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JERUSALEM TERROR: PREDICTABLE “SPONTANEITY”

Gerald Steinberg

For over sixty years, campaigns of incitement and hatred have taught Palestinians to use violence against Israel, and as a response to each wave is developed, a new tactic is found. The excuses change according to the climate, moving from Palestinian refugee claims, economic rationalizations, “occupation and settlement” (after the 1967 war), false claims of “war crimes”, etc., but the underlying strategy of “armed struggle” and “resistance” remains steady.

The most recent wave has taken the form of hit-and-run attacks in Jerusalem’s streets, as Palestinian terrorists find it more difficult to carry explosives across the separation barrier. Two deadly assaults involved bulldozers used for construction, and on September 21, the third such attack took place – in this case, the “militant” (in Reuters-speak) plowed a passenger car into a group of pedestrians at high speed. These attacks, as well as a murderous rampage in the Rav Kook yeshiva, were carried out by East Jerusalem Arabs who live inside the barrier and do not have to cross the IDF check points.

Although the attacks are described as spontaneous individual outbursts, and no organization has been found to be involved, they are part of the constant pattern of hatred and terror aimed at Israeli and Jews. The armistice that ended the 1948 Independence War was followed by the beginning of infiltrations by Fedayeen based in Jordan and Egypt, who attacked Israeli civilians nearby. When these were halted, the attacks led by Arafat’s PLO shifted to the Jordanian-occupied West Bank, (until 1967), to Jordan itself (until 1970), and from there to Lebanon. More recently, when IDF operations such as Defensive Shield and the construction of a security barrier ended the suicide bombing campaign (misnamed “the second intifada”), rocket barrages started from Gaza. And after Israeli strikes led the Hamas leadership in Gaza to impose a temporary cease-fire, the hit-and-run assaults began in Jerusalem.

As the latest attacks demonstrate, Palestinians are capable of reading the signals and acting on their own, with whatever weapons are most readily available. This may be a rifle, a suicide belt filled with explosives, rockets assembled in Gaza, a bulldozer, or a BMW. The steady incitement plays a central role, including Palestinian television programming preaching the virtues of martyrdom and the glory of fighting the Zionist enemy. As a result, the isolated action may appear to be spontaneous, but the foundation and preparations are never far away.

Palestinians also recognize that the United Nations and the powerful non-government organizations claiming to promote human rights rarely respond to terror, in contrast to their shrill condemnations of Israeli responses. In the Second Lebanon War, and in recent months, the Gaza rocket attacks, the statements and campaigns by Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, B’tselem, Alternatives (based in Montreal and funded in part by the Canadian government) and others focused primarily on falsely accusing Israel of “war crimes”.

If Israel were to take steps to deter or defend against these attacks, such as destroying the houses of the terrorists, or preventing Palestinian residents of East Jerusalem from entering the city with their cars, the accusations of “racism” and “collective punishment” would follow immediately. For Palestinians and their supporters, all Israeli responses to terror are illegitimate.

To defeat this strategy, and end terror in its different forms, this incitement must end. The moderate Palestinian leaders who are credited with negotiating peace must move clearly and decisively to stop the parallel demonization and delegitimization of Israel in the United Nations, particularly in the context of the Human Rights Council. If Palestinian officials continue to use the discredited Durban process to use of terms such as “apartheid”, all aid to the Palestinian Authority and its NGOs should be cut off.

The Canadian government, which has recently granted another large aid budget to the Palestinians, can set an important example. Unless the incitement ends, terror will continue, this money will be wasted, and there will never be Palestinian economic development, peace or regional stability.

Gerald M. Steinberg is Executive Director of NGO Monitor and Chair of Political Science at Bar Ilan University.