



Sowing The Seeds Of More Mayhem

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The global response to recent Palestinian terror in Israel highlights the world's appallingly exceptional treatment of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, one that infantilizes both sides and only encourages more terror.

For starters, President Barack Obama mouths the timeworn U.S. position that Israel "has a right" to defend itself, which no president ever feels compelled to articulate for any other nation that finds itself attacked from within or without. That Israel has that right comes not from U.S. or global validation but from its status as a nation state in a Westphalian world, with a government that (like all others) must first ensure the safety of its people. Neither the United States nor Britain, or France or Germany, or India or Pakistan feels compelled to claim that right when terror strikes its nation, and no one needs to claim it for Israel.

From condescending validation of Israel's right, U.S. and global officials lapse into moral equivalency - that both sides are at fault when Palestinians as young as 13 wield guns, knives or rocks; maraud through Jerusalem and the West Bank; and stalk Jewish babies, teens, parents and seniors to slaughter.

Obama calls on both Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas to "tamp down rhetoric that may feed violence or anger or misunderstanding," while Secretary of State John Kerry blames a "massive increase in settlements over the course of the last years" that feeds "frustration that is growing" that a two-state solution remains elusive.

Washington and its allies urge Jerusalem to limit itself to a proportional response while Palestinians are killing Jews; State Department spokesman John Kirby suggests Israel used "excessive" force before top U.S. officials walk back that assertion; the New York Times resurrects the "cycle of violence" trope about Palestinian terror and Israeli reaction that condemns both sides equally; and, in the spirit of moral equivalency, Kerry plans meetings with both Netanyahu and Abbas this week.

Nothing infantilizes the Palestinians more than Western insistence that we know what they want, that a longing for nationhood drives their frustration, that the two-state solution would bring a peaceful nirvana. In the Western imagination, both sides are equally at fault - the Palestinians for resorting to murder and Israel for driving them to do so by expanding settlements and refusing to make peace. By imposing their own mindset on the Palestinians, Western officials and Western media ignore what the Palestinian leadership and its people actually say about what they're doing.

The West ignores Palestinian incitement, rooted in false claims that Israel is changing the "status quo" at Jerusalem's Temple Mount, where Jews pray at the Western Wall and Muslims pray at the Al-Aqsa Mosque. France proposes international observers at the Temple Mount, which would legitimize the falsehood and reward Palestinians for propagating it.

"These days," Abbas declared Oct. 14 on Palestinian TV, "Israel's hostile attack on our Palestinian people, its soil and its holy sites is intensifying, and the savage racism in its ugly form adds hideousness and repulsiveness to the occupation ... We say explicitly and unequivocally that we will not agree to a change in the status quo in the blessed Al-Aqsa and we will not allow Israel to carry out any plot intended to damage its sanctity and its purely Islamic [character]."

Similarly, Abbas and his top aides falsely claimed that Israel is executing Palestinian children on the "pretext" that they're stabbing Israelis - with Abbas decrying the death of a 13-year-old Palestinian boy who, in fact, critically wounded an Israeli boy, was hit by a car after fleeing the scene, is recovering in an Israeli hospital, and later said he went to a Jerusalem neighborhood to "stab Jews."

So, too, does the West ignore Palestinian incitement on social media - e.g., a "Knife_Intifada" hashtag that features a knife shaped like pre-Israel Palestine; a Facebook caption reading, "There is nothing greater than a knife penetrating the heads of the Jews"; a Facebook post teaching how best to stab Jews; a video of a Palestinian stabbing three Jews and declaring, "The settler pigs are banned from [passing] in the alleys of ancient Jerusalem"; and a Facebook caption in Hebrew warning, "We are coming to slaughter you."

Western officials don't rationalize the savagery of other terrorists; don't propose proportional responses to al-Qaida school bombings or Islamic State group beheadings; and don't bemoan "cycles of violence" when it comes to U.S. drone strikes or bombing campaigns to weaken those terror groups.

By viewing the Israeli-Palestinian conflict through an exceptional lens, U.S. and Western officials - reinforced by Western media - do nothing more than plant the seeds for more mayhem.