

Coming soon: The semi-terrorist state of a U.N.-recognized Palestine?

By Nat Hentoff

<http://www.JewishWorldReview.com> | Shortly before the Palestinian Authority and Hamas signed a fateful reconciliation agreement on May 5 in Cairo, Uri Avnery, head of Israel's leading peace movement, Gush Shalom, said, in blissful wish fulfillment, "Hamas and Fatah Reconciliation: Good for Peace" (truthout.org, May 2), that Europe and the United States "should encourage the holding of free and democratic Palestinian elections and accept their results, whatever they may be."



In the real world, after the signing ceremony in newly "democratic" Egypt, the leader of Hamas, Khaled Meshaal, celebrated "the common goal: 'a Palestinian state with full sovereignty on the 1967 borders with Jerusalem as the capital, no settlers and we will not give up the right of return (of many thousands of Palestinian refugees.)'"



Not sharing this fixed goal, of course, was Israel's prime minister, Benjamin Netanyahu: "a tremendous blow to peace and a great victory for terrorism." In Washington, the Obama administration, aglow with the capture and killing of Osama bin Laden was "cautious, saying it needs more details" (New York Times, May 4). How many?

Giving unintentional credence to Prime Minister Netanyahu was a major Hamas official, Mahmoud al-Zahar, who explained on April 29 that the pact "does not involve negotiations with Israel or recognizing it." Added Gaza premier, Ismail Haniyeh: any Jewish presence "on our land is illegal and cannot be recognized." (Benny Avni, "Poison Pill for Peace," New York Post, May 1).

Asking an acutely relevant question, a New York Daily News April 30 editorial challenged the Obama administration: "How could the U.S. continue to send hundreds of millions of dollars to the (Palestinian Authority's) Fatah, in effect also transferring taxpayer dollars to a terrorist group...which recently shot an anti-tank missile at an Israeli school bus in a deliberate attempt to kill children." Adds Netanyahu: Peace is not possible "with those who want to destroy us." (NY Times, May 2).

During a debate on the merger of Fatah and Hamas, "Does Hamas pact doom peace process?" (politico.com/arena, April 30), Jason Problete, founding partner of Problete Tamargo LLP, a Washington firm specializing in law and public policy, cast some very cold water on this fusion that in September, will be brought to the U.N. General Assembly to proclaim Palestine as its newest member: "Fatah and Hamas call a truce? More like an alliance with Iran's mullahs pulling the strings." Iran has been supplying increasingly lethal weapons to Hamas. Mr. Problete continues:

"Hamas is a Foreign Terrorist Organization (FTO) under U.S. law. There is no such thing as an FTO by proxy, but this new Fatah-Hamas alliance comes close to it. For U.S. companies and persons that do business with the fused Palestinians, you'd better mind your Ps and Qs moving forward. Maybe it's time to cut U.S. foreign assistance as, in all likelihood, Hamas's benefactorian is celebrating the new alliance in Tehran, a relationship that will hurt U.S. and regional interests."

To say the least.

Another debater, Garry South, whose Garry South Group is a political strategist for Democrats, provides a graphic addition:

"I was just in Israel and visited a kibbutz just outside Gaza, where the next day the murderous Hamas zealots in Gaza targeted an Israeli school bus across the border and mortally wounded a young boy. Israel will never -- and can never -- negotiate with a Palestinian authority that includes an unreconstructed Hamas."

I have no doubt that Mr. South's prediction is correct. After all, our Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton, told Congress soon after taking office:

"We will not deal with, nor in any way fund, a Palestinian government that includes Hamas unless and until Hamas has renounced violence, recognized

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Israel and agreed to follow the previous obligations of the Palestinian Authority." Will she stick to her insistence? On May 6, she cautiously said, "There are many steps that have yet to be undertaken in order to implement the agreement" (businessinsider.com May 6).

Apparently, dance steps?

In any case, when the "new" Egypt proudly began brokering the union between Fatah and Hamas, it also opened its border between it and Hamas's Gaza Strip, as the Wall Street Journal (April 30-May 1) reported:

"Egypt's abrupt move adds to Israel's worries that Egypt will drift toward Iran's orbit of influence," quoting Egyptian Foreign Minister Nabil al Araby that he was turning "a new page with Iran and may soon offer full diplomatic relations to the Islamic Republic after more than 30 years without high-level official contact."

But dig this in the same story: "The Obama administration sought on Friday to play down Egypt's moves on Gaza and to promote unity government between Hamas and Fatah.

Jacob Sullivan, director of planning and policy at the State Department, argued that there had always been movement of people and quantities of humanitarian goods across the border."

Like that humanitarian anti-tank missile fired at Israeli schoolchildren?

Indeed, Hamas government spokesman Taher Nunu, was pleased that "Egypt has gotten 'positive signals' about the opening of the border and that 'all future progress on Egypt's part is going to serve the interests of the people of Gaza.'"

Chiming in after the agreement was signed, Hamas leader Khaled Meshaal confirmed Gaza's interests: "Our only fight is with Israel." (New York Post, May 5). Back on March 1, our leader, Barack Obama, reprimanded a group of U.S. Jewish leaders, telling them to "search your souls' over Israel's seriousness about making peace" (www.jpost.com, March 11).

When pausing at some point over his deep satisfaction on terminating Osama bin Laden, our president might search into his own soul's long distrustful views of Israel.

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