

Israel's Warped Self-justification For Murder

Paul J. Balles*

Professor Paul J. Balles exposes Israel's warped definition of self-defence, which it uses as a cover for its murder of innocent Palestinians, including women and children, and its destruction of universities, mosques and other civilian infrastructure in the occupied Gaza Strip.

Israel brazenly lies, saying that Hamas broke the cease-fire when it was Israel that broke the cease-fire in November.

In Haaretz, Zvi Barel writes: "Six months ago Israel asked and received a cease-fire from Hamas. It unilaterally violated it when it blew up a tunnel, while still asking Egypt to get the Islamic group to hold its fire." Israel continues its propaganda, claiming that its attack on Gaza is in self-defence. The Huffington Post reports, "A mother whose three school-age children were killed, and are piled one on top of the other in the morgue, screams and then cries, screams again and then is silent."

Self-defence?

The New York Times reported: "At Shifa Hospital in Gaza City, women wailed as they searched for relatives among bodies that lay strewn on the hospital floor."

Self-defence?

While the world is busy attempting to assess the damage from the financial crisis, Israel decides that it's a fitting time to massacre 350 and injure another 1500 in Gaza.

Self-defence?

In its propaganda dissemination, Israelis have been getting instruction on how to paint Israel as angels and Hamas as devils. What makes Hamas Beelzebubs? They have sent 1000 rockets into Israel, killing four Israelis altogether.

Self-defence?

The Israeli navy attacked and rammed a humanitarian boat in international waters off the coast of Gaza, preventing it from delivering desperately needed medical supplies and treatment.

Self-defence?

Solidarity Movement, writing from Gaza: "This massacre is not going to bring security for the State of Israel or allow it to be part of the Middle East. Now calls of revenge are everywhere."

Self-defence?

Jenny Linnel (British), International Solidarity Movement, reporting from Gaza: "In front of our house we found the bodies of two little girls under a car, completely burnt. They were coming home from school."

Self-defence?

Nora Barrows-Friedman, Flashpoints Radio, says: "The people [in Gaza] are filled with panic and terror – and this comes after a prolonged siege that deprives them of needed food, medicine, clean water, electricity – the basics of life."

Self-defence?

Laila El-Haddad, a mother from Gaza, writes: "My father just called to inform me he was OK – after warplanes bombed the Islamic University there, considered to be the Strip's premier academic institution." They also bombed a mosque. Why would the Israeli Air Force bomb a place of learning and one of prayer?

Self-defence?

Justin Alexander, writing for the Economist, notes: "Israel's past military responses to the rocket threat, although massively disproportionate, have ... been largely ineffective. It demolished buildings and levelled large areas of farmland in the northern part of Gaza to reduce the cover available for rocket crews. It fired over 14,000 artillery shells in 2006, killing 59 Palestinian civilians in the process, in what was framed as a preventive tactic to make it more difficult for rocket crews to operate."



Eva Bartlett (Canadian), International Solidarity Movement, reported from inside Gaza on 27 December: "Israeli missiles tore through a children's playground and busy market in Diyar Balah. We saw the aftermath – many were injured and some reportedly killed."

Self-defence?

Ewa Jasiewicz (Polish and British), Free Gaza Movement, observed: "The morgue at the Shifa Hospital has no more room for dead bodies, so bodies and body parts are strewn all over the hospital."

Self-defence?

Sharon Lock (Australian), International

Self-defence?

Haaretz ran an article by Gideon Levy reporting: "Within the span of a few hours on a Saturday [27 December] afternoon, the IDF sowed death and destruction on a scale that the Qassam rockets never approached in all their years, and Operation 'Cast Lead' is only in its infancy."

Self-defence? Not on your life! Or death!

*Paul J. Balles is a retired American university professor and freelance writer who has lived in the Middle East for many years. For more information, see <http://www.pballes.com>. The article republished with written consent from redress.cc & the author.

From front page:

Muslim Curtin Student to become a National Leader



The Leadership Australia program gathered a small group of young Muslims from all around the country together in Melbourne, to show how they can play an active role in the national community, as well as their own local communities. Following the program participants were expected to implement projects within their state or territory.

Ms Ithdayhid said she took a lot from the program, most prominently networking and public speaking skills.

When she returned to Perth she had a series of tasks to complete to consolidate the knowledge she had learned and to put her finely tuned skills into action.

"I've had to find a mentor to help me as well as find someone that I can mentor and share what I have learnt with.

"Another task was to actively seek two public speaking engagements, one to Muslims and another to a non-Muslim audience... which has been quite challenging," she said.

Ms Ithdayhid already has a list of volunteering experience under her belt

including organizing several projects for the Curtin Muslim Students Association, volunteering as a camp leader for the Muslim Women's Support Centre's girls camp and being a student ambassador for Curtin.

She said the AMF's program was very helpful in giving her the confidence to further pursue leadership roles in the community and in showing her how she could make a difference. In 2009 she will be mentoring first year pharmacy students to help them settle into university life and will also play a major role in upgrading the Curtin Mushallah.

What is the meaning of the word 'is' anyway?

Debora McNichol*

A non-Muslim friend emailed an article relating Hamas member Nizar Rayan's recent death and with it, a slew of questions that sounded somewhat accusatory. In verifying my response to him, I read a current article that threw me for a loop. I was shocked (truly!) by this heavily and blatantly biased article. In my American experience, blatant bias occurs most often with conservative outlets. Liberal bias is usually more subtle.

Consider the Associated Press headline: "Israel lets Palestinians Flee; UN Warns of Crisis." To read this headline accompanying article, one would think that there was a degree of benevolence on the part of the Israelis and that the humanitarian crisis was yet to come in Gaza. Well guess what. As I clicked the link to this article, I was curious and skeptical as to how Israel could possibly be opening its borders to the same people it was bombing. I also wondered what else the United Nations had to warn us about, as there was already a full-fledged crisis in Palestine. Could the AP have developed the Bill Clinton disease? What does the word "warn" mean anyway? (In hindsight, I wonder why the UN failed to warn the world of Israel's reasonably foreseeable ground invasion as well.)

Israel's allowing foreigners with passports to return to their homes by way of Israel and its airports was hardly the gesture of good faith, humanity, and decency that the headline implied. Trying to avoid an international incident is more like it. How the AP could misrepresent the ramifications of and purposes behind Israel's actions is at the least irresponsible.

We must be diligent, insha Allah, and teach our children at home and in the classroom to be diligent. To that end, pressing our children to read the news before checking their emails and MySpace page will teach them the importance of paying attention to current events. Providing notice to the news wires that we are paying attention

to both the big stuff and the details on a massive scale should spur their acting more responsibly in the future, insha Allah.

Here is contact information for a small list of major news wires and outlets. Please forgive my ignorance and the omission of the major Australian outlets:

Associated Press: To send a correction for an article or a letter to the editor: info@ap.org. To contact the editors of a department: go to www.ap.org. Click "Contact AP." Look to the right for a pull down list of departments.

Reuters: Go to www.reuters.com. Scroll to the bottom and click "Help and Contact Us." Under "Quick Links" on the right, click "Corrections and Suggestions." Click "Corrections" under the Editorial heading.

BBC: Go to www.bbc.co.uk. Scroll to the bottom and click "Contact Us." Click "BBC News Item or Programme." Click "Contact Us" at the left, which opens a page with links that concern each news medium.

The Australian: Go to the contact page to access multiple editors and sections addresses: <http://www.theaustralian.news.com.au/contactus>

New York Times: For corrections, email nytnews@nytimes.com. For comments on editorials, email letters@nytimes.com. To comment on the Time's journalistic integrity, email public@nytimes.com.

Al Jazeera: For English, go to <http://english.aljazeera.net/>. Click "About Us" on the left hand side of the screen. Click the "Contact Us" link in the middle of the page. Click the "Send Feedback" link under "Article Tools."

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