Root Causes of the May Election War

Submitted by Yale Zussman, PhD

The root causes for the May Election War can best be understood using an image with three concentric circles, representing Islamic theological factors on the outside, the co-optation of the United Nations and its various organs and agencies in the middle, and the internal workings of the Palestinian enterprise on the inside. Once these factors are understood, an honest observer will conclude that the current Commission of Inquiry (CoI) is inherently fraudulent in its intent. Whether any member(s) of it will use this opportunity to address these issues honestly remains to be seen.

Islamic Theological Factors

Islamic theology divides the world into two parts, a *Dar-al-Islam*, which is ruled by Muslims and where Islam is the dominant religion, and a *Dar-al-Harb*, where non-Muslims rule and Islam is not the predominant religion. *Jihad* is the process by which Muslims expand the *Dar-al-Islam* and impose their religion on the peoples of the *Dar-al-Harb*, generally by aggressive warfare. Theology also states that once any territory has been conquered by Muslims, it cannot revert to rule by members of a different faith.

Much of the course of the Arab-Israeli conflict has been dictated by this theology. When the Land was under Ottoman rule, there wasn't a problem with Jews returning to their ancestral homeland -- the Ottomans had welcomed Jews going back to the Spanish expulsion in 1492 -- because it remained Muslim-ruled. We hear sometimes that the early Jewish pioneers were an invading force, but that claim is a serious insult to the Turks: At Gallipoli, in 1915-16, Ottoman forces defeated an invasion by seven times as many Allied troops as there were Jewish immigrants during the last thirty-five years they ruled what would become the Palestine Mandate. To claim, as the invasion allegation does, that small groups of idealistic young Jews, coming to work the land, defeated Turkish forces is nonsense. The problem arose only after non-Muslims took control and committed to granting Jews individual and collective rights; such rights were contrary to the *dhimma*, Islam's counterpart to apartheid.

Muslims sometimes look the other way when objective reality makes compliance with these beliefs impossible to achieve, but given the small number of Jews involved, and the location of the Land, they didn't in this case, leading to the conflict that has persisted ever since. Setting these theological issues aside is essential to establishing peace; the Abraham Accord does that, which is why it led so quickly to peace between Israel, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Morocco, and Sudan.

Co-optation of the United Nations

Muslim states tried several times to destroy Israel militarily with the intent of following their victory with genocide, but they lost each war they started. Rather than serve to foster peace, the United Nations became a venue where the large number of Muslim members could conduct their campaign in expectation of eventual success. The number of specific cases is rather high, but perhaps the most egregious is the "Zionism is Racism" resolution. The ongoing inability, or unwillingness, of the UN to hold the PLO, Hamas, other terrorist groups, and now the Palestinian Authority, accountable for their purposeful attacks on Israeli civilians, and indeed both Jewish and non-Jewish civilians around the world, has served to encourage more violence. The UN has shown little concern for war crimes that have become part of Hamas's repertoire, everything from using children as human shields; training children to become combatants; manufacturing and storing rockets in schools, medical facilities, and mosques; firing unguided rockets from these facilities toward civilians; and using ambulances to move military personnel and equipment. All of these are explicit war crimes, but the UN has managed hardly a peep. No UN agency has mustered the courage to reject the PA's offering financial incentives to commit murder. The very existence of the current CoI is a manifestation of the abuse of UN structures by Muslim countries, and is thus a violation of the goals presented in the UN Charter. The members of the CoI should be ashamed of themselves.

Nor have Israel and Jews been the only victims of UN malfeasance. The expectation that UN backing would eventually enable them to destroy Israel and massacre its population undermines any incentive Palestinian leaders have to negotiate toward a real solution to the conflict. Their "resistance" has cost their people a great deal because each time they refuse to seek a solution, the suffering of the refugees is prolonged and the next "opportunity" offers them less: Any agreement they might reach today would, and should, give them less than if they had reached an agreement in 1993, which would have been less than they might have received had they settled in 1967, which was less than what they might have received had they settled in 1949. A 1949 settlement would have been for less than if they had accepted the 1947 Partition Resolution, which in turn was less than what was proposed by the 1937 Peel Commission, which they also rejected. UN fixation on the "settlements" leads Palestinian leaders to think that UN support will ultimately reverse this reality, someday, redeeming their strategy, despite no evidence whatsoever that it will. It is no coincidence that negotiations for a resolution of the conflict ended when Israel stopped building new settlements. The UN and its agencies are thus complicit in prolonging the conflict and preventing the refugees from returning to a normal life.

The Palestinian Dimension

The Muslim world invented Palestinianism and the Palestinian People sometime in the second half of the Twentieth Century. The proof of that is rather straightforward and begins with the detail that when current PA President Abbas was born, "Palestinian" referred to the Jews living in the Mandate. Arabic doesn't have a letter for the phoneme "p," so in Arabic the Palestinians are known as *Filastiniyun*, a name derived from the ancient Philistines. The Philistines arrived from the Aegean world about a century after the Israelites settled in what had been Canaan, and disappeared from history about five centuries later. They weren't Semites, so if the *Filastiniyuns* are part of the Arab nation, as they insist they are, they cannot also be Philistines. Apart from Jews living in the Mandate, no people ever called itself "Palestinian," or "*Filastiniyun*," until the establishment of the PLO, with the assistance of the Soviet KGB, in 1964. The UN has adopted and advocates the false narrative necessary to keep the world's people from recognizing that the *Filastiniyun* effort is something of a scam.

The purpose of both Palestinianism and the Palestinian People is to challenge Jewish rights in accordance with Islamic doctrine; that's why their leaders continue to show no interest in a Palestinian state living in peace next to a Jewish state of Israel. The goals of Palestinianism make a two-state solution impossible, but Filastiniyun leaders know claiming they want this solution is a necessary step toward their real objective of destroying Israel and following up with a genocide to demonstrate the continued validity of the *dhimma*. These goals are contrary to the UN Charter and all international and humanitarian law, and they're no secret, but the UN has managed not to notice.

The only solution to the conflict that is currently viable would see Gaza incorporated into Egypt while Israel and Jordan fix a border between them, thus approximating what existed before the 1967 war. "Palestine" and Palestinianism would be eliminated, removing most of the Islamic dimension, and peace just might break out.

The May war was a direct result of PA President Mahmud Abbas's cancellation of a scheduled election because he expected to lose. As usual, when this corrupt leader wanted to redirect the attention of his people, he instigated violence against Israelis, especially Jews. Hamas, whose electoral expectations had been dashed by the cancellation, couldn't allow him to get away with it, so it upped the ante by firing unguided rockets toward Jerusalem and other Israeli cities. No government can allow an outside force to attack its people with impunity -- a concept the UN recognizes, except when it comes to Israel -- so Israel responded to the rockets by attacking Gaza, Hamas's base. Note that if the UN hadn't completely lost its credibility on this conflict, it might have been possible for Israel to rely on the Security Council, but the second circle precluded that approach.

If the Commission of Inquiry isn't to go down in history as just another effort by the Muslim states to use the UN in their war against the residents of the *Dar-al-Harb*, it must:

1) Put Hamas's behavior, before, during, and after the May Election War, at the center of its activities and recommend ways to prevent that group from continuing with its ongoing war crimes.

2) Advocate for reforming the UN structure so that it cannot be used as a tool of aggression by members acting either alone or collectively.

3) Recommend to the Muslim World that the time has come to revisit the *dhimma*, *jihad*, and the division of the world into a *Dar-al-Islam* and a *Dar-al-Harb* and thus come into compliance with the UN Charter.

Israel has been the primary, though not only, victim of developments in all three circles. It should not be a victim of your commission as well.

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