

A Decade of Bloodshed Since Rabin's Murder

by Dean Andromidas

Ten years ago, on Nov. 4, 1995, Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin was assassinated, in a crime which marked the doom of the Middle East peace process.

Minutes before his murder, he addressed a peace demonstration of more than 100,000 Israelis, declaring that “peace is not only in prayers . . . but it is the desire of the Jewish people. There are enemies of peace. They are trying to attack us in order to torpedo peace. I want to tell you: We found a partner for peace among the Palestinians—the PLO, which used to be an enemy—and stopped terrorism. Without partners for peace, there is no peace. Also with Syria, there will be an opportunity to achieve peace. This rally must broadcast to the Israeli public, and to many in the Western and outside world, that the people of Israel want peace, support peace.”

Ninety minutes later Yigal Amir, one of the “enemies of peace,” shot Rabin to death.

Who are these enemies of peace in Israel? Former chief of the Shin Bet security agency, Carmi Gillon, who resigned immediately after Rabin's death, said in an interview published on Oct. 31, 2005 in the daily *Yediot Ahronot*, that Rabin's assassin was not part of a “psychopathic group” nor a “bad weed,” but part of the organized mass right-wing movement, which maintained a sustained campaign of incitement against Rabin, and which included Ariel Sharon and Benjamin Netanyahu. In effect, Gillon was saying that the truth has been ignored for the sake of “healing the nation.”

Gillon charged that the Shamgar Commission, which investigated the assassination, had failed to address this incitement and the responsibility of the fanatical rabbis who issued religious rulings that called for the death of Rabin.

“They did nothing to deal with inciters then, and they do nothing now,” Gillon said. “After Rabin was murdered, they dealt with all the political, social, and legal issues as one big glob. Apart from empty tears and declarations that ‘we’re all brothers now,’ there was nothing. . . . A battered majority thought that if we embraced the radical Right, which was essentially a full partner to the incitement that led to the murder, then we could once again become one nation and recover from the trauma.”

Gillon went on, “After the murder it wasn’t nice to talk about it. It wasn’t nice to quote right-wingers, including Sharon and Netanyahu, so they passed over it. Today, all of a sudden, it kicks us in the face once again when there is incite-



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Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, who was looking for a way out of the perpetual conflict between Israel and the Palestinians, shown here on Oct. 25, 1995, during his last visit to Washington, before his assassination on Nov. 4, 1995.

ment against Sharon from the same political camp and the same rabbis.”

He added that things have “changed for the worse. All the time the polarization between right and left gains strength,” while a “rather large extreme minority” has been sharpening the polarization.

As for Amir: “He was no bad weed, or part of some psychopathic group. It is an overall worldview. It may be comfortable for the left to believe they are bad weeds, but this group includes hundreds of thousands of people. Not all of them are murderers, but they all think Rabin’s murder paid off because it derailed the Oslo process.”

Sharon’s Squadristi

Gillon should have gone one step further, identifying the movement of messianic religious Zionists, which has functioned for over three decades as the squadristi Sharon deployed to construct the illegal settlements, the “facts on the ground,” whose very purpose was to prevent a Palestinian state from ever coming into being.

Don’t be deceived by the anti-Sharon rebellion of Sharon’s Golem over the last months, because of his disengagement plan. The much touted “brave act” of Sharon’s “unilateral disengagement” from the Gaza Strip only occurred because he found himself boxed in by international and internal pressures for some alternative to his hard-line policy that has left over 1,000 Israeli civilians and nearly 4,000 Palestinians dead. This civilian death toll is many times larger than in any previous war in Israel’s history. If Sharon had not attacked Rabin after the signing of the Oslo Accords, and had supported the evacuation of Gaza ten years ago, how many thou-

sands of Palestinians and Israeli would be alive today?

These same Messianic Zionists were not created by Sharon, but are the assets of foreign financial and political forces that have created this movement to keep the entire Middle East in perpetual conflict, if not war. They have been financed by foreign millionaires who have invested billions of dollars in the Jewish settlements—people like hedge-fund speculator Michael Steinhardt and his buddies in the so-called “Mega Group” of millionaire philanthropists. Then there is the 30-million-strong fundamentalist Christian Zionist Movement, which has been used to put Bush and Cheney into the White House, along with the neo-con cabal who serve as Cheney’s handmaidens in carrying out his perpetual war policies. In reality, they represent the cat’s paw of a force far more powerful than a simple war criminal like Sharon.

The Bloody Ten Years

The targeting of Rabin and the peace process began more than a year before that fateful night in November 1995, when the first suicide attack was carried out since the signing of the Oslo Accords. That attack was not carried out by a Palestinian but an American-Israeli, Dr. Baruch Goldstein, who, on Feb. 25, 1994, entered the Hebron Mosque and killed over 30 Palestinian worshippers. The investigating Shamgar Commission concluded that Goldstein was a “bad weed” who acted alone, even though the Brooklyn-born Goldstein was a card-carrying member of the United States-based Jewish Defense League and its Israeli counterpart, Kach. Goldstein was not an isolated psychopath but a true believer of JDL founder, the late Rabbi Meir Kahane, who openly preached death to the Arabs. While both Kach and the JDL were labelled terrorist organizations by both the U.S. State Department and Israel, there has never been a rounding up of its well-known members, who could have been easily convicted of belonging to a terrorist organization.

After Goldstein’s act of mass murder, many Israelis called for the evacuation of the extremist Jewish settlement in Hebron, which was financed by Florida-based bingo parlor king Irving Moscowitz, who is a major financial supporter of Sharon and Netanyahu, both of whom refused to denounce Goldstein. But Rabin felt he was not politically strong enough to take on the movement and all it represented, including the political machine of Ariel Sharon. Then Hamas, which had been carefully cultivated by Sharon in the 1970s to be used against the Palestinian Liberation Organization, carried out revenge suicide bombings. Despite this rapidly deteriorating situation, the Rabin alliance with Palestinian President Yasser Arafat held strong. Sharon and his squadristi escalated their campaign of incitement against Rabin, which culminated with

the latter's murder 19 months later.

Rabin's assassin, Yigal Amir, was also no lone psychopath. He was deeply involved in the Messianic Zionist movement. He was often found in the Israeli settlement in Hebron, visiting Goldstein's grave and meeting with Kach and other extremists. One of his "spiritual" advisors was Rabbi Benny Elon, who is now chairman of the Moledet Party which calls for the "transfer" of Palestinians out of the "land of Israel." Elon's niece, who was a friend of Amir, went to prison because she refused to report to the police that Amir had told her that he was going to assassinate Rabin. The fanatic Elon was chief Rabbi at the Ateret Cohanim Yeshiva in the old city of Jerusalem, which is part of a network of fanatical religious institutions which want to destroy the Mosques on the al-Haram al-Sharif/Temple Mount, Islam's third holiest site, and build the third Temple of Solomon. He trained, and continues to train, new generations of Yigal Amirs. Until last year, Elon was tourism minister in Sharon's government. He is one of the key liaisons between the Israeli Messianic Zionists and the Christian Zionist movement in the United States.

Rabin's successor, Shimon Peres, and the rest of the Israeli establishment, refused to take on these Israeli extremists. Instead, Peres called for early elections in 1996 and then tried to paint himself as "Mr. Security," including approval for targeted assassinations, only to lose the elections to Netanyahu.

Netanyahu's victory was well oiled by the same U.S. financial supporters of Baruch Goldstein's friends, and shaped by the same neo-con cabal that entered the White House with the election of George W. Bush. In fact, while Rabin's body was still warm in his grave, this group of neo-cons in Washington was drafting the notorious document, "A Clean Break: A new Strategy for Securing the Realm." This document was presented to Netanyahu on July 8, 1996, shortly after he won the 1996 Israeli elections. It was drafted by Richard Perle, Douglas Feith, Charles Fairbanks, and David Wurmser (see "Cheney Behind New Middle East War Drive: Return of Clean Break," *EIR*, Oct. 17, 2003), all of whom would later hold top positions in the Bush Administration. "Clean Break" not only overturned the Israeli-Palestinian peace process, but six years later become Cheney's blueprint for perpetual war in the Middle East, beginning with the attack on Iraq.

Netanyahu took this plan to heart. He overthrew Rabin's settlement freeze, implemented radical free market economic policies, and launched provocations against the Palestinians which led to major clashes. At the same time, Sharon, as the head of the newly created National Infrastructure Ministry, massively expanded the settlements in the occupied territories.

When Netanyahu became Prime Minister, this same neo-con cabal in the United States launched operations, including the Monica Lewinsky affair, against then-President Bill Clinton, undermining his ability to support the peace process.

This continued during the short-lived government of Prime Minister Ehud Barak.

Although elected in 1999 with a tremendous mandate, Barak's refusal to carry through with a peace deal, left the initiative to Sharon, who made his infamous march onto the al-Haram al-Sharif/Temple Mount in Jerusalem on Sept. 28, 2000, which ignited the al-Aksa Intifada.

The collapse of the peace process into a violent conflict between Palestinians and Israelis, worked to Sharon's advantage. With generous financing from the U.S. Christian and Messianic Zionist movements, Sharon became Prime Minister, despite the ruling by an Israeli investigative commission two decades earlier, that Sharon could never become Israeli Defense Minister because of his role in the Sabra and Shatilla massacres of Palestinians during the 1982 Lebanese war.

For the past four years, Sharon has been a full partner with Dick Cheney's perpetual war policies. On the West Bank, Sharon's squadristi have been allowed to set up over 100 so-called "outposts," many of which have now become real settlements, complete with housing and related infrastructure. Despite the evacuation of the Gaza settlements and four half-deserted West Bank settlements, none of these outposts has been dismantled, as stipulated in the so-called Road Map for a Middle East Peace. This is despite the fact that these outposts are inhabited by the same fanatics who have been mobilizing, often with violence, against the implementation of Sharon's policies.

Sharon is following up the Gaza withdrawal, not with another disengagement from the West Bank, but a repeat of his hard-line policy, which promises yet a third intifada. He is continuing to use the violence, including the death of Israelis, as a blood sacrifice, to hold onto the West Bank, and destroy the Palestinian National Authority and its President, Abu Mazen.

Veteran Israeli peace activist, Uri Avnery, in a commentary appearing on the Gush Shalom website, writes how this is the way of Sharon. The latest round of killings, writes Avnery, started with the assassination of 25-year-old Luay Sa'adi, of Islamic Jihad. "When Sharon, between breakfast and lunch, gave his assent to the execution, he knew that he was also condemning some Israelis to death—it was certain that the Jihad would respond with an act of revenge. There is no escape from the conclusion that that was indeed the purpose of the action."

Will Israel have to wait another four years, and a blood sacrifice of thousands of Israelis and Palestinians, before Sharon withdraws from the West Bank and makes peace?

Israeli observers all agree that a change can only come from outside, specifically the U.S. Presidency. The ongoing developments in Washington, with the prospect of Cheney and his cabal of neo-cons being marched off to jail, could open the way for a sane policy initiative to come from Washington. A decisive change in Washington could open the way to corresponding changes in Israel, and stop the bloodletting.