The Suffering of the Palestinians Continues and the World Simply Watches

One of the world’s great enduring myths, persisted in by multiple political leaders, is the two-state solution in Israel – Palestine. The State of Israel was created in 1948, not least as a form of compensation for what had happened to the Jewish people in World War II.

At the time of its creation, the bulk of the land in what became Israel was Palestinian. Since then, there has been a steady expansion of Israeli territory with a corresponding diminution of the land occupied and controlled by the Palestinians. The current out surge of violence in the region was precipitated by continuing Israeli occupation, or perhaps theft would be a better word, of Palestinian land.

This has been an enduring action since at least 1948. The 1967 war between Palestinian and Israeli forces resulted in a major land grab by Israel. Not only did they take vast quantities of Palestinian land, they also occupied the Syrian territory of the Golan Heights.

It is a fundamental principle of international law that land seized in warfare may not be retained by the occupying power once the conflict is over. This has been completely ignored by Israel, that shows no intention of ever vacating Syrian land that they seized in the war.

One does not have to look very far to find the reasons for the Israeli recalcitrance. It is the support that the United States provides to Tel-Aviv, as it has done throughout the entire existence of the State of Israel, and unqualified support for each and every action by that government. The United States has never been reluctant to use it veto
power in the United Nations Security Council to prevent any effective action against Israel, regardless of the actions of the latter.

The current war provides a perfect example of history repeating itself. Some largely ineffective Palestinian rockets fired at Israel have been met with a massive response. More than 200 Palestinian schools for example have been destroyed, with the standard Israeli response to criticism being that the buildings were actually used as bases by the Hamas protesters.

The likelihood of these schools ever being rebuilt is virtually zero. A lack of educational opportunities can be added to the list of indignities and disadvantages these children now face and that will deleteriously affect their future.

The response in the West has been uniformly the same. On the one hand its leaders call for calm and a cessation of the fighting. That is a pointless plea as the fighting will never stop in any lasting sense as long as the destruction of Palestinian buildings continues, as does the continuation of the theft of Palestinian territory.

The other repeated claim by Western leaders is for the “two State” solution to be given effect. This is one of the great lies perpetrated by the West. The Israeli’s have no intention of ever allowing a two-state solution. That has been blindingly obvious since at least the 1967 war. Every time the topic is raised in international forums, the plea is always the same: the solution is the two-state state solution.

If that were ever remotely true, steps would have been taken in recent decades. Instead, what has happened? Not a day goes by without Israeli settlers taking possession of yet more Palestinian land and homes. There has been a relentless repetition of this process for several decades. Still the world’s political leaders refer to the two-state solution as being the answer.

One seriously wonders what planet they are living on. Are they incapable of seeing what is happening before their very eyes? Do decades of theft of Palestinian land not pass a message to the world? That message is unmistakably clear. Israel will continue to steal Palestinian land. In that they have the political and moral support of the United States and with that support assured there is absolutely no incentive for the Israelis to ever change or modify their behaviour.

The pattern of Israeli conduct has long been obvious. Apart from the continual theft of Palestinian territories and the unlawful occupation of the Syrian Golan Heights, Israel for many years occupied a significant portion of Lebanese territory. The retreat from Lebanon in 2000, having occupied its territory since the war in 1982 was a rare and thus far unmatched retreat from occupied territory.

Even in the parts that are still occupied by the Palestinians, there are severe restrictions on the ability of the occupants to lead normal lives. They are subject to constant restrictions by the Israelis, including the right to fish in the waters off their coast. These restrictions have also continued for many years, with barely a word of protest from the West.

It would be totally unrealistic to expect any two-state solution coming to fruition in the foreseeable future, the constant comments by the world’s political leaders notwithstanding. What then is the solution? It is frankly impossible to see any viable solution emerging in the foreseeable future. Israeli behaviour is not going to change as long as they have the political support of the Americans, and one cannot see an end to that support.

There is no other land that the Palestinians could occupy and call their own, and why would they seek such a solution? The Palestinian people occupied Palestine for hundreds of years before the State of Israel was imposed upon them. If there is to be a solution to the problem it will have to commence with the withdrawal of western support for the State of Israel. That withdrawal will have to include the cessation of the several billion dollars a year in financial support, and a similar cessation in the political support extended to them in the United Nations and elsewhere.

Frankly, it is difficult to see the West taking any such actions. The trauma of the Palestinians will therefore continue, representing one of the great failures of Western politics in modern times. The Palestinians deserve better. They are unlikely to get it.

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