

Israel's Escalating Rhetoric: A Madoffian Symptom

In September of 2010, a group of the Friends of the Freer and Sackler Museums of Washington DC were visiting Iran. As a former member of the board of these museums, I naturally extended an invitation for the group to visit the Malek Public Library and Museum in Tehran, an institution that was endowed by my grandfather to the Shrine of the Eighth Imam. To coincide with this visit, the Malek Library had organized a small exhibition of religious texts—Islamic, Christian, Zoroastrian and Jewish—at the center of which stood a magnificent 18th century Torah scroll. The scroll had been recently donated to the Malek Library by the Chief Rabi of one of Tehran's synagogues, and the exhibition was meant to honor this donation. The donors of the scroll were therefore invited to attend the opening of the exhibition.



The Torah scroll donated to the Malek Library and Museum in Tehran



Freer and Sackler visitors listening to the Tehran Rabis

The Chief Rabi, or Khakham as they are called in Iran, was accompanied by a junior Rabi who spoke English and served as his interpreter. When one of the visitors asked the Chief Rabi “for how long have you lent the scroll to the Library?” he jokingly answered that “contrary to the general belief that Jewish people cannot depart with their precious belongings, this was not a loan but a donation.” Furthermore, the junior Rabi revealed that he taught two days a week at the Holy City of Ghom, at a seminary of Talmudic studies organized for Shiite theology students. To the American visitors, it looked surreal: while the official propaganda in the US portrayed Iran as a country bent on exterminating the Jews, in Iran proper, Rabis were donating gifts to an institution that operated under the aegis of a Shiite shrine, joked around, and taught the Talmud to theology students in Ghom.

When this was related by my sister to Eugene Schulman, an antiquarian and bibliophile friend in Geneva, he took it upon himself to complement the Rabis' generous gift with one of his own: he donated to the Malek Library a most rare volume, a copy of the first edition of the first translation of the Koran into English by George Sale, published in 1734.

Today, there are of course those who, like Eugene Schulman, despite being of Jewish faith, see through Israeli propaganda and prefer a cordial approach to animosity. There are also those who like the Freer and Sackler visitors—one third of whom were also of Jewish faith—want to have a first-hand opinion and visit Iran. But for a vast majority of the population at large, who remain at the mercy of the virulent Israeli propaganda machine, Iran has been so demonized that the threat of bombing, and the killing of thousands of innocent civilians, almost seems to be an accepted right of Israel!

Existential threat

Israel explains the bombing of Iran as a necessity to avert an existential threat. But how can Iran pose an existential threat to Israel? In the worst case scenario, Iran must kick out the International Atomic Energy Agency inspectors; shut down cameras that constantly monitor its nuclear operation; then enrich Uranium from 20% to bomb grade, which it hasn't done yet; and then produce a nuclear bomb, for which it may or not have the technology. But when and if it produces bombs, which can be no more than a few, it has no effective aviation or accurate missile to deliver the bombs. On the opposite side though, Israel has, by all knowledgeable estimates, between 150-200 nuclear bombs, with one of the most advanced fleet of war-planes as well as submarines to carry and deliver them. It can in fact bomb Iran back to the stone-age. Common sense dictates then that *if there is an existential threat, it's the other way around*. It is Israel's huge nuclear arsenal that poses an existential threat to its neighbors and not vice versa. So the question is: what is the real motive behind Israel's incessantly escalating rhetoric?

The Madoffian reaction

To me it's a Madoffian reaction to cover up criminal actions that Israel has committed and continues to perpetrate, by means of a fiction that it has created: Israel being an island of democracy, a model nation in respect to international law, and surrounded by villains. Like Madoff's Ponzi scheme, the fiction is to divert attention from its criminal activities, i.e., land grabbing. While Israel advertises the democratic nature of its state, it must hide the theft and terror that it is perpetrating. The latter go hand in hand, because terror is a necessary instrument of Israeli theft.

Israel though justifies its killings as a tit for tat against crimes committed by the Arabs. While it is very difficult to prove who initiated violence in any of the tit-for-tat situations between Israelis and Arabs, the crimes perpetrated by Israel against non-Arabs clearly demonstrate that theft and terror were very much present in the formation of the Jewish state, and continue to be, as if engrained into its very DNA:

1- **The King David Hotel massacre** – In 1946, the Irgun, which was the underground terrorist organization of the Zionist movement, blew up the King David Hotel in Jerusalem,

killing 91 British subjects and wounding 45 additional ones. The British Government never expected such a payback for having pronounced the Balfour Declaration—which paved the way for Jewish settlement in Palestine—and for establishing the British Mandatory authority in Palestine, under whose laws the Jews acquired lands in Palestine. But by 1946, British law and British authorities had become an impediment for Zionist expansionist policies, and therefore, the British had to be terrorized and scared off. They were in fact bombed off. And that should serve as a reminder to those who think that having been the recipient of much US largess, Israel will always remain a grateful ally.

2- **The Deir Yassin massacre** – While Jews, financially aided by such noblemen as Baron Edmond de Rothschild, began to settle in Palestine and bought properties legally and at fair price, there came a time when Palestinians would sell no more, or demanded a high price. The Zionist movement then took a page from the Mafia and struck terror in order to acquire property on the cheap. On April 9th, 1948, following the 1947 UN Resolution for the partitioning of Palestine, and a month before the creation of the State of Israel, the Irgun attacked the Arab village of Deir Yassin, killing more than a hundred unarmed people including men and women. The Irgun quickly capitalized on this massacre to spread panic, and scare Palestinians out of their homeland. Panicked by the Irgun atrocities and the imminent creation of the Israeli State, many Palestinians left their properties, which were then gobbled up by Israeli settlers. Provoked panic was an effective tactic. It had worked for the Mafia in New York, and for the SA brown-shirts of pre-war Germany. It also worked in Palestine.

3- **The killing of Count Bernadotte** - Israeli terrorist activities, however, did not stop after the creation of the Israeli state (May 14, 1948), nor did it target Arabs alone. The UN High commissioner Count Folke Bernadotte, for instance, had not a drop of Arab blood in his vein. As a matter of fact, he was as blue blooded as they come: he was a scion of the Swedish royal family and a descendent of Napoleon’s General, Jean-Baptiste Bernadotte. Nevertheless, he was assassinated by the order of an Irgun operative named Itzhak Shamir—who was later elected Prime Minister of Israel. Bernadotte’s sin was to believe in and defend the 1947 UN Resolution, which stipulated that Jerusalem was to remain under UN jurisdiction. By then, assassination had become the tool of choice for removing any *obstacle* that blocked the land-grabbing activities of Zionists. Whether Arab or Swedish, the obstacle had to be eliminated. And Count Bernadotte was assassinated on September 17, 1948, four months after the creation of the State of Israel.



4- **The attack on the USS Liberty** - On June 8th, 1967, in the midst of Six-day-war, the US vessel Liberty was attacked by Israeli war-planes and torpedo boats. Israel claimed innocence and purported that the attack was a mistake, while congressional investigations, which dragged on for several decades, proved that there were multiple attacks and they were deliberate. As several books on the subject have demonstrated, Israel believed that the SS Liberty, which was primarily equipped with eavesdropping material, had intercepted Israel's communiqués to its commanders, ordering them to capture the Golan Heights of Syria despite a cease-fire that had been declared, which the Israeli government had officially accepted. The SS Liberty was an *obstacle*, and had to be eliminated, even though it was an American vessel. 34 crewmen were killed and 171 more men were wounded defending their ship against Israeli aggression. But such was the complacency of US politicians towards Israel, that for years no one dared to investigate the matter, and it was only after 13 years of hard work by the victims of this blatant aggression that Israel accepted to pay the family of the victims a modicum of compensation. The sense of betrayal among certain US patriots is nowhere more evident than in the memoirs of the then CIA director, Richard Helms. He was totally dismayed that the NY Times had treated the killing of 34 US servicemen as a minor incident, and tucked the reporting of this major incident in a minor space of its inner pages, to never address it again.

Six decades later, Israel still believes that it must kill anyone deemed to be an *obstacle*. It has carried out assassinations in practically all major countries of the Middle East, the latest being Iran where it has targeted four civilians, who were scientists and university professors. Upon the death of the fourth one, even Secretary Clinton decided to distance herself, and the US, from these assassinations by publicly condemning them. But it was by no means a universal condemnation. Senator Santorum, for instance, said that he would not shed a tear for the death of an Iranian. Funny it is this Christian Right fixation on sex and abortion, which tries to protect "life" in a 6 millimeter fetus, but doesn't give a damn about the life of a 6-foot man.

The "terrorist" labeling

Ironically, despite such a long history of terrorism, it is Israel who constantly accuses others of terrorism. I remember when Itzhak Shamir had become Prime Minister, he was asked whether he would shake hands with Yasser Arafat? He answered in his thick Eastern European accent: "never with a terrorist." There he was, Itzhak Shamir, the murderer of Bernadotte, unabashedly posing as a saint and labeling his equally aggressive counterpart a terrorist.

Today, the most common refrain for Israeli propaganda is to label Iran a terrorist state. While the present government of Iran has undoubtedly terrorized its own citizens, from Israel's point of view, as well as the US', the terrorist labeling is solely due to Iran's support of Hezbollah and Hamas. Since the latter two are labeled as terrorists, Iran's support for them is deemed as terrorist activity. And the news media has fully embraced it, because when it comes to Israel, it

accepts its propaganda as truth and is unwilling to verify the facts. The facts though recount another story:

The sin of Hezbollah - In pursuit of its land-grabbing policies, Israel invaded a sovereign nation, Lebanon, and occupied it for several years. Hezbollah came into being in order to end foreign occupation. And it managed to do so by kicking out the Israelis. For Israel, which had already drawn plans for the annexation of southern Lebanon, it was an affront that it could not swallow. Hezbollah's achievement had shattered the myth of Israeli invincibility. Like school kids and bad losers, Israel reverted to name calling. Hezbollah was branded a terrorist and Israel took hostage hundreds of Lebanese that it had previously captured. I cannot imagine that their capture was in any way less traumatic than when Nazis burst into Jewish homes and deported them, scenes of which we have seen in so many movies. But when Hezbollah in turn abducted two Israeli soldiers—not civilians—as a means to free its captured brethren, all hell broke loose and Israel bombarded Lebanon, killing thousands of people. Not one western journalist, though, had the integrity or honesty to address at that time the issue of Lebanese hostages languishing in Israeli prisons. The lives of two captured Israelis were far more important than those of hundreds of Lebanese. Or perhaps, journalists couldn't tell the difference between 2 and 100s. For this new breed of journalists, Israel was a saint who could do no wrong, and Hezbollah, who had the audacity to defend its homeland, was a terrorist. By extension, so was Iran.

Aid to Hamas - While the case of Israel's invasion of Lebanon was a clear cut violation of international law, the condemnation of Israel's constant skirmishes with Hamas is legally more challenging because it can very well fall into the tit for tat category. But let us concentrate only on Iran's label of terrorist state for the sin of supporting Hamas. GlobalSecurity.org, whose goal is to provide accurate information for the general public, evaluates the sum total of foreign aid to Hamas to approximately 50 million dollars in 2003, only 3 million of which was provided by Iran, i.e., a mere 6%. The bulk of it, or more than 80%, came from Saudi Arabia and its cronies. The same news media that cannot distinguish between 2 and 100s, cannot tell the difference between 6% and 80%. Iran is labeled a terrorist but Saudi Arabia is not. That is Israel's will, and that is what the news media must reverberate.

Because of its hatred for Iran, Saudi Arabia has become a virtual ally of Israel. It must therefore enjoy the same coverage protection in the media as Israel, no matter if its financial support for al-Qaeda, Jihaddists, Wahhabists, and the likes, has caused the killing and murder of thousands of Americans.

The Ponzi scheme pattern

Israel creates smokescreen after smokescreen—existential threat, terrorist threat, etc...—to perpetrate its land-grabbing activities, and bullies every opponent to escape accountability.

Madoff too created smokescreens to hide the truth and bullied the SEC to accept his account, despite a detailed report from an analyst in Boston exposing the fictitious nature of his operations. That should have served as an alarm and stopped his operations. It didn't.

9/11 too should have served as alarm, exposing the negative effect of Israeli media on US security, but it didn't. For, one must see the gigantic failure of the US intelligence in detecting 19 free-roaming Saudis in aviation schools as a direct result of negative propaganda against Iran, while shielding Saudi Arabia. Indeed, when the al-Khobar Towers were blown up in 1996, it is Iran and a fictitious Hezbollah in Hejaz that were blamed rather than al-Qaeda. The Saudis then struck a deal with al-Qaeda, barring terrorist attacks within their kingdom but giving them free hand abroad. As a result, all the resources of US intelligence remained focused on Iranians and Shiites, rather than on Saudis and Sunnis. Then came the attack on the Nairobi embassy, two years later. Though the FBI indicted 13 Saudis in absentia, it still focused on monitoring Iranians rather than Saudis. And so, 19 Saudis leisurely walked on to US planes and blew up the Twin Towers, despite all the evidence pointing to the possibility of such attacks. And al-Qaeda still continues to get financial support from Saudi Arabia while American soldiers are being killed all over the globe. Israel wants the US to focus solely on Iran, and the US must oblige.

But a Ponzi scheme cannot last eternally. Madoff's Ponzi scheme eventually blew up hurting hundreds of investors. Israel's Ponzi scheme will also unravel one day, bringing shame to all those who rooted for its terror and theft operations.

Sullyng the US Constitution

I do not worry for Iran, because it has made the decision to defend its sovereign rights. If attacked, it needs to defend itself. And if defeated, it needs to fight back. I do worry, however, for the US, for its own sake as well as the rest of the world for whom it stood as a role model. It had a constitution that enshrined the right of the individual to fair trial before any condemnation, let alone killing. It was a right bestowed on every American citizen, which was nevertheless extended in the 1960s and 70s beyond the shores of America, when successive US presidents forbade assassinations of foreigners by the CIA. But those principles are now long forgotten, since today's president has not only allowed a plethora of drone attacks outside the United States, killing and impairing innocent civilians regarded as "collateral" damage, but has also ordered the killing of a US citizen, Anwar al-Awlaki, without trial, by blowing him up and whoever was in his vicinity. What's more, the president who ordered the killing supposedly taught constitutional law before entering into politics. If he doesn't understand the constitution, who should?

When I complained about this incident to a friend, his reaction was "c'mon you are exaggerating; Awlaki was an al-Qaeda operative and deserved to die." My answer was that if we believe that whoever we designate as the bad guy "deserves to die," let us then empower

our police force to go after the drug lords and blow up Chinatown, Harlem, Laredo and any dwelling in which they might hide. That is certainly a more worthy cause than killing Awlaki, because, if al-Qaeda has killed some 10'000 Americans over a decade, the drug lords kill ten times that in a single year. If this is what America has become, then we are back to the age of tyrants and despots.

There is however another aspect to the killing of Awlaki. As far as I know, he was never accused of killing an American or any other person. He was designated as a villain because of inciting others to kill Americans. If that is a sin worthy of being blown up, we should then consider the case of Andrew Adler, the publisher of the Atlanta Jewish Times, who in his Jan. 13, 2012 issue, advocated that Mossad agents should "take out" the "unfriendly" Barack Obama, in order to replace him with a president who is more sympathetic to Israel. If Awlaki incited the killing of Americans, so did Adler. If Awlaki's audience were terror-minded people, and his speech therefore dangerous, so was Adler's audience; for, it is hard to find more terror-minded people than Mossad agents. And to those who think that Adler's advocacy can only fall on deaf ears, I would answer that if Israelis killed their own president for the sin of blocking further land-grabbing through the Oslo accords, why wouldn't they kill the president of the United States for the same reason?

So the question is: why isn't Attorney General Eric Holder—who nowadays constantly defends the merits of the Awlaki killing—blowing up Adler, or arresting him and put him on trial. There are unfortunately several reasons for this state of affairs:

- 1- The Iron Curtain that the Soviet Union had erected served as a mirror for the United States to see and measure its own standards of morality. With the Soviet Union gone, American politicians have more and more taken an imperial stance, believing that they have the right to do as they please and intervene wherever they want.
- 2- With no mirror to gage its own morality, mighty US has been lured into following the example of tiny Israel. If Israel can get away with murder so can the US. If the US Constitution or International Law is an impediment, it should be ignored.
- 3- More importantly, so powerful has gotten the Israeli lobby in the last two decades, that neither Mr. Obama, nor Mr. Holder, nor any other politician would ever dare to lay a finger on the likes of Alder. All they are permitted to do is to blow up Awlaki, or applaud Israel when they blow up innocent scientists or university professors.

By supporting Israel, approving and defending its most egregious crimes, and constantly capitulating before its outrageous demands, the US is losing its soul and the respect that it once enjoyed around the world. The Professor of Constitutional Law who would not respect the rights of Americans to fair trial, would neither respect the 1955 Treaty of Amity between Iran

and the United States, a treaty that, constitutionally, is the Supreme Law of the Land. It either has to be terminated or honored. One cannot have Iran designated as a “friend” by the Supreme Law of the Land, and simultaneously impose sanctions on it for the sake of Israel. A modicum of respect for the sanctity of the written word necessitates the termination of the treaty before imposing sanctions. If the Treaty cannot be terminated, sanctions cannot be imposed either.

By following the example of Israel in lawlessness, the US government is sullyng its own constitution. The US Constitution is the greatest set of rules that man has ever produced. If sullied, it's the soul of America that vanishes, and with it, the hopes of all who believed in the greatness of America.

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