

You deserve a factual look at . . .

Turmoil in Gaza

What can the world, what can Israel do to restore order?

About two years ago, yielding to the pressure of “world opinion,” Israel decided to abandon Gaza and to withdraw the about 8,000 Israelis who had lived there for generations and who had created flourishing agriculture and successful industry.

What are the facts?

Israel's trial balloon. For Israelis, the abandonment of Gaza was also a trial balloon to assess what the relationship with a nascent Palestinian state would be. They got a quick and decisive answer. Almost from the very first day of their “liberation,” the Gazans launched daily rocket attacks on Israel. Fortunately, so far “only” about fifteen people have been killed and “only” about 300 injured by those relatively unsophisticated weapons. But it is only a matter of time until one of those rockets – whose range and effectiveness are being constantly improved – hits a school, a large housing complex or a hospital.

In the meantime, Israel responds with pinpoint volleys on the launching pads of those rockets. But they are easily movable and purposely located in heavily populated neighborhoods. It is thanks only to Israeli respect for human life that tens of thousands of Gazans have not perished in Israel's response to those barrages. We must ask ourselves what our country would do if Mexico were to launch thousands of rockets into San Diego. The answer is perfectly clear: We would retaliate in full force.

A wall forms the border between the Gaza Strip and Egypt. It is lightly guarded by Egyptian troops. The terrorist Hamas government decided to breach this wall and tens of thousands of Gazans burst into the Egyptian Sinai. The wall has now been rebuilt and most of the Gazans have been returned to their territory. Some, however, are still roaming the Sinai and have committed suicide attacks on Israeli citizens.

Gaza in misery. The situation in Gaza is indeed miserable. That is not the fault of the Israelis, but the fault of the Gazans/Palestinians themselves. In 1948, the UN proposed that “Palestine” be divided into an Arab and into a Jewish sector, with Jerusalem becoming an “internationalized” city. The Jews reluctantly accepted this partition plan. The Arabs rejected it out of hand and invaded the newly-born Jewish state with the armies of six nations. Had the Arabs accepted the partition plan or any of the many Israeli offers of conciliation, they would now have had their own state for sixty years and would enjoy prosperity and economic success just as Israel. Instead, focused exclusively on the destruction of Israel and the killing of the hated Jews, Gazans are living in misery, totally

The withdrawal-from-Gaza experiment did not work. Gazans destroyed the infrastructure and the basis for prosperity that Israel left in the territory. If, instead of being singlemindedly focused on lobbing rockets into Israel, it would have concentrated on peace and on sound development, Gaza could today be on the road to being another Singapore. But Gazans threw away that opportunity. What is more, having had the very bad experience with Gaza, Israel will think more than twice before turning Judea/Samaria (the “West Bank”) over to the Palestinians. Israel – its people, its cities, its airports and its industrial and military infrastructure – would be under the guns of those who are sworn to destroy it.

depending on the dole of Israel and on the support of the world.

Rather than bombing Gaza in response to the daily barrages of rockets, Israel has responded and is so far continuing to respond by selectively withholding economic support for Gaza. Although Israel allows the importation of essential foods and medical supplies, it has curtailed the importation of gasoline, diesel fuel and electricity. The world is outraged, but it is as humane a response as possible to the incessant shelling of Israeli cities.

Constant smuggling of arms. Even under the supposedly watchful eyes of the Egyptians, scores of tunnels from Egypt into Gaza have been constructed. High-power explosives and advanced weapons are daily smuggled through these tunnels into Gaza. They are supplied and paid for primarily by Iran, which is closely allied to Gaza's

Hamas terrorist government. One wonders why these tunnels are not being used to import food, fuel, medicine and clothing, rather than weapons. Also, why should Israel be responsible for the supplying of Gaza? There are no good answers to these questions.

When the Jews evacuated Gaza, they left hundreds of beautiful homes behind. The Gazans destroyed them. They were going to build highrises instead. In the more than two years since the Israelis left, not a single brick has been laid. The Gazans destroyed and plundered the sophisticated and fully computerized greenhouse installations that the Jews had left behind. They were worth millions of dollars, could have produced food for the residents and millions of dollars in yearly revenue for the impoverished territory.

It is said that one of the reasons for Gaza's misery is that it is so densely populated. Yet, Singapore, for instance, and Hong Kong are much more densely populated than Gaza. But the comparison to Singapore is significant. It, too, is densely populated, is bordered by an unfriendly neighbor, and has been devastated by war. Today, Singapore is an oasis of prosperity, a bustling center of financial and economic activity. Gaza, with the unstinting help of Israel and with the billions of dollars that the world community has poured into it, could also be such an oasis of peace and prosperity instead of the hovel of misery and decay and the cauldron of violence that it is today.

This message has been published and paid for by

FLAME

Facts and Logic About the Middle East
P.O. Box 590359 ■ San Francisco, CA 94159
Gerardo Joffe, President

FLAME is a tax-exempt, non-profit educational 501 (c)(3) organization. Its purpose is the research and publication of the facts regarding developments in the Middle East and exposing false propaganda that might harm the interests of the United States and its allies in that area of the world. Your tax-deductible contributions are welcome. They enable us to pursue these goals and to publish these messages in national newspapers and magazines. We have virtually no overhead. Almost all of our revenue pays for our educational work, for these clarifying messages, and for related direct mail.

110

To receive free FLAME updates, visit our website: www.factsandlogic.org