

**THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE STATE OF ISRAEL
IN PALESTINIAN AUTHORITY IDEOLOGY AND EDUCATION**

Itamar Marcus & Harel Zioni

Palestinian Media Watch, May 18, 2011

On the occasion of the 63rd anniversary of Israel's independence, *Palestinian Media Watch* has prepared a comprehensive report describing how the establishment of the state [of Israel] is depicted in the Palestinian Authority's educational system and official media, both of which operate under the supervision of PA President Mahmoud Abbas. The report documents how the establishment of Israel and its continued existence are demonized by spokesmen and representatives of the PA in the official controlled media.

The report does not include quotes from the media controlled by Hamas, since the Hamas position concerning Israel's existence is well-known and its charter calls for the destruction of Israel. The aim of the report is to document the PA positions expressed in internal Palestinian discourse in Arabic that are not expressed to the outside world. The report focuses on statements by senior PA officials, columnists in the official PA press, and program hosts and reporters on PA TV, from 2010-2011.

ABSTRACT:

"The Zionist gangs stole Palestine...and established the state of Israel"—this quote, from an official PA 12th Grade schoolbook, is an accurate depiction of how the PA educates its population to view the establishment of the State of Israel. Presenting the creation of the state as an act of theft and its continued existence as a historical injustice

serves as the basis for the PA's non-recognition of Israel's right to exist.

In order to create an ideological basis for this, the PA denies there was an ancient Jewish history in the Land of Israel and also distorts modern history, presenting Zionism as a demonic Nazi-like phenomenon. In order to explain what made Jews come to Israel, since they claim there was no historical connection to draw them, Zionism is presented as a colonialist movement created by the West to further its interests.... Israel is further demonized through images and descriptions, such as "the foster child of the Nazis," "an organized terror state," "the cruelest enemy," etc. Accordingly, the idea of the State of Israel ceasing to exist is presented as the achievement of justice.

Today, following the establishment of a Fatah and Hamas unity government, many countries are demanding that Hamas recognize Israel's right to exist as a condition for the world's recognition of their new government. Ironically, this very condition is violated daily by the Palestinian Authority under Mahmoud Abbas.

THE REPORT:

1. "THE ZIONIST GANGS STOLE PALESTINE"

"The Zionist gangs stole Palestine" is a quote from a Palestinian Authority official 12th-Grade schoolbook. It encapsulates how the PA views—and educates its population to view—the establishment of the State of Israel.... The establishment of the state is presented as the result of crime, robbery and theft by foreigners with neither the right nor any historical connection to the place, with the deliberate aim of harming the Arab inhabitants of the land. The term "Zionist gangs" is prevalent in Palestinian discourse and refers to the generation that founded the state. The word "theft" refers to the acts of developing the land and establishing the state.

The following are some examples:

In a 12th-Grade schoolbook: "Palestine's war ended with a catastrophe

that is unprecedented in history, when the Zionist gangs stole Palestine and expelled its people from their cities, their villages, their lands and their houses, and established the State of Israel.” [*Arabic Language, Analysis, Literature and Criticism, Grade 12, p. 104.*]

Special Ramadan supplement to the official PA daily features a competition with prizes. The text of the Balfour Declaration is shown, followed by the question: “The cursed James Arthur Balfour Declaration led to the theft of the homeland and the expulsion of an entire people, in a campaign of ethnic cleansing unparalleled in modern history. On what date and what month in 1917 was this declaration issued?” [*Al-Hayat Al-Jadida, Sept. 7, 2010*]...

PA TV item on UN Resolution 194, broadcast on International Refugee Day: “The Resolution, which stipulated return and restitution for the Palestinian refugees who had been expelled by force from their homes and from their land by the Zionist gangs in 1948 in the greatest operation of ethnic cleansing, continues to be a black chapter in human history.” [*PA TV (Fatah), June 20, 2010*]

Columnist in the PA daily under the headline, “Zionism reproduces the Holocaust”: “They plundered the Palestinian land and national interests, and established their state upon the ruins of the Palestinian Arab people, under the faded and false slogan, ‘A nationless land for a landless nation.’” [*Al-Hayat Al-Jadida, Jan. 19, 2011*]....

2. NOT RECOGNIZING ISRAEL’S RIGHT TO EXIST

In order to substantiate the claim that the establishment of the State of Israel was an act of theft, the PA engages in historical revision. The ancient Jewish history in the Land of Israel is erased, while modern Jewish history is distorted in order to present Zionism as a demonic phenomenon.

Thus, the PA leadership creates the ideological basis for negating Israel’s right to exist. PA spokesmen have claimed that the Jewish nation is an “invented nation,” intended to justify Zionism; this ignores the

reality of Zionism as the expression of the aspirations of the Jewish people returning to its homeland. This...erasure of the connection between the Jewish people and the Land of Israel results in the verdict that the State of Israel has no right to exist.

The following are some examples:

PA Minister of Religious Affairs Mahmoud Al-Habbash: “History proves the Arab, Islamic and Palestinian right to this land and disproves all the Israeli claims that they have religious and historical rights in this land.” [PA TV interview (Fatah), March 2, 2010]

PA Minister of Religious Affairs Mahmoud Al-Habbash: “The political science department at Bir Zeit University held...a political symposium with the participation of scholar Antoine Shalhat, who spoke about...Zionist ideology.... Shalhat said that the idea of Zionism is the establishment of a national home for Jews in Palestine and the invention of a new nationality, known as the Jewish nation, and that the first to propose this was the Jewish Theodore Herzl, who spoke in his book *Altneuland* about his ideas of establishing a Jewish state.” [Al-Hayat Al-Jadida, July 27, 2010]....

Jordanian academic Muhammad Dohal, interviewed on PA TV documentary program about the UN Partition Plan: “The Jews are hated in every society in which they have lived, because of their behavior relating to their great love of money.... This was the source of their harm to the societies around them, including Palestinian society, Arab-Palestinian society. We all know that the Jews lived in Palestine and the Palestinian people adopted them, so to say...but they contrived schemes by means of their secret organizations, which gave rise to the idea of the need to purchase tracts of land and to seize control of them, and then to claim that they were the owners of a great area of the land, and that they were the original inhabitants of this land, and that the people which had adopted them was simply accidental in this land.... Their behavior led to [Shakespeare’s] famous story, the story of Shylock about money lending, which clings to the Jews....” [PA TV (Fatah), Oct. 10 and 17, 2010]....

Adel Abd Al-Rahman, columnist in the official PA daily: “The false story of

the Zionists, according to which Palestine is ‘the promised land,’ is simply a lie without any basis. No person of the Jewish faith who was born in any country of the world has the right to return to Palestine....”
[Al-Hayat Al-Jadida, May 16, 2010]

Adel Abd Al-Rahman, columnist in the official PA daily: “The history and heritage of Jericho confirm the Arab-Palestinian-Canaanite narrative concerning the entire Palestinian land, from the [Mediterranean] sea to the [Jordan] river, negating anything else, especially the false Zionist narrative.” [Al-Hayat Al-Jadida, Oct. 21, 2010]....

3. ESTABLISHMENT OF THE STATE OF ISRAEL PRESENTED AS “COLONIALIST” PLAN

In order to explain Israel’s existence as a country of immigrants who have no connection with the land, the claim is made—in President Mahmoud Abbas’s name—that “the Zionist movement is not Jewish, nor did it flow from the desire of the Jews themselves; rather, it was an imperialist colonialist movement which sought to use the Jews and to enlist them for the benefit of the west’s colonialist plans.” (See source below.) In other words, the State of Israel is the result of an international imperialist plot. The PA argues that the countries of Europe (led by Britain) tried to rid themselves of the Jews, who were a burden to them. They wanted a foreign body in the heart of the Arab world and establishing a state for the Jews there served this colonialist purpose.

The following are some examples:

PA President Mahmoud Abbas raised this claim in his research, as testified by a professor of political science at Bir Zeit University, Dr. Samih Hamouda: “...Professor Samih Hamouda, from the department of political science at Bir Zeit University, presented an analysis of the research studies of President Mahmoud Abbas, on the subject of Zionist ideology. Prof. Hamouda said that in his writings and research, the President linked Zionism with imperialism, by examining the reasons for the growth of Zionism, through scientific analysis of European society and the problem of Jews in Europe, and linked this with western

aspirations in the Arab East. He added, 'In the President [Abbas's] studies, the Zionist movement is not Jewish, nor did it flow from the desire of the Jews themselves; rather, it was an imperialist colonialist movement which sought to use the Jews and to enlist them for the benefit of the western colonialist plans.'" [*Al-Hayat Al-Jadida*, July 27, 2010]....

Ahmad Hanoun, senior member of the PLO department for refugee affairs: "Most of the world participated, clearly and directly, in the plot against the Palestinian people. Meaning, they are partners in [creating] the tragedy that befell the Palestinian people. Nowhere [else] in history did the UN partition a land, giving it and allowing a part [of the population] that was not authentic to establish a state in that land, while not allowing the other nation to establish its state." [*PA TV (Fatah)*, Nov. 1, 2010]

Adel Abd Al-Rahman, columnist for the official PA daily: "The evil European and American forces enabled [the Jews] to achieve the idea of a 'national home,' in order to be rid of them and to remove from European society the results and ramifications of the Holocaust which they had carried out against the Jews of Europe in Nazi Germany. This was [done] with the aim of tearing apart the Arab land, by planting them as an imperialist colonialist enterprise in Arab Palestine. Instead of opposing the West's colonialist plans and ideas, the Zionist Jews were glad to be the pawns of and fuel for the colonialist enterprise." [*Al-Hayat Al-Jadida*, Jan. 19, 2011]....

4. DEMONIC IMAGES AND DESCRIPTIONS OF THE STATE OF ISRAEL

The Palestinian Authority demonizes Israel through horrific visual images and descriptions....

The following are some examples:

Coordinator of the Prisoners' Committee of the National and Islamic Parties, Yasser Mazhar, on behalf of the Committee: "Israel is the foster child of Nazism, and a strategic ally of racism, which has disappeared

from the world—except for there.” [*Al-Hayat Al-Jadida*, July 27, 2010]

Jamal Tamimi, a lecturer in communications at Al-Quds University, responding to the question, Where is Israel headed? “To what is beyond Hitlerism, what is beyond fascism, what is beyond Nazism.” [*PA TV (Fatah)*, Oct. 12, 2010]

Senior Fatah member, Marwan Barghouti, serving 5 life sentences in Israel for his involvement in terror activities, in an interview from prison: “The great Palestinian people—generators of the longest armed revolution in modern history, and proprietors of the two mightiest and greatest Intifadas in the region, facing the cruelest enemy and Zionist settlement colonialism that is unparalleled in the modern history of colonialism...” [*Al-Hayat Al-Jadida*, Sept. 28, 2010]

Adel Abed Al-Rahman, columnist in the official PA daily: “The Israeli apartheid state, possessing no cultural heritage or any collective symbol for a society born from the womb of the Zionist and Western imperialist attack, aspires and exerts efforts to appropriate and take over symbols and elements of the Palestinian national identity.... All this is in order to strengthen its false claims and its fallacious stories to the world and its cultural and scientific institutions.... The Israel organized terror state acts vigorously, and on more than one level, to eliminate the Palestinian issue.... [Some] pretend not to know that all areas of life are [battle]fields for the conflict with the Zionist movement and with its racist and fascist state.” [*Al-Hayat Al-Jadida*, May 19, 2010]

In an announcement published by the PLO Executive Council on the 22nd anniversary of the Palestinian declaration of independence (1988): “Owing to its policy that is hostile to peace and stability, Israel has become a growing political and moral burden on all of humanity.” [*Al-Hayat Al-Jadida*, Nov. 15, 2010]

In an article on the subject of the huge fire in the Carmel Forest last December: “Israel—whose preparations for destruction and war we hear about daily—is now unable to protect nature, which belongs to [all] mankind. This is a natural outcome for a country whose aim is destruction and ruin of humanity.” [*Al-Hayat Al-Jadida*, Dec. 8, 2010]

5. JUSTICE WILL BE ACHIEVED WHEN ISRAEL CEASES TO EXIST

The Palestinian Authority policy is to present the conflict with Israel as a struggle between Palestinians who are said to be innocent, with justice on their side, and Israel, which is said to be oppressive and cruel, void of legitimate rights. For this reason, the PA objective—having a world without the State of Israel—is not perceived as negative or unjust towards the citizens of Israel. Rather, it is presented as the attainment of historical justice.

A Fatah member of the Palestinian Parliament, Najat Abu-Bakr, stated this explicitly: “I am certain that the State of Israel—this entity which the world implanted in our body, in our bones and in our history—this is the beginning of the end of this oppressive entity.” [PA TV (*Fatah*), June 1, 2010]

The same message was conveyed by the narrator on a PA TV program about refugee camps. The narrator addresses the Jews of Israel, asking them to leave—in the name of justice: “Where are you [Israelis] from? Where are you from? Where are you from? Of course, you’re from Ukraine; of course, you’re from Germany, from Poland, from Russia, from Ethiopia, the Falasha (pejorative for Ethiopian Jews). Why have you stolen my homeland and taken my place? Please, I ask of you, return to your original homeland, so that I can return to my original homeland. This is my homeland; go back to your homeland!” [PA TV (*Fatah*), May 4 and 7, 2010]

CONCLUSIONS

The call for Jews to leave Israel that was expressed on official PA TV—“Return to your original homeland, so that I can return to my original homeland”—exemplifies the basis of the Palestinian Authority ideology, as documented in this report. The PA’s logic is:

Since “the Zionist gangs stole Palestine,” justice will be attained only

when that which was stolen is returned.

Since “recognition of Israel’s right to be a state in this region represents an environmental and security hazard,” then for the sake of peace, justice demands that the danger be neutralized.

Since “the European and American forces of evil facilitated for them [the Jews] the idea of a ‘national home’...with the aim of tearing apart the Arab land, by planting them as an imperialist colonialist enterprise in Arab Palestine,” then justice will be achieved only when this “colonialist enterprise” ceases to exist.

Since “Israel is the foster child of Nazism, and a strategic ally of racism, which has disappeared from the world—except for there,” then justice demands the removal of the last remnant of Nazism in the world.

This position—that the State of Israel has no right to exist and therefore justice will be attained only with its termination—is a primary component of Palestinian Authority ideology. Today, following the establishment of a Fatah and Hamas unity government, many countries are demanding that Hamas recognize Israel’s right to exist as a condition for the world’s recognition of their new government. Ironically, it is this very condition that the Palestinian Authority itself under Mahmoud Abbas violates daily.