



PERSPECTIVES

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The Palestinians Have Been Lying For Years. Can They Still Get Away With It?

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: The Palestinians have been lying in all directions for far too long. A gullible liberal public might buy into their lies for a while, but not forever. The UAE and Bahrain are no longer swallowing Palestinian lies, and other Arab states might join them.

The Nazi propaganda minister Joseph Goebbels unfortunately proved to the world that it is possible to lie in several contradictory directions at once: for example, you can claim that Jews are both innately capitalist and innately communist, two conflicting vilifications that facilitated the Holocaust. Of course, some Jews were capitalists and some were communists, but this was also true of almost everyone else.

One would like to believe that educated and decent citizens of the world would reject the authenticity of lies that contradict one another.

But do they? The claims made by the Palestinian Authority, Hamas, and the many media sites they support and spawn, mostly with the help of the EU (which should know better), put these decent citizens to the test.

Officials in the Palestinian Authority and members of the BDS movement frequently accuse Israel of ethnic cleansing. At the same time, in Arabic, they boast of the power of the Palestinian womb to overcome Israel in the long term. The second statement irrefutably contradicts the first.

In reality, neither is correct. The Palestinians have a high population growth rate that exposes the lie of the claim of ethnic cleansing, but their fertility—as is true elsewhere in the Arab world—is rapidly falling, especially in the West Bank.

Depopulation (rather than ethnic cleansing) is taking place in the Balkans, including Muslim Bosnia and Kosovo, thanks in part to the EU's policy of encouraging the young to emigrate to Germany and the Scandinavian countries. There, they are eagerly absorbed by the local labor markets, leaving much of the Balkans and eastern Europe geriatric disaster areas.

The Palestinians' pattern of lying in opposite directions is illustrated by the invocation of the most ubiquitous term used to describe Israel's relationship to its historic homeland: "occupation." The mere mention of the Gaza Strip will almost immediately prompt a reference to Israel's "occupation," despite the incontrovertible fact that Israel relinquished control of the Strip's Palestinian population in Gaza and withdrew from it down to the last Jewish man, woman, and child in 2005.

Yet even as Israel is mysteriously continuing its virtual "occupation" of Gaza, Hamas, Islamic Jihad, and their respective military wings have an annual celebration at this time of year to commemorate the liberation of Gaza from Israel, which they classify as a first step toward the complete "liberation" of Palestine "from the river to the sea"—that is, the destruction of Israel. Gaza is thus simultaneously occupied and liberated, a remarkable feat.

The PA and Hamas take pride in the innate tolerance of Islam, Islamic society, and the many and varied Islamic entities of the past. As they vilify Israel for its supposed treatment of Muslims regarding the Temple Mount, they stress that hundreds of thousands of Muslim worshippers have come to protect the site in past years—a fact documented by Palestinian-supported media sites. But if Israel is so intolerant and harsh toward Muslim worship, how are these hundreds of thousands managing to assemble in the area?

And as they vilify Israel for religious intolerance, the PA, Hamas, and most of the other factions cannot stand the sight of religious Jews visiting the Temple Mount or praying and sharing the space with Muslim worshippers. At the graves of the Patriarchs in Hebron, the Palestinians often describe visits by Jews to the site as "pollution" (*tadnis*) by "herds of settlers."

Israel is accused of laying siege to Gaza to destroy its economic and demographic foundations. At the same time, Hamas threatens Israel with rockets if it does not extend more power lines to the Strip to meet its growing energy demands. If Israel is attempting to impoverish Gaza, how is it that there is so much demand for energy? And if Hamas has liberated Gaza from the Israeli yoke, why does it want to increase its dependence on a state (to control coronavirus, to get hospital treatment for family members of Hamas officials, and so on) whose destruction it seeks to the point of threatening terrorism if it refuses such dependence?

The Palestinians have long gotten away with spreading contradictory lies among a public that should know better: liberals and progressives. But they are not the only people listening, and there are signs in other quarters that patience is starting to wear thin.

The Abraham Accords Peace Agreement signed between the UAE and Israel and the Declaration of Peace signed between Israel and Bahrain on the White House veranda have mostly to do with the typical geostrategic factors that dictate the strategic behavior of states—a common threat (Iran), a common powerful ally (the US), the promise of economic and technological benefits from making peace—but one cannot underestimate the importance of the Arab states' growing distaste for a Palestinian movement that has lied for far too long.

The PA came into being in 1994 as a result of a negotiation process between the PLO and Israel (the “Oslo process”). So how can it deny the right of Arab states to negotiate with the same State of Israel? Hamas wants the Arab states to be in a state of perpetual war with Israel, while at the same time it periodically negotiates with Israel to fill its coffers and bring benefits to placate a growing and hostile Gaza population.

The Palestinians should learn from the master of this technique. Goebbels' evil, triumphant as it seemed in the 1930s and early 1940s, was nevertheless short-lived. Somehow, truth prevails in the end.

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