

**War Crimes in Gaza and the Zionist Fifth Column in America**

James Petras (*Atlanta: Clear Day Books, 2010*)

James Petras is a teacher and humanist of a rare, encyclopaedic, analytical intelligence. He has long been recognised as one of the USA's foremost critical social scientists. I would go further, and readers of this journal would concur: his voluminous creations forged over decades have been the highest-quality journalism and scholarship. Is it not obvious that he, and the noble causes world-wide that he has championed, should be the object of obloquy, loathing and persecution by the adversaries of all liberation struggles?

The memory of the ongoing crimes of what I have called the "Zio-fascist state," depicted with matchless brio in this work, will point to acts of colonial bestiality among the most atrocious in humankind's tortured history. Long after the tribunals of history have met and proclaimed their verdict of guilty for war crimes in Gaza, the scale and horrors of these crimes will neither be forgiven nor forgotten. This book is a classic, not only in the history of colonialism but because it reveals the indomitable spirit of resistance of the Palestinians that have stood up and fought back, at times with little more than sticks, stones and their bare fists against their oppressor.

The parturition of Israel was one of blood and torture, imprisonment and mass murder. The start of this genocidal thrust is *Al Naqba* (1948) that marked the advent of this mass pillage and expulsion of hundreds of thousands of Palestinians from their native lands in a struggle that is still unfinished and which has endured for almost seven decades. A grisly process that can only be eradicated by the end of this ignominious occupation; and not the fake quest and wicked charade of what has been brandished "a negotiated settlement." The masters of the Zio-fascist state are not alone in their crimes and have been abetted by the USA, the European Union, Arab states, notably Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Jordan and the Arab League.

The creation of Greater Israel, which is one of the quintessential pivots of Zionist ideology, owes its provenance to the Nazi-inspired racialist doctrine of the *Herrenvolk*, or the master race, among whose paramount practitioners were Heydrich and Himmler. In this perspective, the Zio-fascist state that labels itself Israel and considers all Arabs as the *Untermensch*, whose lands and people are legitimate plunder, stands forth as the *legatus apostolicus* of Nazidom. It is, therefore, not an aberration that Rabbi Obadiah Yosef, one of the country's most revered clerics in his sermon for *Rosh Hashanah* could clamour for the death of the Palestinian political leadership. To this is added a cry for the annihilation of all Arabs and Palestinians who are "evil enemies" of Israel.

The findings of B'Tselem, an Israeli human rights group, remind us of the scale of the land grabs, euphemistically peddled as "settlements" (see <http://www.btselem.org/English/Settlements/>). This agony has not run its course. Most of these "settlements" are being funded by the "donations" of Zionist finance capital which, with the blessing of the US Treasury, are tax deductible.

Excluding the huge German reparations, since 1950, Israel has received yearly some US\$5 billion or around US\$300 billion over six decades, and that in a land of about six million. Such massive and unrelenting accumulation, combined with the exploitation of an undifferentiated mass of Palestinian labour toiling for subsistence

wages, have aided the fortunes of Israeli capitalism, which is firmly meshed with global imperialism.

Not surprisingly, Israel's per capita GDP is now 65% of its US counterpart and growing faster than in the USA. Thanks to its US financial moguls, the Zio-fascist state is in the ranks of the OECD rich countries. It is, as George W. Bush once jubilantly proclaimed, a *de facto* member of the European Union as well as NATO.

I have underscored these salient facts that will enrich our understanding of what Petras baptises as the "Zionist Fifth Column" in America. His creation revolves around what he designates as the "Zionist Power Configuration." The categorisation is accurate but I would have preferred my "Zio-fascist complex" so as to throw into sharper relief the horrors of its being.

The operative word is "fascist" for, as Fidel Castro scathingly noted at the time of the genocidal assault against the people of Gaza, Israel is a brazen Fascist monster. The mobilisation of its power in the USA is by elected and appointed Zionist officialdom. A key to its power is that it is a mass grassroots organisation buttressed by the financial support of scores of millionaires, dozens of billionaires and a mass media that is its handmaiden. In many ways it has paralyzed the US Congress and the Executive. It influences Treasury, State, the Pentagon and all leading Congressional committees that relate to Israeli expansionism. This phalanx not only acts as a foreign agent of Israel now, but has overtly done so over the last five decades. The career profiles of its professionals that are the quintessence of the "Fifth Column" are to be found in every nook and cranny of Wall Street, the globe-girdling corporate law firms, the insurance industry, the big three stock market-rating agencies, the big three accounting firms and the media. As the author makes clear, pro-Israel career patterns and projections of power have established a hegemony of US public life.

It would be difficult to do justice to the prodigious research which sheds light on the interlocking directorates in every domain over which the "Fifth Column" has exercised its influence. In understanding the parameters of the system it must not be ignored that the ramifications of the Zionist behemoth is by no means solely confined to the US political oligarchy. Indeed its tentacles are globalised, notably in all the major EU countries.

There is an overarching unity in Petras' entire work. The expanse of his reach is not limited to a single continent but is global. In short, his all-encompassing and militant internationalism exposes the logic and madness of imperialism and its works. When the war criminals in Israel are ultimately flung to the tribunal of justice, this work will be a salutary reminder of the scale of their crimes.

As his adversaries have long recognised, Petras is a social scientist of a special breed. He is one whose moral and impassioned commitments and militancy merge with his revolutionary zeal. It is this that demarcates him from the academic herd of bourgeois scholarship whose dribblings are wedded to the perpetuation of the prevailing propertied order. And, hence, the bulk of those who market themselves as social scientists have pursued trajectories that have transformed them, directly and indirectly, into the apparatchiks of imperialism. Petras has contemptuously swept aside the trappings of that prostituted academic market place. Hence, Petras stands in the forefront of all struggles for a better world. A world in which the terrors of class rule, exploitation and social injustices spawned by capitalism and imperialism

will be consigned to the rubbish can of history. What matters in this context is not the savagery and duration of the battle but the steel-like conviction that ultimately the forces of evil can be brought to book.

It is the bold uncompromising marshalling and analysis of these interlocking facts that helps to explain how the US oligarchy, subjected to the assaults of an omnipresent Zionist “Fifth Column,” have become the major accomplice of Israeli war crimes.

Since this book went to press the preparations for the obliteration of Iran has gathered speed. Almost unanimously, the Congress has demanded even more crippling sanctions, as though the already existing body of criminal sanctions and embargos were inadequate. The vote in Congress was galvanized amongst others by the American Israeli Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) and acclaimed by all the major American Jewish organizations.

The upsurge of Zionism, as Petras notes, is a virulent form of identity linked to a foreign power. Its overwhelmingly successful hegemonic inroads have been abetted by the abject capitulation of the US ruling class. The US political complex and successive administrations with no exception have become part of the interlaced web of Zionist power that extends into every nook and cranny of all sectors of American capitalism.

In conclusion, it is to be hoped that this scholarship of crimes against humanity will be translated and be read by many.

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