

ilan pappe versus mikado july 2005
July 15, 2005

What May Come After the Evacuation of Jewish Settlers from the Gaza Strip

A Warning from Israel

By URI DAVIS, ILAN PAPPE, and TAMAR YARON

We feel that it is urgent and necessary to raise the alarm regarding what may come during and after evacuation of Jewish settlers from the Gaza Strip occupied by Israel in 1967, in the event that the evacuation is implemented.

We held back on getting this statement published and circulated, seeking additional feedback from our peers. The publication in Ha'aretz (22 June 2005) quoting statements by General (Reserves) Eival Giladi, the head of the Coordination and Strategy team of the Prime Minister's Office, motivated us not to delay publication and circulation any further. Confirming our worst fears, General (Res.) Eival Giladi went on record in print and on television to the effect that "Israel will act in a very resolute manner in order to prevent terror attacks and [militant] fire while the disengagement is being implemented" and that "If pinpoint response proves insufficient, we may have to use weaponry that causes major collateral damage, including helicopters and planes, with mounting danger to surrounding people."

We believe that one primary, unstated motive for the determination of the government of the State of Israel to get the Jewish settlers of the Qatif (Katif) settlement block out of the Gaza Strip may be to keep them out of harm's way when the Israeli government and military possibly trigger an intensified mass attack on the approximately one and a half million Palestinians in the Gaza Strip, of whom about half are 1948 Palestine refugees.

The scenario could be similar to what has already happened in the past - a tactic that Ariel Sharon has used many times in his military career - i.e., utilizing provocation in order to launch massive attacks.

Following this pattern, we believe that Prime Minister Ariel Sharon and Defence Minister Shaul Mofaz are considering to utilize provocation for vicious attacks in the near future on the approximately one and a half million Palestinian inhabitants of the Gaza Strip: a possible combination of intensified state terror and mass killing. The Israeli army is not likely to risk the kind of casualties to its soldiers that would be involved in employing ground troops on a large scale in the Gaza Strip. With General Dan Halutz as Chief of Staff they don't need to. It was General Dan Halutz, in his capacity as Commander of the Israeli Air Force, who authorized the bombing of a civilian Gaza City quarter with a bomb weighing one ton, and then went on record as saying that he sleeps well and that the only thing he feels when dropping a bomb is a slight bump of the aircraft.

The initiators of this alarm have been active for many decades in the defence of human rights inside the State of Israel and beyond. We do not have the academic evidence to support our feeling, but given past behavior, ideological leanings and current media spin initiated by the Israeli government and military, we believe that the designs of the State of Israel are clear, and we submit that our educated intuition with matters pertaining to the defence of human rights has been more often correct than otherwise.

We urge all those who share the concern above to add their names to ours and urgently give this alarm as wide a circulation as possible.

Circulating and publishing this text may constitute a significant factor in deterring the Israeli government, thus protecting the Palestinian population in the Gaza Strip from this very possible catastrophe and contributing to prevent yet more war crimes from occurring.

Please sign, circulate, and publish this alarm without delay!

Please send notification of your signature to Tamar Yaron tiyaron@hazorea.org.il

WE WOULD ALSO APPRECIATE RECEIVING NOTIFICATION IF THE ALARM WAS PUBLISHED IN ANY MEDIA AND/OR IF IT WAS SENT TO A GROUP DISTRIBUTION LIST.

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Wrong Analysis, Wrong Initiative By Michael (Mikado) Warschawski 25.7.2005

A few days ago, I received through my email, a new political statement initiated by well-known figures of the Israeli anti-colonial movement. The fact that one of the signators was Ilan Pappé made me almost sign the statement without reading it. For Ilan is, in my eyes, one of the most clever progressive Israeli intellectuals, with whom, in the recent years, I have had very few, if any, disagreements. Fortunately, I got a phone call from a friend, asking my opinion about the statement, which she considered very problematic. Before answering her, I had to read it more carefully.

I did, and decided not to sign, because this statement is doubly a mistake: both in its analysis and in its practical implications.

In the statement titled "Raising the Alarm—What May Come After Evacuation of Jewish Settlers From the Gaza Strip," one can read:

"We believe that one primary, unstated motive for the determination of the government of the State of Israel to get the Jewish settlers of the Qatif (Katif) settlement block out of the

Gaza Strip may be to keep them out of harm's way when the Israeli government and military possibly trigger an intensified mass attack on the approximately one and a half million Palestinians in the Gaza Strip, of whom about half are 1948 Palestine refugees. The scenario could be similar to what has already happened in the past—a tactic that Ariel Sharon has used many times in his military career—i.e., utilizing provocation in order to launch massive attacks.”

Wrong: the reason for the evacuation of a few thousands settlers from the Gaza Strip is to help in creating a “Gazastan,” part of the old Sharon plan of “cantonization of the occupied territories.” The unilateral redeployment from Gaza is part of a broader and extremely coherent political project, the objectives of which are well summarized by Yehudith Harel and Yaakov Manor, in their answer to the above mentioned statement:

“[...] 1) To improve positions and shorten the border [...] i.e. a tactical military redeployment;

2) To weaken international pressure, and to obtain international green light for the perpetuation of the Israeli control of the settlements blocs, and the lands which are on western side of the wall;

3) To strengthen among the Israeli public the idea that there is no partner for negotiation [...].

4) To make a joke of the Palestinian Authority institutions;

5) To create a trauma among the Israeli public, by pretending that the redeployment from Gaza is the maximum of compromise possible with the Palestinians, and that any additional compromise will provoke a terrible civil war;

6) [...] To continue the construction of the wall and settlements in the West Bank [...].”

These are the objectives of Ariel Sharon's redeployment plan, and definitely not to massacre thousands of Palestinians. Identifying the political objectives of our enemies is of crucial importance, if indeed we want to understand the politics we are denouncing and trying to struggle against.

Will the planned redeployment be implemented? No one can guarantee it, but Sharon is definitely interested in doing it, for the above mentioned reasons.

Will it include military repression and even massacres of Palestinian civilians? Unfortunately, it cannot be excluded, and one should be extremely vigilant threats coming from the Israeli senior officers and to every move of the Israeli occupation forces, before, during and after the unilateral redeployment.

Our main task, however, is not to “warn against the worse scenario,” but to identify what the Israeli government intends to realize under the smokescreen of the unilateral redeployment. is intended to remain hidden, i.e. accelerating the colonization of the West Bank and cantonizing the Palestinians behind the Wall.

Locally - the priority of the anti-occupation forces should be to denounce and to fight against the settlement policy, and the new Israeli consensus in support of the annexation of the ‘settlement blocs.’ Internationally, to demand from the international community institutions—the UN, the EU, the Quartet, the governments etc. To impose on Israel an immediate and total freeze on settlements activities, including the wall and the bypass roads, and to establish, under the auspices of the UN, an International Settlements Freeze Watch, mandated to implement this freeze.

This is the only answer to Sharon’s long-term political plan, and definitely not to highlight brutal threats of a military general or a politician, aimed to terrorize the Palestinian people as well as to divert our attention from the strategic goals of the Israeli establishment.