

Gaza Attack: A Preemptive Strike Against Peace

by Jeffrey Steinberg

Jan. 2—In January 2008, this author circulated a memo, warning that Israeli factions had begun to plan for a bombardment of the Hamas government in Gaza, and that the attack would likely occur before the end of the year. The memo read, in part:

“I received a report on Jan. 15, 2008, from an Israeli source with close ties to Olmert inner circles. I pass it along, with interest in any thoughts or feedback.

“Following the Bush visit to Israel, the Israeli security cabinet met and approved, in principle, major military strikes into Gaza to uproot Hamas. A number of factors will determine whether or not this actually happens.

“First, the Winograd Commission, investigating the July 2006 Lebanon war, issues its final report and recommendations on Jan. 30. The Commission has already said it will not call for Olmert’s resignation, but a harsh finding, pointing to his failures, above all others, could precipitate a government crisis. . . .

“[Defense Minister Ehud] Barak would prefer that the [Ehud] Olmert government remain in power through November. He is pushing the Gaza incursions, and more. The plan would be for Israeli forces to move in to Gaza in force, but also be alert for action from Hezbollah. In that case, the IDF [Israeli Defense Force] has prepared for a new Lebanon war, this time extending into Syria. Barak needs a big military success, to take back the Prime Minister post. Bibi [Likud bloc leader Benjamin Netanyahu], for his own reasons, would

prefer to see the Olmert government fall in the immediate wake of the Winograd findings, because right now, he is polling well ahead of every other candidate to be the next Prime Minister. Then he could have the war option on his watch.

“The Gaza plan also considers the possibility of Iran taking some kind of action in support of Hamas, which would serve as a possible ‘Plan C’ trigger for combined Israeli-American military actions against Iran; actions that have been otherwise stalled due to strong Pentagon and CIA opposition. This was reflected in the National Intelligence Estimate [concluding that Iran had halted its nuclear weapons program in 2003], and more recent efforts by Admirals Mullen and Fallon to get some kind of rules of engagement agreement with Iran, to assure that no new incidents in the Strait of Hormuz lead to a direct confrontation ‘by accident.’

“While Bush was promoting a ‘final two-state solution’ in his talks in Israel and Palestine, it may be the case that the one-year timetable involves these planned Israeli strikes against Gaza. So in Bush’s jaded logic, shared by some in Israel, the path to peace is along the road of war. . . .”

The events of the past week conform precisely to this January 2008 report from a qualified Israeli source, and speak volumes about the fraud of the Israeli government claims that the ongoing IDF assault on Gaza is in retaliation for the end of the ceasefire, or recent rocket attacks into Israel, or any other “event-driven”

explanations for the brutal Israeli bombardment of the Gaza Strip.

LaRouche: The Only ‘Threat’ Is Peace

On Dec. 30, 2008, Lyndon LaRouche issued a blunt assessment of the Israeli action, characterizing it as a strike against the “threat” of peace. LaRouche denounced the Israeli military action as an “act of supreme insanity” that could lead to the destruction of Israel altogether. “The idea that Israel can defeat the Palestinians by the kind of military brutality that we have seen over the past 72 hours is the height of insanity,” LaRouche declared. “It is the same insanity that led Israel to attack Lebanon in July 2006, but this time, having seen the consequences of that Lebanon fiasco, it is far more insane.”

LaRouche thoroughly rejected the widely circulated Israeli argument that Israel faces an existential threat from Iran, and that the attack on Gaza is aimed at destroying Iran’s Hamas assets, which pose a threat of asymmetric war against the population of Israel. “The only ‘threat’ to Israel is an outbreak of peace. There is no credible threat of war against Israel.”

LaRouche addressed the deeper issue that has locked the entire Southwest Asian region in tragedy for the past hundred years: “The disease afflicting those Israeli leaders who sanctioned this military action is the Sykes-Picot mentality. They have become so accustomed to playing the role of pawns in the British imperial divide-and-conquer games in the region, that they have lost the ability to think in terms of their own self-interests.

“With the incoming Obama Administration in Washington, after eight years of Bush-Cheney madness, we have a genuine opportunity to achieve a peace agreement between Israel and Syria—right away. It could be accomplished on the first afternoon that President Obama is in office. And a Syria-Israel peace deal would immediately be followed by an agreement involving Lebanon. This would dramatically change the dynamic in the entire region, and would set the only conditions for a truly just and viable two-state solution between Israel and the Palestinians.

“Such an eruption of peace,” LaRouche continued, “would pose an existential threat to those in the region who remain locked in the Sykes-Picot logic.”

The Sykes-Picot Treaty of 1916, between Britain and France, divided the territory of the former Ottoman Empire between the two colonial powers, and set in motion a perpetual conflict along religious, ethnic, and

tribal lines. Both the major Zionist movements, particularly the Jabotinskyite “Revisionists,” and the Muslim Brotherhood, were creations of the Sykes-Picot arrangements.

While focussing the bulk of his harsh words on the Israelis for the murderous assault into Gaza, LaRouche also noted that some of the Hamas leadership, who are leading figures within the Muslim Brotherhood, are prone to the same self-destructive insanity, that only feeds into the climate of perpetual conflict. “Perhaps this explains why at least a faction of Hamas leaders apparently rejected efforts by the Egyptian government and others to maintain the ceasefire with Israel, until after the Bush-Cheney Administration had left office.”

“Isn’t it time to bring an end to this madness? We have a unique opportunity, right now, to reach an historic peace agreement between Israel and Syria and Lebanon,” LaRouche concluded. “Such an agreement would rapidly lead to a just solution to the Palestine crisis, and that would bring an end to the tyranny of Sykes-Picot, that has crippled this region for the past century. The fact that certain people in Israel, and leading circles in London feel gravely threatened by such an eruption of peace, cannot be an excuse for inaction.”

LaRouche also emphasized that the events in Gaza cannot be separated from other Anglo-Saudi provocations around the globe, all directed at creating a mess for the incoming Obama Administration. The Nov. 26-29 attacks in Mumbai, India; the destabilization of the African continent, from Sudan, to Somalia, to Zimbabwe; and the intensifying narco-insurgency on the U.S. southern border with Mexico, LaRouche asserted, are all part of a single effort, emanating from London, to sink the Obama Administration before the new executive team assumes office. LaRouche explained:

“The Anglo-Dutch faction, facing an existential collapse of its entire post-Bretton Woods financial system, is hell-bent on the total destruction of the nation-state system, and the imposition of a post-Westphalia global financiers dictatorship. They had their way in Washington for the last eight years of Bush-Cheney, and they have nearly succeeded in destroying the United States. They are not happy with what they have seen so far of the incoming Obama team, and they will stop at nothing to complete the destruction of the United States.

“That,” LaRouche concluded, “is the only context for fully understanding the events in Gaza that are playing out today.”