

Israel's Gaza War Is Pre-Planned Genocide

by Jeffrey Steinberg and Michele Steinberg

July 15—Israel's massive bombing campaign against Gaza has nothing to do with either the killings of three West Bank yeshiva students or the firing of rockets from Gaza into Israel. The real trigger for the ongoing war crimes was the announcement that Hamas and Fatah had reached an agreement for a unity government and for elections in the West Bank and Gaza.

The unity deal, which came on the heels of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's sabotage of the U.S.-brokered peace negotiations in April, threatened to dash Netanyahu's plans for a "three-state solution" to the Israel-Palestine conflict. So long as Hamas and Fatah remained divided, Netanyahu could play one off against the other, maintaining the West Bank as a Bantustan under partial Israeli occupation, while treating Gaza as a sealed-off concentration camp, subject to constant and arbitrary Israeli military attacks.

Col. Patrick Lang (ret.), who was the Defense Intelligence Officer for the Middle East for many years, wrote on his widely read [website](#) on July 11: "Netanyahu has made it clear that if rocket (not guided missile) fire out of Gaza does not end, there will be a ground invasion of the Gaza Strip. IMO this will be a large search and destroy operation employing a lot of infantry-supported armor that will be heavily provided with artillery and air support. IMO a decision to conduct such an operation in an area that contains 1.6 million people, most of them civilians, is a decision to inflict mass casualties on that population. IMO that decision is motivated by a desire to destroy the unity government now in effect in the Palestinian Authority. Is this not a war crime?"

The reality of this Netanyahu scheme, fully backed by his close ally Tony Blair, has even been made public inside Israel. Writing in *Ha'aretz* on July 11, Uri Misgav argued that the existence of the U.S.-funded Iron Dome missile defense shield has allowed Netanyahu to maintain his assault on Gaza while giving Israelis a sense of

normalcy: "It enables Israelis to feel protected while continuing their life almost without a hitch. They can blow up their feelings of victimization and misery to new heights, while going on about their business relatively comfortably." Misgav referred to the Iron Dome system as "Israel's doomsday weapon," allowing the government to launch a "limited operation" against the Palestinians once every two years, to "refill the hatred and demonize the Palestinians."

On July 12, as international pressure was building for Israel to halt the bombing, which has targeted civilians far more than supposed Hamas arms caches and command posts, Blair, the Quartet "peace" envoy for Israel and Palestine, visited Netanyahu, ostensibly to press for a ceasefire. Coming out of the meeting, Netanyahu said he had no interest in any such thing.

The same day, the Palestinian Human Rights Organizations Council wrote to the President of Switzerland, Didier Burkhalter, demanding that he convene the High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention, which establishes rules of conduct for occupying powers. The Palestinians detailed that Israel, the occupying power in the West Bank and formerly in Gaza, has committed "grave breaches" under Article 146. They wrote that "further inaction at this time would not only betray any hope that the civilians of the Gaza Strip have left in the ability of international humanitarian law to provide protection and alleviate their suffering, but would leave broader question marks as to the basic commitment of the High Contracting Parties to invest in the future relevance of international humanitarian law."

Sane Israelis Warn Netanyahu

On July 13, Yuval Diskin, former head of the Israeli Shin Bet intelligence service, issued an open letter in Hebrew, blaming the government for the security threat to Israel and the danger of war. The letter was translated and published by J.J. Goldberg, editor-at-large of the American Jewish daily *Forward*:

"Dear friends: Take a few moments to read the following words and share them with others. I see the severe and rapid deterioration of the security situation in the territories, Jerusalem and the Triangle and I'm not surprised. Don't be confused for a moment. This is the result of the policy conducted by the current government, whose essence is: Let's frighten the public over everything that's happening around us in the Middle East, let's prove that there's no Palestinian part-

ner, let's build more and more settlements and create a reality that can't be changed, let's continue not dealing with the severe problems of the Arab sector in Israel, let's continue not solving the severe social gaps in Israeli society. This illusion worked wonderfully as long as the security establishment was able to provide impressive calm on the security front over the last few years as a result of the high-quality, dedicated work of the people of the Shin Bet, the IDF and the Israel Police as well as the Palestinians, whose significant contribution to the relative calm in the West Bank should not be taken lightly.

"However, the rapid deterioration we're experiencing in the security situation did not come because of the vile murder of Naftali, Eyal and Gil-Ad, may their memories be blessed. The deterioration is first and foremost a result of the illusion that the government's inaction on every front can actually freeze the situation in place, the illusion that the 'price tag' is simply a few slogans on the wall and not pure racism, the illusion that everything can be solved with a little more force, the illusion that the Palestinians will accept everything that's done in the West Bank and won't respond despite the rage and frustration and the worsening economic situation, the illusion that the international community won't impose sanctions on us..."

After starkly describing how "combustible" the situation inside Israel is, Diskin concludes with excerpts from his December 2013 speech to the 10th anniversary meeting of the pro-peace Geneva Initiative.

Another warning came from a senior advisor to the chief of staff of the Israeli Defense Forces [IDF], who admitted that the region is descending into chaos, and Netanyahu is fueling the process. He warned that all of the longstanding checks against permanent war and chaos have broken down, and the "crazies" on both sides have seized the initiative.

A leading Hamas official, speaking with American associates, conveyed the identical message: Extreme elements, including groups affiliated with ISIS (the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria) are now operating in Gaza and the West Bank, and are out of control, abetting extremists on the Israeli side.

A senior U.S. intelligence source who has tracked the Anglo-Saudi collusion in promoting radical Sunni jihadism for decades, noted that the new British grand strategy is to promote a permanent war within Islam between Sunnis and Shi'ites, and to turn the Israel-Pal-

estine conflict into another sectarian battle within Islam to last for generations. The British intelligence gurus like Dr. Bernard Lewis who conjured up this scheme for permanent war are themselves deluded—they believe that such chaos can be "managed" to suit British geopolitical interests.

Enough Delusions To Go Around

On July 13, Netanyahu appeared on several U.S. Sunday morning talk shows to spread anti-Palestinian hate propaganda, and to warn against Washington cutting a "bad deal" with Iran in the final weeks of the P5+1 talks over the Islamic Republic's nuclear program.

While Netanyahu was ambiguous about how long "Operation Protective Edge" against Gaza would continue and whether it would evolve into a full-scale ground invasion, two of Netanyahu's favorite Washington mouthpieces, Dennis Ross and Martin Indyk, appeared on Fox News and NBC right after the Israeli leader, to spell out the Israeli plan. They claimed that there was a consensus among the Palestinian Authority, Egypt, and Israel that "the Hamas problem" had to be eradicated altogether, and that the only way to do it was by a ground invasion. Indyk suggested that the "liberated" Gaza should be put under United Nations control for a period of time, before being turned over to the Palestinian Authority.

Similar delusions were publicized during the 2006 Israeli invasion of Lebanon, which was touted as a chance to wipe out Hezbollah. Not only did Israel fail to accomplish that objective, but by all competent military assessments, Israel was humiliated by Hezbollah, which came out of the fight stronger and enjoying more public support.

During a CNN roundtable discussion on July 13, Richard Haass, former president of the Council on Foreign Relations, chastized Netanyahu's boosters on the panel and warned that Israel was incapable of destroying Hamas and that the outcome would be a mirror of 2006.

The reality, however, is far worse. The British plan for a new Hundred Years War within Islam is well advanced, and the assault on Gaza is going to play into this drive for genocidal destruction. The attack on Gaza is part of the same regional dynamic as the jihadist offensives in Iraq and Syria, now spreading into Lebanon and Jordan.