears of both governments aren’t well founded. Both Israel and Egypt found Kerry’s proposal way too favorable to Hamas. (Indeed, Kerry had told Hamas via a Qatari intermediary that many of the Palestinian terrorist group’s demands would be met.) That was too much for Kerry, who can’t stand to be left in the corner at the dance. As the secretary showed last week when a live mic caught him on *Fox News* saying “we have to get over there,” Kerry needs to be in the mix, to be holding important press conferences in foreign capitals and shaping big events. Accordingly, when Israel and Egypt showed Kerry the door, the only place left for him to go was Turkey and Qatar—who back Hamas. Now, so does John Kerry...

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WHY HAMAS IS STILL HOLDING OUT

Dr. Mordechai Kedar

[Arutz Sheva](#), July 31, 2014

Before the start of Operation Protective Edge, an entire bevy of so-called "experts" appeared on Israeli media informing us of the weak state of Hamas, how its oxygen supply is cut off because the smuggling tunnels from the Sinai are closed

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and Egypt has turned against it, as has Saudi Arabia; it cannot pay salaries, it wants to preserve the state it has created in Gaza at all costs - and so one and so forth. Because of that, they concluded, its power of resistance is limited and since we have the Iron Dome to protect us, our decision makers can act judiciously, using our military power - particularly from the air - which is immeasurably more massive than that of Hamas. Even the world is on our side, they said, and surprisingly, supports us.

Now, after four weeks of air attacks and two weeks of a ground operation, Gaza has seen over 1,200 of its people killed and 7,000 wounded, and has not capitulated, has not raised a white flag, continues to launch rockets to Tel Aviv and the south, and the Gazan population has not rebelled. Just imagine what would happen to Israel's government if something like that, G-d forbid, happened here. It has suddenly become clear that all the "weakness factors" attributed to Hamas - the closed smuggling tunnels that Sisi sealed, Saudi Arabia, money and state - do not have the effect the "experts" predicted for the organization. Perhaps Hamas is not exactly the organization these "experts" painted for us. Unfortunately, our mistakes result from continuing to look at the enemy through our own cultural lenses: we need money, a strong army, protection from rockets, friends in the region and international approval, and we think that if Hamas has none of these, it will be as weak as we would be if we lacked them. There is no greater error than that line of thought, because Hamas is the product of a vastly different culture where the strength and weakness factors are totally different from ours.

1. The Spiritual Element: The basic and most deep-seated difference between us is that Hamas depends on a "power player" in the form of Allah, who dwells on high. The organization's *raison d'etre* is a plan whose end goal is Allah's reign over the entire world and Hamas' activity is aimed at succeeding in that Jihad for Allah. Hamas fighters are filled with fervor and the bandanna on their heads says the "Shahada", the testimony that there is no deity besides Allah and that Mohammed is his prophet. Our army is fighting valiantly for our nation, people and land, all of which are human and tangible, and if a commander dares to write his soldiers something with an allusion to religion, he is attacked by the thought police of Haaretz, and defamed along with the Jewish message he was trying to put

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forward. (An allusion to IDF Brigadier General Winter, who wrote his soldiers a letter of encouragement using biblical expressions from the fight of David and Goliath and was attacked by anti-religious coercion advocates). Many of us have distanced ourselves from the "Power Player" who dwells on high and have erased the concept from our cultural experience. Hamas continues to stick to spiritual goals and in this regard, has the advantage.

2. Culture and Ethos: Our culture sanctifies life, health, education, progress and economic, scientific and civil success. Death negates all of these and therefore, naturally, we try to prevent it when it comes to our lives and also those of our enemies. The terror organizations in our region, on the other hand, sanctify death for Allah, and even mothers rejoice when their sons go out to die. This difference explains the fact that the over 1200 dead do not bring Hamas to ask for a ceasefire. As long as the dead are called "shaheeds", they are considered not dead, according to the Koran: "Do not think that those who have been killed for Allah are dead; they are alive and nourished by the hand of Allah (Chap. 3, v. `69). Hamas terrorists are proud of their often-used slogan: "The Jews wish for life and we wish for death." This is the reason for their using human shields, for even if those "shields" are killed, they are not really dead, so their death is not seen as something bad. In general, in the Middle East there is no dividing line between citizens and combatants, everyone is considered "the enemy".

3. Attitude to the Media: The media has a critical role to play in wartime, as it has direct influence on large audiences worldwide and determines the public's opinion of the operation. Public opinion has immediate influence on politicians, who try to act in accordance with their voter's inclinations. Israel adheres to journalistic ethics and limits its announcements to the media, refraining from showing bodies, body parts and other horrors that can influence viewers. Hamas, on the other hand, does not care about causing people to be shocked by horrible pictures of the dead and wounded, and supplies photographs that are intended to create a sympathetic audience. **4. Legal Restrictions:** Israel is a country based on law, it limits military actions to the strictures of international law. Soldiers and officers can find themselves facing the Israeli courts or international ones. Hamas is not a state, does not act like one and does not limit its activities to the accepted laws of warfare. The obvious example: Israel attempts to prevent harm to non-involved

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citizens, while Hamas intentionally launches deadly rockets to heavily populated—Israeli areas.

5. International Support: We have been hearing that "the world understands us" from the beginning of hostilities and therefore, that it supports our actions. However, this is a highly fragile support, easily shaken by one picture of a rocket - even a Hamas rocket - hitting a school. The change in America's position is a gigantic plug for Hamas' steadfastness, for even the US president has adopted Hamas conditions for ceasefire, first among them removing the sea blockade of Gaza, although at the beginning of the operation he supported Israel and its right to defend itself. Hamas enjoys unlimited and unquestioning outside support from Qatar and Turkey. Despite the losses and destruction in Gaza, those two countries will stream material and financial aid to Gaza, including building materials that will allow it to rehabilitate the organization, its weapons arsenals and rockets, enlist new soldiers, train and equip them as well as dig more tunnels so as to infiltrate Israel and sow death...

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HAMAS UNDERGROUND WARFARE

Dr. Eado Hecht

[Besa](#), July 27, 2014

Underground warfare is not a new phenomenon - it started when humans were living in caves. However, it became a deliberate form of warfare when men began digging tunnels for military defensive and offensive use. Defensive tunnels were used to hide people and property from attackers. Offensive tunnels were used to infiltrate under defensive walls or to collapse these walls by undermining their foundations. The defenders of besieged cities and forts fought back, trying to

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locate the attackers' tunnels by digging their own tunnels to break in and capture their enemies in hand-to-hand combat. The major problem for the defenders was locating the tunnels. Unless the attackers were careless, this was rare. The invention of gunpowder made siege and anti-siege tunnels much more effective - the sappers could be less accurate while navigating underground in order to hit the target.

During the First World War, hundreds of tunnels (called 'mines') were dug on the French front by armies on both sides of the conflict, under each other's positions. These were packed with explosives and detonated, killing dozens of men, in some cases more than a hundred, with each attack. Since the First World War, tunnel warfare reverted mostly to defensive, smuggling or infiltration uses - the most famous and widespread use being during the Vietnam War. The Vietcong dug hundreds of kilometers of multi-level tunnels to live in, hiding from American forces and using them to ambush or raid the Americans. The Americans established a special unit, the Tunnel Rats, to discover and fight inside the tunnels. More recently, since the mid-1990s, Hezbollah has used tunnels to store weapons and protect personnel. At first these were only under Beirut and in central Lebanon. However, after the Israeli withdrawal in 2000, Hezbollah also began building them in southern Lebanon as underground combat positions for launching rockets and from which to conduct military operations against IDF units above ground. After the war in 2006, Hezbollah increased its investments in these tunnel complexes. Possibly, they are also working on cross-border tunnels into northern Israel.

The use of tunnels in Gaza began approximately a decade and a half ago, on the border with Egypt to smuggle weapons into Gaza under the IDF border security. Very quickly, in addition to smuggling weapons, the tunnel operators began importing civilian goods. After Israel withdrew from Gaza, the number of smuggling tunnels jumped from a few dozen to hundreds as more and more Gazans got involved in this lucrative business. Taxes imposed by the Hamas government on the imports were a major source of its revenue. After the Egyptian military overthrew the Muslim Brotherhood government, the new regime shut down these tunnels - this being one of the causes of the present economic crisis in Gaza. From 2001 the Palestinians began using explosive-filled tunnels to attack Israeli border-posts. However, they employed this tactic rarely because the effort far exceeded the benefit - casualties were light and it was much easier to achieve

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them by other means. In 2006 the Palestinians tried something new – a tunnel was dug underneath the Gaza-Israel border and an assault-team emerged behind an Israeli border-post. The Israeli soldiers were surprised - two were killed, one wounded and one abducted (Gilad Shalit).

After taking control of Gaza, Hamas began a project to build a maze of underground concrete bunkers connected with tunnels and multiple entrances/exits underneath the residential areas of Gaza. These underground complexes are fairly similar in concept to the Vietcong tunnels, though the quality of finishing is better with concrete walls and roofs, electricity and other required amenities for a lengthy sojourn. Their purpose is to enable the Hamas command structure to reside safely underground while their armed forces conduct a mobile defense against Israeli forces. Many of the tunnels are interconnected to enable traveling underground from one to the other with multiple camouflaged openings to emerge above ground in different locations (inside civilian houses, mosques, schools and other public buildings). This enables surprise attacks on the IDF units from different directions, allowing the attackers to then disappear again underground to emerge and attack somewhere else. The exact extent of these complexes is not known. The entrances and probably the tunnels themselves are booby-trapped with explosives. These were first used during Operation ‘Cast Lead’ (December 2008 - January 2009). They were deemed successful so the project was expanded and accelerated. After the failure of Hamas’ rocket forces to inflict significant damage on Israeli towns in November 2012 (Operation ‘Pillar of Defense’), Hamas apparently decided to build a large offensive tunnel capability that would enable them to infiltrate into Israeli villages within a few kilometers of the border or place large bombs underneath these villages. The IDF knew of this operation but failed to find and destroy more than a few tunnels...

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WHO IS THE REAL ENEMY?

Masada Siegel

[*Times of Israel*](#), July 27, 2014

I was working at *CNN* as a field producer on Sept 11, 2001. In disbelief, I watched smoke pour out of the enormous gash in the World Trade Center. Soon after, the building started to fall. The next few weeks were filled with bomb scares. New Yorkers' days were filled with crying friends, heroic firefighters and first responders all over the streets and the smell of death which permeated the city. Millions in NY, Washington DC and Pennsylvania were traumatized. New York City was officially a war zone. The USA went after the terrorists, after Al Qaeda, even eventually killing Osama Bin Ladin. The world for once was on America's side, except of course for the Palestinians who were dancing in the streets, giving out candy and celebrating death in America.

In 2005, Israel voluntarily left Gaza. Israel's soldiers were forced to uproot their fellow citizens from their homes, all in the name of peace. Gaza leadership has been destroying infrastructure ever since. First they destroyed empty buildings that were once synagogues, instead of using them for their own benefit. Also, Israeli settlers had built greenhouses to grow vegetables when they were living in Gaza. Instead of dismantling them before they left, the settlers sold them to American Jewish donors for \$14 million. The green-houses were then transferred over to the Palestinian Authority in order to help create economic opportunities for the Palestinians. Former World Bank President James Wolfensohn, who brokered the deal, put up \$500,000 of his own cash. In September of 2005, Palestinians looted dozens of greenhouses walking off with irrigation hoses, water pumps and plastic sheeting in a blow to fledgling efforts to reconstruct the Gaza Strip. The result was obvious; the Palestinians destroyed their own opportunity to rebuild. A multi-million dollar opportunity to create employment was ripped to shreds with no pushback from leadership. The destruction continued outside of Gaza with unending rockets firing at Israel - hundreds, thousands of rockets. For years now, the children in border town Sderot, Israel run to bomb shelters on a daily basis...

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Hamas is a recognized terrorist organization dedicated to the destruction of Israel and of Jewish people. Men, women and children are all legitimate targets to kill. This is in their charter. What is not in their charter is to build bridges, infrastructure, schools and give women rights. That’s because they are not interested in freedom of the press, freedom of religion, education and gay rights. Hamas doesn’t build. It knows only how to tear down. So while the world defends Hamas, we might think about what our lives would be like if we were forced to live under an organization whose core beliefs is to kill.

When Israel was created as a state in 1948, the next day five Arab nations went to war against a new country. Israel has been fighting for survival ever since. Against all odds, so far Israel has succeeded. But not without an enormous challenge and psychological cost: in its 66 years of existence, it has suffered numerous wars, thousands of rocket attacks and dozens of suicide bombings. Over the past several years, thousands of rockets have been launched from Gaza, home to one of the supposed poorest people in the Middle East. How is there money for rockets but not food? How is there money for weapons and not infrastructure? Israel controls both the water and the electricity in Gaza. What country shoots rockets at another and still has their basic utilities turned on? Not to mention, Hamas is delinquent in paying their bills for these services. Billions of dollars from around the world have flooded into Gaza, where has the money gone? According to the Congressional Research Service, Since the establishment of Palestinian self-rule in the West Bank and Gaza Strip in the mid-1990s, the U.S. government has committed about \$5 billion in bilateral assistance to the Palestinians. Additionally, the United States is the largest single-state donor to the U.N. Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UN-RWA). America has taken a keen interest in also helping the Palestinians develop an economic infrastructure. If the money was allocated properly; Gaza would have become the Singapore of the Middle-East, a thriving beach resort metropolis.

However, damning evidence is pointing directly to where the money has gone. Hamas built an underground city of tunnels from people’s homes in Gaza into Israel in order to kidnap and kill Israelis...Additionally, a second UN chartered school filled with missiles was found, not to mention a hospital being used as the headquarters of Hamas, where news briefings are held. Is a hospital an

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appropriate place for news briefings? Many media outlets, which are also businesses, need ratings and to make money. They find it much easier to show horrific photos of dead children instead of discussing facts and what alas has caused these innocent and unnecessary deaths and what could have prevented them. Perhaps that is why, earlier in the week, it was underreported when according to UN websites, U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said “The United Nations position is clear: We condemn strongly the rocket attacks. These must stop immediately,” said Mr. Ban. “We condemn the use of civilian sites - schools, hospitals and other civilian facilities - for military purposes.”...

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[Why Hamas Stores its Weapons Inside Hospitals, Mosques and Schools: Terrance McCoy, Washington Post, July 31, 2014](#)—Inside a Gaza Strip mosque in January 2009, nothing at first seemed unusual with the wooden pulpit pushed against the cement wall.

[U.S. Senate: Support Israel's Right to Defend Itself: Ayelet Izraeli, Jerusalem Online, July 30, 2014](#)—Diplomatic reinforcement from the U.S. to Israel in operation “Protective Edge”: the U.S. Senate passed a resolution this morning (Wednesday) in which it supports Israel's right to defend itself from Gaza missile attacks.

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