

At War For The Holy Homeland

My indignation at the terrorist attacks on unarmed Palestinians, deaths toll 123 so far, with an incredible injury rate of 13,700, keeps boiling over - until Nicaragua popped up into the news. *El Presidente Ortega* was one of my favorite "socialist dictators" but now his forces of government repression have slaughtered over 100 protesters.

This is the age of tinpot dictators. Stripped of their rhetoric we find the naked lineup: Putin of Russia, Erdogan in Turkey, Sleazeball in the Philippines, Whatisname in Honduras, Notyournormalyahoo in Israel, Ortega of Nicaragua - all and etc. just *tinpot fuehrers*, of which our President may be *the tinpottiest*.

Poor Israel, everybody's Unchosen People these days. Certainly the center of attention but still a scapegoat. In the middle of the radical seventies, the UN even declared Zionism was Racism. They erased that in the late eighties as part of another of the Mideast peace hustles that go nowhere. I mean, don't get me started on Israel's conduct, but still doesn't each and every Nation have a chosen people - *itself*, for which delusionary entity it is willing to genocide the Nation's enemy of the moment.

Israel's greatest mistake was thinking that its inspired version of European Nationalism - Zionism - would create a secure Jewish Homeland. Copy European Nation Worship? It has been a plague upon the globe for 500 years. Take today - look at the most worshipped Nations - nine of them have nuclear weapons, airborne Auschwitzes, and each Nation likes the others to think that they are just itching to use them. Five other nations *host* nukes for the US: Germany, Turkey, Italy, Belgium and the Netherlands. Why these five? Well, take a look at the 25 other nations in alliance with the US Empire starting with Albania and ending with Zimbabwe. Why *these* 25? Because these are the Empire's client states, operated on the ground by would-be elites directly benefiting from the Imperial US presence, and willing to accommodate the immiseration of "their" own people. And special deal if you're not aligned with us, you still get one of our almost 800 military bases.

Yeh, sure there's Israel listed among the *NineNukeNations* with Israel's "official" total of 80 nuclear warheads - though there could be as many as 400. That would put Israel on a par with England, France and China but the Israel government won't let anybody count what the Israelis won't admit exist. (The global "rivals", US and Russia, have about 14,000 together, shared equally.) Yet, 80 nukes or 400, it is a lot more than 0, the number Iran has. But you see the fear: a small arsenal would do the trick in a territory as small as the Mideast. Iran can trump Israel's advantage with one nuke. (Pakistan could spare one or two. It has an arsenal estimated at 130 warheads). Get the picture. Iran, the untamed enemy of Israel. Its turn to go.



But forget the Iranians, it is the Palestinians who are outplaying Israel in the Holy Homeland itself. Why? because the Palestinians are playing for survival, Israel only for dominance. The Gaza grassroots won't give up and accept the role of cowed, undernourished zombies, dying off like lobsters, citizens of Warsaw at a steady simmer. And so for third time in 20 years there is a massive nonviolent uprising among the grassroots. This testifies to a simple truth - when you realize that violence/weapons won't attain your objective, your alternatives are stark - submit, obey, accommodate - or persistently resist.

Persistent Resistance is what we call the response of indigenous people everywhere to their displacement and cultural obliteration. Indigenous people and native people have to be relentless and vigilant. That's why indigenous people lead the fight against climate disruption by concretely defending the water, the air, the trees. Their openly earth dependent way of life represents a battle plan and a sustainable culture beyond money.

This is a level of Resistance that the word Nonviolence doesn't quite cover. Hamas leadership accepted the 2nd Intifada, knowing that all out war would end Gaza. Accepting certain defeat against insuperable odds is an act of admirable defiance, and even more so if your weapons are rocks, rockets and kites - with no casualties for Israel!

Gandhi was elated when he read of Polish Cavalry charging German tanks. "Almost nonviolence," he wrote. Wounded Knee, the Zapatistas, the South African ANC are examples of more successful uses of this force of almost nonviolence. Gandhi get your gun? Hardly. But if the armed leadership was loyal to his vision as seems to be the growing relationship between the civilian resistance and the armed militants?

We have a long way to go. The Palestinians have always maintained an armed wing. Until the 1st Intifada, victory was conceived as a military victory. In the first Intifada, the civil resisters worked out a deal with the youth to control the toxic burning of tires, and their own burning rage,

by allowing the burning to mark a death, like in the Hunger Games. By the time of this "Third Intifada" there were certainly plenty of excuses to burn tires: 123 dead and rising. And plenty of reasons to show defiance: 13,700 wounded. Those kites with burning rags easily morph into rockets.

But the ability of the grassroots to take things into their own hands has always surprised the armed leadership. When the first Intifada erupted, the PLO had been driven out of the Mideast to Tunisia and to their credit recognized the Power of the People for what it was. They adapted themselves to it under the pragmatic banner I like to call *By All Means Necessary*. A revolutionary committee was formed to coordinate activities. Here the *violent vanguard* worked more at the direction of the grassroots, offering their bureaucratic expertise to do the office work, turning out regular newsletters which were calendars of actions rather than an agenda to be followed. The PLO's occasional recruiting for armed activities had little appeal among people immersed in civil resistance.

The Palestinian grassroots, civilians, citizens, neighbors and friends, are proving to be the creative element in a real Liberation Movement. The Palestinians are becoming a real Chosen People in the wars of the Holy Homeland. The tables have turned. For me as a preChristian, the Jews had a role as a "chosen people" (i.e. a people that has kept open their channels with the *one*, with the *unnameable*, with the *source*). The Jews are being shuffled off the Cosmic Stage with hardly anyone but Evangelical Christians and Nikki Haley applauding them.

Isaiah's prophecy was that the chosen people will lead us all - regardless of Nation (see above) - to a *universal moment* when we - all of us - beat our swords into ploughshares. That's Zion. I'm a Zionist. The Holy City. King's Beloved Community. Isaiah would have a lot more to say if he saw the Jewish role as Chosen slipping away into other hands, an Islamic People of the Book whose holy wars may be evolving into a more purified spiritual warfare, close to Gandhi or King's nonviolence.

Hey - it can't be the Palestinians!?! Almost against their wills, faced with such an Orwellian powerful oppressor, the Palestinians are actualizing the force of Persistent Resistance, an ecumenical resistance mode: *By All Means Necessary* where the gun is another means, not the end. It represents a grassroots uprising where huge numbers start pulling their weight to sustain and not disrupt their communities. Where everyone is included and appreciated for what they have to offer. Even if its rocks and slapping soldiers. Guns too if they are part of a bigger means and not the end and be-all. It is when almost everybody has had enough.

So far Americans still haven't had enough. Stay tuned.

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