

How to Bring Peace to Palestine

By Philip Carl Salzman

The Canadian Government is sending \$25,000,000 of taxpayers' money¹ to UNRWA, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency, which is uniquely dedicated to supporting Palestine refugees.² Some observers³ say that UNRWA actively supports Hamas, the Muslim Brotherhood movement dedicated to the destruction of Israel and the genocide of Jews.⁴ Hamas controls Gaza, from which it launches rocket and tunnel attacks on Israel. "'I'm horrified,' said Conservative foreign affairs critic Peter Kent, who said there is ample proof that 'massive amounts' of UN aid have been redirected to support Palestinian military efforts against Israel. We have abundant evidence that UNRWA is part of the problem."⁵ Conservative M.P. Andrew Scheer said that "UNRWA is an obstacle to achieving peace in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict."⁶ Canadian official policy states that "Canada is committed to the goal of a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the Middle East." The goal of Canadian aid to Gaza and the West Bank is to "support the establishment of a law-based, peaceful and prosperous society."⁷ Canadians need to ask themselves whether Canada's financial aid advances to cause of peace, or impedes it.

Champions of Palestine argue that Palestinians are victims of Israeli imperialism and colonialism, theft of Palestinian land, ethnic cleansing and genocide, apartheid, and white supremacy. Jewish Israelis are thus alleged to be oppressors of Palestinians, and the Palestinians are victims of Israeli oppression. It follows from this, goes the argument, that the hundred years of Palestinian mob violence and terrorism against the Jews in Palestine and Israel, the repeated invasions by Arab armies, the Palestinian and Arab refusal to engage with Israel or to "normalize" relations, the Palestinian rejection of all peace plans offered, and the continuing incitement to violence by the Palestinian Authority, are justified by the demand for Palestinian liberation from oppression. However poorly this argument fits with the facts, many Canadians seem to believe it.

The demand for "liberation" from "oppression" is, however, not the same as a desire for peace. In fact, the Palestinians have multiple reasons for not wanting peace with Israel, all feeding together to strengthen one another and to reinforce the determination to reject peace:

The first reason that Palestinians reject peace with the Jewish State of Israel is the despised status of Jews in the view of Islam. Jews are viewed in the foundational texts of Islam as, at best, stubborn rejecters of the true faith, and, at worse, enemies of Islam.⁸ For 1400 years, Jews in Islamic lands had to pay heavy taxes not to be killed, accept ritual humiliation and a wide range of restrictions, and provide labour for the Islamic state, in order to claim "dhimma" protected status as subordinates.⁹ The idea that Jews could be politically independent and run their own state and society is monstrous to Islam and to many Muslims, and a violation of God's order. The Palestinian Hamas Charter (Article 7) openly calls for the elimination not only of Israel but of all Jews everywhere: "The Day of Judgement will not come about until Moslems fight the Jews (killing the Jews), when the Jew will hide behind stones and trees. The stones and trees will say O Moslems, O Abdulla, there is a Jew behind me, come and kill him. Only the Gharkad tree would not do that because it is one of the trees of the Jews. (Related by al-Bukhari and Moslem)." (Hamas Charter, Article 7)

The second reason why the Palestinians reject peace with the Jewish State of Israel is that for 1400 years Palestine—so named by the Roman Empire after two centuries of wars with the Jews, to erase the names Israel and Judea—was occupied by invading Islamic forces, first the Arabs as they expanded their Empire from Europe to India, then the Ottoman Turks. Under Islamic law, lands governed by Muslims became Islamic waqf, Islamic foundations, which belong to Muslims in perpetuity.¹⁰ The establishment of a Jewish state on land long controlled by Muslims is thought by

Muslims to be theft from God. Making peace with Jewish Israel would mean that the Palestinians would be surrendering Islamic territory to Jews, and by doing so betraying Islam and God.

The third reason why Palestinians reject peace with Israel is that peace will not restore the honour that they lost when they and the Arab armies were defeated militarily by the Jews.¹¹ In Arab culture all men are warriors, and honour goes to those who have achieved victory. Those who have lost in conflict, have lost their honour. Fouad Ajami, in *The Dream Palace of the Arabs*, reports that “Khalil Hawi, a poet of renown and professor at the American university of Beirut,” killed himself the day in 1982 that ‘Israeli armour had struck into Lebanon.’ Speaking to colleagues at the university earlier in the day, he had asked, ‘Where are the Arabs? ... Who shall remove the stain of shame from my forehead?’¹² “‘Manhood and honor had been lost,’ he told a colleague, Najib Saab, who saw him the day before he died.”¹³ Palestinians cannot make peace with Israel because to do so would be to accept defeat and the loss of honour. Nothing but the Palestinian defeat of Israel, and victory over the Jews, would restore Palestinian honour. That is why the Palestinian goal, stated explicitly by Hamas and Fatah, and illustrated in Palestinian authority textbooks, is Palestine “from the river to the sea,” erasing Israel from existence.¹⁴ For Palestinians, peace with Israel equals Palestinian dishonour.

If Palestinians are not interested in peace, how could they be persuaded that peace is desirable? I would propose the basic economic principle: if you want more of something, reward it; if you want less of something, punish it. Mahmoud Abbas understands this principle well; he wants more Jews murdered, so he rewards the murderers and their families.¹⁵ Apparently also Canadians, Americans, and Europeans want more Jews murdered, because they coddle and fund the Palestinian Authority. So too with international organizations, such as the United Nations, which repeatedly reward the Palestinian Authority’s bad behaviour by granting it recognition. The repeated rejection by the Palestinians of peace offers, from the United Nations proposed division of Palestine into two states for two peoples,¹⁶ to the many offers of “land for peace,” and so on, has not led to any punishment of the Palestinians. Apparently, Palestinians get a free pass because they are self-proclaimed “victims.” But this means that Canadians and others are happy to accept the Palestinians incitement to violence and rejection of peace.

Israel is ready for peace, and has been for seventy years. It is now a highly successful society, democratic with full human rights, renown for scientific mastery and technological innovation. It has no desire or need to enter into conflict with Palestinians or more distant neighbours, other than for self-defence. Until now, it has had no peace partner among the Palestinians.

Of course, not all Palestinians agree with the policies and objectives of Hamas, Fatah, and the Palestinian Authority. Bassem Eid, founder of the Jerusalem-based Palestinian Human Rights Monitoring Group, who identifies himself as “a proud Palestinian who grew up in a refugee camp and raised a large family,” argues that:

After 66 years of mistakes and missed opportunities, it is time for us Palestinians to create the conditions for peace and to work for a better future. It is time that we stopped pretending that we can destroy Israel or drive the Jews into the sea. It is time that we stopped listening to Muslim radicals or Arab regimes that use us to continue a pointless, destructive, and immoral war with Israel.

Eid sums up: “I want peace and prosperity for my people. I want an end to the misery and the destruction.”¹⁷

If Canadians, Americans, and Europeans want “an end to the misery and the destruction,” and to bring about peace and a better future for Palestinians, they know what they must do: hold Palestinian governments and organizations accountable for their anti-peace actions. At the present time, Canadians and others are enabling Palestinian violence and rejection of peace. Canadian aid supports Palestinian rejectionism and terrorism. If we do not change our policies, defund the Palestinians, and reject international recognition for the Palestinians, we can expect no movement toward peace, more terrorism, and no improvement in the lives of Palestinians or Israelis.

About the Author



Philip Carl Salzman B.A. (Antioch), M.A., Ph.D. (Chicago) is Professor of Anthropology at McGill University, appointed in 1968. He founded the Commission on Nomadic Peoples of the International Union of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences, and its international journal, *Nomadic Peoples*, for which he received the IUAES Gold Award. In recent years he has also served as Senior Fellow at the University of St. Andrews, Open Society International Scholar at the American University of Central Asia, Erasmus Mundus International Fellow at the University of Catania, and Visiting Professor at the University of Sydney. Extensive ethnographic field research in Baluchistan (Iran), Gujarat and Rajasthan (India), and Sardinia (Italy) provided the foundation many articles in academic journals, and for book publications such as *The Anthropology of Real Life: Events in Human Experience* (1999), *Black Tents of Baluchistan* (2000), winner of the Premio Pitagora–

Salomone Marino, *Understanding Culture: An Introduction of Anthropological Theory* (2001), *Pastoralists: Equality, Hierarchy, and the State* (2004), *Culture and Conflict in the Middle East* (2008), *Postcolonial Theory and the Arab-Israeli Conflict* (2008), and *Thinking Anthropologically 3rd Ed.* (2010). His latest book publication is *Classic Comparative Anthropology: Studies from the Tradition* (2012). In public affairs, he was a member of Middle East Strategy at Harvard (2008-2010), a member of the Board of Directors of Scholars for Peace in the Middle East (2004-2012), and is currently a Senior Fellow at the Frontier Centre for Public Policy, a member of the Academic Council of the Canadian Institute for Jewish Studies, a Fellow of the Middle East Forum (2015-), and a member of the Board of Directors of Scholars for Peace in the Middle East (2016-). His articles have been published by the Frontier Centre, the Middle East Forum, the Gatestone Institute, the Canadian Institute for Jewish Research, the Macdonald Laurier Institute, and *Areo Magazine*.

¹ <http://torontosun.com/2016/11/16/liberals-restore-funding-to-palestinian-aid-agency-with-alleged-ties-to-hamas/wcm/8051d4ea-7e47-4aca-ad6c-cfb51d71284b>

² <https://www.unrwa.org/>

³ <https://www.jewishpolicycenter.org/2007/08/31/how-unrwa-supports-hamas/>

<http://www.jpost.com/Arab-Israeli-Conflict/UNRWA-closes-Hamas-tunnel-under-school-502452>

⁴ http://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/hamas.asp

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hamas_Covenant

⁵ <http://torontosun.com/2016/11/16/liberals-restore-funding-to-palestinian-aid-agency-with-alleged-ties-to-hamas/wcm/8051d4ea-7e47-4aca-ad6c-cfb51d71284b>

⁶ <http://torontosun.com/2016/11/16/liberals-restore-funding-to-palestinian-aid-agency-with-alleged-ties-to-hamas/wcm/8051d4ea-7e47-4aca-ad6c-cfb51d71284b>

⁷ http://international.gc.ca/world-monde/issues_development-enjeux_developpement/priorities-priorites/where-ou/west_bank_gaza-cisjordanie_gaza.aspx?lang=eng

⁸ Andrew G. Bostom, *The Legacy of Islamic Antisemitism*. Prometheus Books, 2008.

⁹ Bat Ye'or, *Islam and Dhimmitude*. Fairleigh Dickenson University Press, 2001.

¹⁰ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Waqf>

¹¹ <https://www.britannica.com/event/Arab-Israeli-wars>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arab%E2%80%93Israeli_conflict

¹² Fouad Ajami, *The Dream Palace of the Arabs*. Vintage, 1999. P. 26.

¹³ Fouad Ajami, *The Dream Palace of the Arabs*. Vintage, 1999. P 95.

¹⁴ Robert Friedmann, *A Diary of Four Years of Terrorism and Anti-Semitism: 2000-2004*, Volume 1. P. 285.

<https://www.israelnationalnews.com/Articles/Article.aspx/12717>

¹⁵ https://www.washingtonpost.com/posteverything/wp/2017/04/28/palestinians-are-rewarding-terrorists-the-u-s-should-stop-enabling-them/?utm_term=.4dcdeb38e0c7

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Palestinian_Authority_Martyrs_Fund

¹⁶ <https://learning.blogs.nytimes.com/2011/11/29/nov-29-1947-united-nations-partitions-palestine-allowing-for-creation-of-israel/>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_Nations_Partition_Plan_for_Palestine

¹⁷ <http://blogs.timesofisrael.com/we-palestinians-hold-the-key-to-a-better-future/>