



A Christian Perspective on Hamas

The October 7, 2023 brutal attack by Hamas terrorists on Israeli children, women and men left the world shocked by its barbarity. Pro-Hamas demonstrators across Great Britain, Europe and the United States celebrated the attack by chanting “From the river to the sea, Palestine will be free.” This chant for the annihilation of Israel from the Jordan River to the Mediterranean Sea summarizes the fanaticism of Hamas and many of its Western followers.

These events elicit shock and fear that conflict in the Middle East is never-ending and could suck America into another regional quagmire or worse.

For the Christian reader—including most of our readers of the *Mindszenty Report*—one observation is clear: Hamas is waging a religious war against Jews and Christians in the native land of Jesus Christ, as well as many Muslims deemed “infidels.” Hamas’s target in the October 7 attack were Jews in Israel, but Hamas has not hesitated to kill rival Palestinians. In Gaza, Hamas has repressed rival Islamic factions and a small population of Palestinian Christians, who numbered 3,000 when Hamas came to power in 2007 and today total only 1,000.

Hamas can be described as “pro-Palestinian” only in the sense that they have ruthlessly seized power in the name of the Palestinian people, while killing, arresting, imprisoning and attacking Hamas’s enemies. Hamas opposes Palestinian leadership, Fatah, in the West Bank. Since taking power in Gaza in 2005, Hamas has systematically attacked and killed opposition parties and leaders. (Some of these parties were even more extremist than Hamas.) After public protests in 2019 about living conditions, including a 70 percent unemployment rate for youth, Hamas arrested dozens of individuals, including activists, journalists and human rights workers.

At the core of Hamas’s ideology is an extremist religious belief that Islam will triumph through the eradication of

every other religious group unless the latter convert to Hamas’s version of Islam. It begins with the elimination of Israel, then proceeds to the entire Middle East, finally ending in an apocalyptic struggle between the forces of Allah and the godless West. When Islamic fanatics describe the United States as the Great Satan, they mean it literally.

Funding Terrorism

Hamas makes little pretense about its radical agenda, so *why have the presidential administrations of Barack Obama and Joe Biden allowed massive U.S. and international aid to flow into Gaza?*

From 2014 to 2020, United Nations agencies spent nearly \$4.5 billion in Gaza. Just in 2020 the U.N. spent \$600 million. These funds were supposedly directed to aid Palestinian refugees in Gaza who make up three-fourths of a total population of 2.3 million squished into 141 square miles. In addition to U.N. money, Qatar has provided \$1.3 billion since 2012, nominally for construction, health services and agriculture. In 2014-2020, Germany and other European countries provided about \$80 million for proposed water projects (never completed) in addition to their contributions to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA).¹

In 2018, President Donald Trump ended nearly all aid to the Palestinians, including the West Bank and Gaza. Trump sought to pressure Palestinians and other Arab states to commit to recognition of Israel as a legitimate state.²

Promptly after Biden’s inauguration, the Biden administration announced that it was renewing aid to the West Bank and Gaza, including \$75 million through the U.S. Agency for International Development specifically for economic and development assistance in the West Bank and Gaza; and \$201 million in humanitarian assistance through UNRWA. This brings to \$618 million the U.S.

contribution to UNRWA by July 2022.³ UNRWA's total budget for 2021 and 2022 is respectively \$1.5 billion and \$1.6 billion, with the United States contributing about a third.⁴ Biden made a special trip to Palestine to announce a series of further initiatives that included \$618 million in aid to the West Bank and Gaza.

Where did much of this money go? Hamas used the funds to build an extensive network of tunnels to house a command headquarters, weapons and fighters. Water pipes were converted to rocket launchers and mortars used in the attack on Israel.⁵ As billions of dollars came into Gaza for humanitarian relief, the people of Gaza suffered from an overall unemployment rate of close to 50 percent, and 80 percent of the people lived in poverty.

Long before the October 7 attack on Israel, European and American military and intelligence experts raised questions about Hamas directing these funds into its military operations.⁶

The Terrible Iran Deal

The Obama and Biden administrations have suffered from combined ignorance and arrogance, believing that decades of problems in the Middle East can be solved if only U.S. relations with Iran could be repaired. Iran is one of Hamas's biggest financial backers, with direct links to Hezbollah in southern Lebanon.

Obama's greatest gambit was the signing of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, reached by Iran, the U.S. and several world powers in July 2015.⁷ In the agreement, Iran promised to allow U.N inspectors into its nuclear sites and to dismantle much of its nuclear facilities. Iran promised that it was not seeking to build a nuclear bomb.

In exchange, the U.S. and its European allies agreed to the transfer of \$100 million in cash and the lifting of \$400 billion in sanctions, in addition to the unfreezing of \$100 billion worth of Iranian assets frozen by sanctions. Who can forget photos of pallets of American dollars clear-wrapped ready to be sent by jet to Iran?⁸ Then Iran and the Obama administration orchestrated a careful media campaign to persuade the Western public just how good the deal was for world peace. This pro-Iranian network still exists in the Western media.⁹

Iran broke the deal nearly immediately, leaving the Obama administration with egg on its face. Coming into office, Trump ended the agreement and new sanctions were

imposed on Iran. Trump's policies were in turn reversed by the Biden administration, which began talks with Iran for a new nuclear deal. Biden's negotiators, however, found the Iran negotiators intransigent. Talks fell through. In October 2023, the Biden administration imposed new sanctions on Iran's ballistic missile and drone programs.

Even more damning for the Biden administration is that *both the Obama nuclear deal and the renewed talks were headed by Robert Malley, who is now on leave after it was alleged that he passed classified material to Iran.* His Iranian-born aide in these negotiations, Ariane Tabatabai, remains in her position as a Pentagon senior policy adviser, although the report that caught her boss, Malley, suggested that she was working on the behalf of Iran as well.¹⁰

Hamas Should Not Fool Anyone

Why did Biden, at the outset of his administration, renew large-scale funding to Hamas? From its inception Hamas openly sought to wage a holy war against Israel and the West. Hamas arose as a direct reaction to attempts by the U.S. to reach accords with the Palestinian leadership found in the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and its successor Fatah following the death of PLO leader Yasser Arafat in 2004. Hamas broke with Fatah when the PLO renounced violence by signing the Oslo I Accord in 1993. Hamas's goal was to create a religious organization as an alternative to the secular PLO.¹¹

*The ideological goals of Hamas are boldly and primitively stated in its founding document, "The Covenant of the Islamic Resistance Movement," issued in August 1988.*¹² The Hamas Covenant reveals that the organization is fanatically Islamic with a global focus to wage war on Jews, Christians and Muslims who do not adhere to their views of Islam, calling the latter Muslims "transgressors" who are "smitten with vileness wheresoever they are found. . . ." Jews and Christians are labeled infidels. Furthermore, the charter clearly aligns Hamas with the Muslim Brotherhood, the largest ultra-Muslim movement.

Hamas projects a paranoid mindset of a global Jewish conspiracy. Article 22 of the Hamas Covenant states: "With their money, [the Jews] took control of the world media, news agencies, the press, publishing houses, broadcasting stations, and others... [The enemies/the Jews] were behind the French Revolution, the Communist revolution and most of the revolutions we hear about... They were behind World War I, when they were able to destroy the

Islamic Caliphate... They were behind World War II, through which they made huge financial gains.”¹³

In January 2006, Palestinian territories—Gaza and the West Bank—held what would be their last democratic election, where Hamas won a plurality (44 percent to the Fatah’s 41 percent). Hamas also gained a strong majority of seats in their parliament. Neither party wanted to share power and after a deal was struck for a unity government, in June 2007 Hamas murdered Fatah members and took total control of the Gaza strip. Surviving members of the opposition fled to the West Bank.

In Gaza, Hamas established an authoritarian Islamic state. The government has imposed a militant Islamic regime, in which women are required to cover themselves. Homosexuals have been publicly executed. Gaza is overcrowded, poverty-stricken and ridden by crime and drugs. Many of the homes in the refugee camps do not have running water, and sewage flows through the streets.¹⁴ Gushers of international aid evidently have not been spent on water or sewer systems.

What Next, Mr. President?

The barbaric attack on Israel on October 7, 2023 was long in preparation. The attack caught Israeli defense forces off guard, even though Israeli intelligence reportedly received some version of the plan a year prior to its launch.¹⁵ Hamas’s surprise attack on southern Israel resulted in the deaths of 1,200 Israeli and foreign nationals, mostly civilians. Hamas fighters slaughtered babies and children, then gleefully raped, mutilated and murdered women, while live-streaming their atrocities and claiming to be victims of Israel.

Can there be any settlement in the Middle East after this? Hamas enjoys considerable popular support among the Palestinians in both Gaza and the West Bank. Polls show that 53 percent of Palestinians believe Hamas is “most deserving of representing and leading the Palestinian people.” Only 14 percent of Palestinians prefer Abbas’s secular Fatah party.¹⁶ Furthermore, Arabs throughout the Mideast show in polling that they overwhelmingly believe Israel should not exist.

Hamas and its allies are hoping to win the hearts of average Arabs throughout the Middle East and the minds of Western youth. While Americans strongly support Israel, a whopping 60 percent of those aged 18-24 think Israel is to blame for the humanitarian crisis. Another poll by Harris-

Harvard reveals that 51 percent of this same ill-informed demographic group believe that Hamas “respects the rights of religious and ethnic minorities like Christians and Jews,” which is obviously false.¹⁷

Hamas’s strategy is to win enough public support in the West to apply pressure on European and American leaders to force Israel to restrain its military campaign to destroy Hamas. Signs of division within the Democratic Party over support for Israel are already apparent. This division is not just between the so-called “Squad” of Democratic Party congressional activists, but within the leadership itself. Former President Obama and some of his aides have publicly criticized Israel’s military actions in Gaza, to the dismay of the Biden administration.¹⁸

Democrats need Muslim voters to carry Michigan and Minnesota in 2024, so they are caught in a bind in expressing full-throated support for Israel’s invasion of Gaza.

Neither Obama nor Biden should be preaching to Israel about how to destroy an enemy that invaded Israel and systematically slaughtered 1,200 men, women and children in heinous war crimes. *Biden’s foreign affairs advisers, specifically Secretary of State Antony Blinken and U.S. National Security Adviser Jake Sullivan, come directly out of the Obama administration and have been wrong time and time again.* These are the “experts” who engineered the disastrous military retreat from Afghanistan that projected American weakness.

Embarrassingly Wrong Advisers

In a spectacularly ill-timed article in the November 2023 *Foreign Affairs* magazine, Jake Sullivan touted Biden’s foreign policy successes, writing that the Middle East “is quieter than it has been for decades.”¹⁹ He posited that “in the face of serious frictions, we have de-escalated crises in Gaza and restored direct diplomacy between the parties in its absence.”²⁰

The Sullivan article went to press right before the October 7 invasion of Israel (after which the online version was updated), but just how wrong can one be and still claim expertise that should be listened to by the president or the public?

Secretary of State Blinken is not any better. While Blinken has placed the U.S. on the side of Israel in its fight with Hamas, Israeli leaders resist his pressure to accept a cease-fire. Blinken came to prominence in the Obama

administration when he was nominated as deputy secretary of state in late 2014. During the Senate confirmation hearings, Blinken was adamantly opposed by Senator John McCain (R-AZ), who lambasted Obama's nominee as "not only unqualified" but "one of the worst selections of a very bad lot [Obama] has chosen." In a later statement, McCain found "Blinken" actually ... dangerous to America and to the young men and women who are fighting and serving it."²¹

Although the U.S. cannot wave a magic wand and end conflict in the Mideast, the Biden administration should stand firmly on the side of Israel, which was attacked. There will be no peace in the Middle East until Israel eliminates Hamas. Moreover, Iran as a major sponsor of Hamas needs to be confronted with a hardline American position. And sending U.S. dollars to Hamas needs to stop, since Hamas spends the money on its war machine instead of on alleviating its people's poverty.

As Christians, whatever our partisan inclinations, we should understand that there is no moral equivalency between Hamas and Israel or between extremist Islam and Christianity. Hamas seeks more than the destruction of Israel. They foster a hate-filled culture of death, and their hatred extends to the entire West. The U.S. should give Israel space to do the hard work of cleaning up its neighborhood.

Attention St. Louis-Area Readers

Please save the date of Sunday, February 18, when we plan to sponsor another lunchtime speaker event at Saint Mary of Victories Church in downtown St. Louis: Laszlo Suhayda has released a book about his family's escape from Hungary in 1956 and will share the moving story with us. Watch your mail for details.

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¹ <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/gaza-strip-hamas-unrwa-palestinians-palestinian-authority-b1979393.html>.

² <https://www.jpost.com/us-elections/why-trumps-jewish-supporters-say-hes-been-a-dream-come-true-on-israel-647869>;
<https://www.newyorker.com/news/dispatch/donald-trumps-legacy-in-israel>.

³ <https://www.unrwa.org/newsroom/official-statements/us-contributions-unrwa-2021-2022-are-key-agency%E2%80%99s-ability-operate>.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ <https://www.quora.com/Gaza-is-plagued-by-poverty-but-Hamas-has-no-shortage-of-cash-Who-is-funding-Hamas>.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ For a good discussion of this deal, see <https://www.cfr.org/background/what-iran-nuclear-deal>.

⁸ <https://aclj.org/executive-power/president-obamas-plane-full-of-cash-to-iran-recklessly-endangers-america>.

⁹ <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/deception-and-the-iran-deal-did-the-obama-administration-mislead-america-or-did-the-rhodes-profile/><https://townhall.com/columnists/struanstevenson/2023/12/09/iran-sinister-web-of-influence-in-the-west-n2632025>.

¹⁰ <https://hotair.com/jazz-shaw/2023/11/13/we-still-have-an-iranian-mole-inside-the-pentagon-n592174>.

¹¹ <https://www.eurasiareview.com/27112023-hamas-the-origins-and-rise-of-the-radical-palestinian-movement-part-i-analysis/>.

¹² https://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/hamas.asp.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ <https://www.eurasiareview.com/27112023-hamas-the-origins-and-rise-of-the-radical-palestinian-movement-part-i-analysis/>.

¹⁵ <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/11/30/world/middleeast/israel-hamas-attack-intelligence.html>.

¹⁶ <https://apnews.com/article/hamas-middle-east-science-32095d8e1323fc1cad819c34da08fd87>

¹⁷ <https://www.politico.com/news/2023/12/08/biden-israel-hamas-response-poll-00130832>;

<https://pjmedia.com/michaelcantrell/2023/11/21/new-poll-reveals-young-americans-sympathetic-to-hamas-terrorists-n4924126>

¹⁸ <https://abcnews.go.com/Politics/nobodys-hands-clean-obama-democrats-break-biden-support/story?id=104657266orists-n4924126>.

¹⁹ <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/united-states/sources-american-power-biden-jake-sullivan>.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ <https://www.foxnews.com/media/blinken-blasted-lecturing-israelis-john-mccain-warning-diplomat-resurfaces>.

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