

The Bloody Truth of Gaza Disengagement

by Dean Andromidas

A death toll approaching 100 Palestinians, including woman and children, from Israel's ongoing military assault against the Gaza Strip, is a bloody testimony to the fact that Israel Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's "disengagement plan" is a fraud whose aim is to destroy any hope for peace in the Middle East.

Now this fact, already written in Palestinian and Israeli blood, has been confirmed by Sharon's top crony Dov Weisglas, who told the Israeli daily *Ha'aretz*, "The significance of the disengagement plan is the freezing of the peace process." Weisglas is also Sharon's private attorney, and has been his confidential liaison with the Bush White House, especially with Vice President Dick Cheney, for the last three years. Weisglas's brutal frankness is matched only by Sharon's bloody military assault in Gaza and the West Bank.

"And when you freeze the process, you prevent the establishment of a Palestinian state, and you prevent a discussion on the refugees, the borders, and Jerusalem. Effectively, this whole package called the Palestinian state with all that it entails, has been removed indefinitely from our agenda," Weisglas said. He then gave credit to his friends in the White House and Congress: "And all this with the authority and permission. All with a Presidential blessing and the ratification of both houses of Congress."

In images appropriate for a beastman, Weisglas declared: "This disengagement is actually formaldehyde. It supplies the amount of formaldehyde that is necessary so there will not be a political process with the Palestinians."

The disengagement plan, Weisglas states, was to head off all the peace initiatives which were receiving broad backing, both inside and outside of Israel. "Time was not on our side. There was international erosion, internal erosion. Domestically, in the meantime, everything was collapsing. The economy was stagnant and the Geneva Initiative had gained broad support. And then we were hit with the letters of officers and letters of pilots and letters of commandos [refusing to serve in the territories]. These were not weird kids with green ponytails and a ring in their nose with a strong odor of grass. These were people like Spector's group [Yaftah Spector, a renowned Air Force Pilot who signed the pilot's letter]. Really our finest young people."

Weisglas went on, "The peace process is the establishment of a Palestinian state with all the security risks that entails. The peace process is the evacuation of settlements,

it's the return of refugees, it's the partition of Jerusalem. And all that has now been frozen. . . . [W]hat I effectively agreed to with the Americans was that part of the settlements would not be dealt with at all, and the rest will not be dealt with until the Palestinians turn into Finns. That is the significance of what we did."

Arrogance Unanswered

Commenting on Weisglas's statement, an Israeli intelligence source told *EIR* that Weisglas was "either an idiot or he knows the Bush Administration will do nothing in response." He said the statements revealed the obvious truth that the disengagement plan was meant to destroy the peace process. He said that it shows the total "arrogance" of both Weisglas and Sharon.

Another source, a senior Israeli political commentator, said the move was aimed at getting support from the Likud and the settlers for Sharon's plan. Nonetheless, he said, such statements should embarrass President George W. Bush, because Bush has been telling everyone how he supports a Palestinian state. It also embarrasses Labor Party Chairman Shimon Peres, who has been trying to do everything to crawl into a national unity government with Sharon, claiming that the disengagement would be the first step in a broader peace process.

Palestinian Cabinet Minister Saeb Erekat called on the Bush Administration to distance itself from Weisglas's statement: "It is clear that Mr. Weisglas expressed the true intentions of Prime Minister Ariel Sharon. We hope that President Bush will answer the question now as to how to make the Gaza disengagement plan part of the road map and not an alternative to it." The White House has yet to issue a statement.

Ahmed Tibbi, Israel Knesset member and former advisor to Palestinian President Yasser Arafat, wrote to the U.S. ambassador to Israel Daniel Kurtzer, questioning whether "the American Administration is a partner to Sharon's political deceit, which Weisglas revealed with incriminating candor." Tibbi wrote that Weisglas's comments "bolster what we have said all along, that the disengagement plan is a Sharon bluff."

Yossi Beilin, initiator of the Geneva Initiative and chairman of the Yahad party, told Israeli Radio that Weisglas's "frightening comments" were uttered in a rare moment of truth and show Sharon's real dangerous intentions. The remarks "reveal the fact that it is Sharon who is not a partner for peace, and the peace camp must work for him to be overthrown," he said.

Hadash party Knesset member Mohammed Barakeh called the statements grave, saying that Sharon's government has to be overthrown.

Goebbels Would Be Pleased

Weisglas's interview is only the latest exposure of Sharon's Goebbels-style propaganda campaign masking his real

policy towards the Palestinians: the creation of Warsaw-Ghetto-type enclaves that could soon become concentration camps.

The code name given to the ongoing military assault on Gaza, "Days of Repentance," is yet another display of Sharon's satanic use of language in the service of propaganda. Sharon and his generals claim that the operation is in response to the firing of Palestinian primitive Qassam rockets at the Israeli community of Sderot. In reality, the operation has been in the planning for more than two years, since 2002, when Sharon and his generals wanted to launch a massive invasion of Gaza similar to the infamous "Operation Defensive Shield," which was launched in the West Bank that same year. Then Sharon had been deterred by the Bush Administration, which was concentrating on preparations to launch a war on Iraq. The U.S. Presidential election campaign has given Sharon a window of opportunity, knowing that Bush, desperate for the Jewish vote, would do nothing to deter him.

According to a United Nations report, as of Oct. 6, 82 Palestinians have been killed in the operation, including 24 children under the age of 18, and the death toll is rising. More than 50,000 Palestinians are trapped in their homes in the Jabaliya refugee camp which has now become a war zone.

For Sharon, however, an assault on Palestinians is not enough. Now he has launched a black propaganda war against the United Nations Relief and Works Agency which he hopes to shut down with totally baseless claims that it is being used as cover for terrorism. This attack is a crime against humanity, because UNRWA is the only agency that is preventing mass starvation in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. In fact, Israel, which has totally reoccupied the West Bank, and now the Gaza Strip, refuses to take responsibility for the Palestinian population as it is required to do under the Geneva Conventions. Thus, UNRWA, and all other relief agencies, have become unwitting accomplices to Sharon policies. The shutting down of UNRWA will turn Sharon's Warsaw Ghettos into real concentration camps.

The black propaganda campaign was launched simultaneously with the military assault, when Sharon, at his Security Cabinet meeting approving the operation, demanded that the Israeli military and Shin Bet security services provide "evidence" to be used to justify the operation. It did not matter whether or not the evidence were truthful. Targetting UNRWA would also exact revenge against UNRWA director Peter Hansen, who had made hostile remarks during the massive Israeli assault on the Jenin refugee camp in the West Bank in 2002.

The Israeli military came up with the "evidence": a blurry video clip of a "long object" that the Israelis claimed was a missile being loaded on an ambulance operated by UNRWA. It posted the video clip on the website of the Israeli Defense

Forces and the Foreign Ministry, and forced the United Nations to conduct an investigation. They also accused UNRWA of employing " Hamas terrorists," and they arrested 13 UNRWA employees, claiming that they belonged to Hamas.

UNRWA director Peter Hansen denied the absurd charges, declaring that the "long object" was obviously a stretcher. The Israeli military was then forced to back-track, and Israeli Gen. Israel Ziv stated that "there are doubts among the analysts as to what it is."

The Israeli daily *Ha'aretz* revealed that the Israelis themselves had used ambulances and UN vehicles, "just as, in the 1950s, there were cases in which the IDF units, including some well known to Ariel Sharon, made operational use of either genuine or fake UN observer vehicles."

More recently, Israeli reserve sergeant Maj. Zohar Shapira, of the elite Sayeret Matkal, revealed that in Operation Defensive Shield in 2002, the Israeli military used ambulances to surreptitiously transport troops on their way to assaults. His commander told him that ambulances were the most protected vehicles at their disposal!

Humanitarian Disaster

On Oct. 6, twelve United Nations organizations released a special report warning of the impending humanitarian disaster, as a result of Israeli military operations, and conditions of siege imposed on the Gaza Strip. Their findings testify to the criminal policies of Sharon and his generals. Sixty-six percent of the population lives below the poverty line, defined as earning less than \$2 a day! This is expected to rise to 72%, within a year. And 24,547 Palestinians have been made homeless in the last four years because of house demolitions, a Class A war crime. Despite the fact that UNRWA has been making a desperate attempt to help feed 1.5 million Palestinians, chronic malnutrition among children under five years old is at 12.7% in the Gaza Strip, and is expected to rise.

With over 24,000 employees, UNRWA is the second largest employer in the the Occupied Territories after the Palestinian National Authority. The criminal false charge that it is used as a cover for terrorism has already endangered its employees, who are treated with suspicion by Israeli soldiers. The rules of engagement have become more and more lax, and "shoot first ask questions later" is becoming more and more acceptable. UNRWA is totally dependent on donations from the international community; therefore, these false claims, if believed, could deter nations to give desperately needed donations.

The difference between hope and holocaust for the Palestinians could be decided by who wins next month's U.S. Presidential Elections. Only a U.S. President can stop Sharon and his generals, and bring peace to the region. If Bush is re-elected, Sharon's disengagement plan will be used as a springboard for a new regional war.