

Israel's 'Lies of Gaza' Cause International Denunciation

by Michele Steinberg

Jan. 23—"The Israeli invasion of Gaza will turn out to be the biggest strategic blunder ever committed by Israel. This may prove to be an existential blunder," said Lyndon LaRouche, at the height of Israel's ground invasion of Gaza.

Identifying the hideous role of the Bush Administration, with Dick Cheney as a wholly owned asset of the Anglo-Dutch financier empire, LaRouche noted, "The Israelis were pressed massively to do it . . . and the pressure came partly from the United States. This operation was known for a year. It was a planned homicide, and one of the motivations for the Israelis was to try to deny the fact that they had been defeated in their Lebanon war of 2006. They lost that war, and they're trying to pretend they didn't. . . . Well, they *did* lose that war; they shouldn't have started it. They're going to lose this one, too!" But, LaRouche also warned that not just Israel, but *all* the players in this hopeless war are "locked" in the "Cartesian" universe created by the Sykes-Picot Agreement of 1916-17 to carve up Southwest Asia.

Can this circle of tragedy, started by imperial powers nearly a century ago, be broken?

On Jan. 20, in reply to questions from a Russian institution about the danger that the "elites, on a world level . . . will now unleash a major 'hot' war," LaRouche again warned, the "only competent approach for war avoidance is to recognize that the entire 'Middle East'

threat is located, centrally, in London's continuing, imperial control in the Sykes-Picot region. . . ."

However, LaRouche underlined the change in the U.S. with the Obama Presidency. "The threat from London and its agents is serious and immediate," LaRouche said, "but from the U.S.A., under the new, Obama Administration, with the departure of the Bush Administration, no threat is now likely, although it could be possible under unforeseen, but not excludable conditions. Since the economy of the planet as a whole has been in an accelerating general breakdown crisis since July 2007, no comparison to the threat of war which Britain represented after the 1890 ouster of Bismarck, nor the installation of the London-initiated Hitler tyranny, nor the so-called 1946-1989 'Cold War' period, should be attempted. The threat under the present situation is of the kind which has no precedent since Europe's Fourteenth-Century New Dark Age.

"The only development which could presently prevent some form of general warfare," LaRouche concluded, "would be a pro-physical-economic-development cooperation, one initiated jointly by the U.S.A., Russia, China, and India."

'Existential Blunder?'

As the investigations of the extent of deaths and destruction in Gaza against children, women, neighbor-



UNRWA

UN Relief and Works Agency warehouse burns in Gaza after being hit by Israeli precision bombing.

Siegmán has been very active in the last half-year, pulling together working groups on the Middle East, involving senior figures such as Gen. Brent Scowcroft and Zbigniew Brzezinski, both of whom were advisors to President Obama during the campaign and transition. In early October, Siegmán participated in a conference in London with Saudi Prince Turki bin Faisal to try to reopen, and bring to fruition, the now-threatened Arab Peace Initiative of 2002. Siegmán supports making a sovereign Palestinian state the highest priority of the Administration, as well as a comprehensive Israeli-Arab peace agreement, and immediate negotiations between Israel and Syria.

hoods, schools, and UN installations uncover more horrors every day, Israel has begun to be hit with almost unprecedented criticism; and the long-overdue recognition that Hamas has to be part of the political solution is increasingly being heard.

When the former head of the American Jewish Congress, Henry Siegmán, a rabbi and former U.S. Army chaplain, decries Israel's and the media's "Lies of War" in Gaza ... when the UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon, who was once heralded by the neocons as a strong supporter of the despised Bush Administration at the UN, leads the world's diplomats in refusing to blindly accept Israel's "self-defense" explanation for the mass killings in Gaza ... and when leading U.S. diplomats, such as Richard Murphy, former U.S. envoy to the Middle East, say that U.S. dialogue with Hamas is inevitable—it becomes clear that there is a break in the recent history of "perpetual war" in Southwest Asia.

But to make peace possible, it is necessary to break with Sykes-Picot and *all* such imperialist looting arrangements, as President Franklin D. Roosevelt had intended. While no one other than LaRouche and his political movement is yet identifying the Sykes-Picot disease, that moment is rapidly approaching.

This week, Siegmán, one of the "elders" of U.S.-Israeli relations, wrote a profound commentary entitled "Gaza: The Lies of War," which appears in the Jan. 29 edition of the *London Review of Books*.

Siegmán blasts the lying, and writes, "Western governments and most of the Western media have accepted a number of Israeli claims justifying the military assault on Gaza: that Hamas consistently violated the six-month truce that Israel observed and then refused to extend it; that Israel therefore had no choice but to destroy Hamas's capacity to launch missiles into Israeli towns; that Hamas is a terrorist organisation, part of a global jihadi network; and that Israel has acted not only in its own defence but on behalf of an international struggle by Western democracies against this network."

No! says Siegmán. The truth is that the 2008 truce "was seriously violated on 4 November, when the IDF entered Gaza and killed six members of Hamas. Hamas responded by launching Qassam rockets and Grad missiles. *Even so, it offered to extend the truce, but only on condition that Israel ended its blockade. Israel refused. It could have met its obligation to protect its citizens by agreeing to ease the blockade, but it didn't even try*" (emphasis added).

"Middle East peacemaking has been smothered in deceptive euphemisms, so let me state bluntly that each of these claims is a lie. Israel, not Hamas, violated the truce: Hamas undertook to stop firing rockets into Israel; in return, Israel was to ease its throttlehold on Gaza. In fact, during the truce, it tightened it further. This was confirmed not only by every neutral interna-

tional observer and NGO ... but by Brig. Gen. Shmuel Zakai (Ret.), a former commander of the IDF's [Israeli Defense Force] Gaza Division. In an interview in *Ha'aretz* on 22 December, he accused Israel's government of having made a 'central error' during the tahdiyeh, the six-month period of relative truce, by failing to take advantage of the calm to improve, rather than markedly worsen, the economic plight of the Palestinians of the Strip."

Siegmán had already told the New York Council on Foreign Relations, in 2006, after Hamas overwhelmingly won national Palestinian parliamentary elections, that Hamas could participate in, and deliver a peace agreement.

The best contribution Siegmán makes is historical, not limiting his commentary to the events since Dec. 19, 2008, when the *hudna* (cease-fire) ended, nor to the six-month truce.

Echoing the sage words of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, who was assassinated in November 1995, by a Jewish fundamentalist terrorist who opposed the Palestinian state, Siegmán reminds us that "Israel's government would like the world to believe that Hamas launched its Qassam rockets because that is what terrorists do. ... In fact, Hamas is no more a 'terror organization' (Israel's preferred term) than the Zionist movement was during its struggle for a Jewish Homeland." Quoting Benny Morris, author of *Righteous Victims*, "It was the Irgun that first targeted civilians."

Rabin told Israeli critics of the Oslo Accords that, "You make peace with your enemies, not with your friends." On Sept. 13, 1993, at the signing ceremony, at the White House, of the Oslo Treaty, Rabin asked all there to toast "those with the courage to change axioms."

Now is the time to change those axioms of war and imperialism.

Last Gasp for Two-State Solution

At a Jan. 14 seminar entitled, "Can the Two-State Solution Be Salvaged," sponsored by the Middle East Policy Council, the magnitude of the impact that Israel's civilian killings in Gaza and its lack of diplomatic effort to make peace by recognizing a sovereign Palestinian state came to the fore. For the first time in decades, the possibility of a "one-state solution," i.e., a one-person, one-vote state, with no state religion, and no "second-class" status for non-Jewish citizens, is being debated in Washington, Tel Aviv, and among

academics. Speaking at the MEPC forum, Ali Abunimah, director of the Chicago-based website, *Electronic Intifada*, opened with a comparison of Israel's military might to enforce its apartheid against Palestinians, to the 1989-90 shift in South Africa, when President F.W. de Klerk came into office, and made major changes, including meeting with jailed "terrorist" Nelson Mandela, recognizing the African National Congress, and organizing the first election, in 1994, that had universal suffrage. As against Israel today, said Abunimah, no opponent—black African country, nor internal political force—could defeat South Africa's military might; but force could not save the apartheid regime.

Whether Abunimah knows it or not, the roots of South Africa's apartheid and Israel's apartheid are the same: Lord Cecil Rhodes and his racist imperial institutions and acolytes. (see *EIR* Feature, Jan. 23, 2009).

Now others are challenging the Gaza "Lies of War." On Jan. 20, Ban Ki-moon was the first high-level foreign official to visit Gaza after the Jan. 18 unilateral ceasefire, and stood before the still smoldering UN Relief and Works Agency compound which was struck by the Israelis with phosphorus bombs on Jan. 15. Ban said: "I am appalled and not able to describe how I am feeling having seen this. ... It's an outrageous and totally unacceptable attack against the UN. I have protested many times and I protest again in the strongest terms." Ban stressed, "It is particularly significant for a Secretary General of the United Nations to stand in front of a bombed site of a UN complex." He called for an investigation to make those responsible "accountable."

On Jan. 21, Richard W. Murphy, who was Ronald Reagan's Assistant Secretary for Near East Affairs from 1983 to 1989, when the Palestinian Liberation Organization was finally recognized, gave an outspoken interview. Noting that Hamas is "a group which has not, to my knowledge, ever launched a deliberate blow against the United States" (although some Americans have been killed in Hamas strikes in Israel), Murphy said that "it is inevitable" that the U.S. will open political contact with Hamas, which is "a legitimate representative of part of the Palestinian community." And, "It made us look foolish to be beating the drums for democracy and elections globally, and then to be turning our back on the [2006] Palestinian elections, and endorsing a blockade that turned into a siege, and forcing down the standards of living in Gaza," he added.