

Only word-smithing has changed from May 2005-November 2009

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There are no 1967 borders-this is intentional misrepresentation of fact by the PA

Now I, for one, am confused. Palestinian land? According to the oft-reported UN 242 and UN 338 resolutions serving as the basis for territorial claims to this land as well as the "West Bank" i.e., Judea and Samaria, these remain to this day **disputed territories**. Thus, how can one say these are Palestinian lands? There is a linguistic disconnect between statements that this is Palestinian land and what the precise language states within these two UN resolutions. They do **NOT state** that these are anything but disputed territories-note the word territories. Nor is there any language ever mentioning Palestine or Palestinian within these two resolutions. If one took the time to read these carefully, one would realize that this disputed area must be resolved via negotiations-some 42 years later no resolution has occurred. UN resolution 242 states (1):

Withdrawal of Israeli armed forces from territories occupied in the recent conflict: Termination of all claims or states of belligerency and respect for and acknowledgement of the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of every State in the area and their right to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries free from threats or acts of force.

If given this precise language directly from 242, combined with the following statements:

"The British UN Ambassador at the time (Nov. 22,1967), Lord Caradon, who introduced the resolution to the Council, has stated that:

It would have been wrong to demand that Israel return to its positions of June 4, 1967, because those positions were undesirable and artificial. After all, they were just the places where the soldiers of each side happened to be on the day the fighting stopped in 1948. They were just armistice lines. That's why we didn't demand that the Israelis return to them. (2)

The United States' UN Ambassador at the time, former Supreme Court Justice Arthur Goldberg, has stated that:

The notable omissions - which were not accidental - in regard to withdrawal are the words "the" or "all" and the "June 5, 1967 lines" ... the resolution speaks of withdrawal from occupied territories without defining the extent of withdrawal. [This would encompass] less than a complete withdrawal of Israeli forces from occupied territory, inasmuch as Israel's prior frontiers had proved to be notably Insecure."(2)

Then please help me understand the following: President Obama, the leadership of the PA and the world media state that this geographic area is anything but disputed land. Yet, it seems as though our administration has readily accepted that Israel is illegally occupying Palestinian land and therefore not entitled to any of it. Of course this began with former President Bush back in May 2005. In turn have we not changed our policy with respect to an international legally defined dispute? After misrepresenting the facts, on May 27, 2005, the very next day, May 28, 2005 Washington felt a need to once again clarify its position: "The U.S. National Security Council Spokesman said on Friday that the president had not changed his position on the Middle East peace process and that in his meeting he reiterated to the chairman major points from his letter of understanding to Sharon from April 2004 and in other official statements" (3) Words have meaning and can be used as powerful weapons that transform thoughts into "on the ground" actions. Palestinian leaders have used words and language much more effectively than Israel for many years. They understand the importance of media exposure, being first with certain messages that in turn make the 6 pm news- casts. Clarity of thought or historical accuracy is not crucial to the message; getting the words out first to the public is however of paramount importance.

So, with the world stage looking on, the Palestinian leader took the opportunity to once again lay claim to all the land the Arabs (not Palestinians) lost to Israel in the 1967 6-day war, including east Jerusalem. Abbas said, " It is time our people, after many decades of suffering and dispossessions, to enjoy living in freedom on their own land. The boundaries of a future Palestinian state should be those that existed before the 1967 war." This of course means east Jerusalem, the West Bank and Gaza. Of course as I have previously pointed out, this is contrary to established international law. Did President Bush use this as an opportunity to clarify the truth? No, rather he said, "Israel needed Palestinian consent to retain land the Arabs lost 38 years ago." Mr. Bush further exacerbated this discussion of territorial integrity by with holding previous support he gave PM Sharon. Let us remember that last year President Bush indicated to a visiting Ariel Sharon that Israel could retain large settlements on the West Bank near Jerusalem.

Understandably Israeli officials became alarmed with what was being said in Washington D.C. on May 27; not to worry, a senior administration official (who refused to be identified) said that President Bush stood by past statements supporting claims to the settlements. Am I the only one confused at this point?

Finally, the confusion reaches an all time high when the discussion of borders is provided. Mr. Bush said explicitly that "any final status agreement must be reached between the two parties, and changes to the 1949 armistice lines must be mutually agreed to." This statement was aimed at assuaging Palestinian concern over his letter to Sharon last year, in which he stated that "in light of new realities on the ground, including already existing major Israeli population centers, it is unrealistic to expect that the outcome of final status negotiations will be a full and complete return to the armistice lines of 1949." So Mr. President what is it? You have now publicly introduced the notion of the 1949 armistice lines as the bargaining point of departure. This comment is now "on the table". The PA did use this statement as the basis for negotiation. Mind you, Mr. Bush

did not clarify the difference between armistice lines and borders. Nor did he offer historical context, as did Lord Caradon with respect to the artificial nature of these lines. Nor did Mr. Bush say that consistent with the agreed upon international legal UN 242, all of these lands are subject to negotiation and both parties, Israel and the PA have rights to these disputed territories. This is the truth.

So, here we are in November of 2009 and the mantra has shifted to the “1967 borders”- Erekat knows full well there are no such borders but he counts on the new Obama Administration to look past this small language event and take a non-position when the UN vote in the Security Council occurs in the coming days/weeks.

““We want the Security Council to declare that the two-state solution is the only option and that it would recognize the state of Palestine on the '67 borders and to live side by side with the State of Israel Palestinian Authority negotiator Saeb Erekat told *The Jerusalem Post* on Tuesday.”⁴

This “linguaging ”is classic Palestinian misdirect-even in a denial they promote a false statement-Erekat has just back tracked on his statement the day before indicating the PA would seek unilaterally the formation of a state. He knew then this would not “play in Peoria” but it did grab one day’s worth of headlines-it did go on offense and once again made Israel “respond/react” to such nonsense-thus, Erekat’s objective number one accomplished. However, he was not through-he knew if he came out with an adjustment to his statement he would once again be on the offense-note how he played the “good one” while promoting a lie-’67 borders-they never existed. Furthermore, the almost all other media printed this statement as if it were the “truth”-score another one for the Palestinian PR machine.

Without reviewing again international law, this writer has done so in multiple other posts as have hundreds of others, allow me once again suggest:

“On 10 June 1967, at the end of six days of fierce fighting in which 776 Israeli soldiers lost their lives, a cease-fire was reached. **Previous cease-fire lines were now replaced by new ones** - the West Bank of the Jordan River, the Gaza Strip, the Sinai Peninsula and a large part of the Golan Heights had come under Israel's control as a result of the war.”⁵

Erekat, all of Fatah and the PA know that these are legally “cease-fire lines” and furthermore they know that until a negotiated agreement is signed they remain so defined. The intentional misdirection of facts aka lies, and the subsequent lack of media responsibility add to the ongoing situations.

I predict that we will see, in the media, yet another distortion. It will read something like this: "President Obama says that Israel must now retreat back to the 1967 borders and thus evacuate all of the West Bank." Note the use of one word, "borders". The PA spokes people will make a one-word change that gives tacit approval for future discussions. The new mantra will be, "The 1967 border or nothing at all."

Yes, words do have meaning and unless we are clear, unless we hold people accountable to their proper use, the lives of millions of people are at stake.

Notes

1. Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "UN Security Council Resolution 242," IMFA website.
2. "What was UN 242," reported on Palestine Facts website.
3. Eldar, Akiva et al "US: Our Position towards Israel is unchanged," Haaretz, May 28, 2005.
4. Jerusalem Post-November 18, 009
5. Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, November, 2009 via Myths and Facts, http://www.mefacts.com/cached.asp?x_id=11939