

UNRWA READER

UNRWA as Obstacle to Peace

Ending UNRWA and Advancing Peace

Israel Not Invited to U.N. Conference on Refugees – June 13, 2004

The Mystery of the Palestinian ‘Refugee’ Monument – July 3, 2012

Ten Talking Points: How to Respond to UNRWA Attacks on Its Critics – March 12, 2013

With Encouragement From a Vatican Official, Israeli Government Finally Denounces a Palestinian School System That Was Introduced More Than 13 Years Ago – January 8, 2014

The U.N.’s Child Death Cult Education – April 6, 2014

UNRWA Spokesman Challenges Our Credibility: We Respond by Challenging the Credibility of UNRWA – April 7, 2014

Refugees from 1948 War are Now Our Responsibility – May 8, 2014

UNRWA Impediment to Peace – May 2014

Pope Set to Tour “Martyr’s Gallery” in UNRWA-Sponsored Club – May 25, 2014

Opinion: How the UNRWA is Blocking Peace and a “Marshall Plan for Gaza” – July 31, 2014

Summer Anti-Semitic Demonstrations – September 3, 2014

A Dispassionate Look at UNRWA – September 24, 2014

Rising Above Personal Attacks, the Time Has Come to Examine UNRWA Policy – December 10, 2014

Letter to Parliament – December 11, 2014

One for the Book of World Records: The Myth of an UNRWA Policy of Peace That Does Not Exist – December 27, 2014

From Teheran to UNRWA: The New US-UNRWA Accord – July 23, 2015

More UNRWA Teachers Promoting Violence on Facebook – September 2015

UNRWA READER (cont'd)

Letter to U.S. Ambassador to Israel – January 26, 2016

Links to Hamas – August 16, 2016

U.S. Aid Admits: We Don't Interfere with Palestinian Terror Curriculum for Kids – August 17, 2016

Is the U.S. Complicit in UNRWA-Hamas Cooperation? – August 17, 2016

Will UNRWA Schools that Operate in Jerusalem be Included in the Crackdown on Incitement? – August 26, 2016

UNRWA Leader Inadvertently Acknowledges There's a Hamas Leader on Its Payroll – March 3, 2017

UNRWA Does Not Have Any Intention of Changing Their Schoolbooks – April 10, 2017

UNRWA Bluff – April 14, 2017

Did UNRWA Really Advocate a Change in Curriculum? – May 5, 2017

Dear President Trump: End UN Refugee Camps Now – May 5, 2017

Lobby to Reform UNRWA Launches in Knesset – July 18, 2017

UN Terror Agency Under Scrutiny by Congress and the Knesset – August 10, 2017

Don't Dismantle UNRWA, Reform Its Policies – August 10, 2017

UNRWA as obstacle to Peace

Speech to Israeli Knesset by David Bedein

Thank you very much for inviting me to the Knesset today to speak about the problems of UNRWA.

Let me begin by saying that the problem with UNRWA runs much deeper than its school curriculum. Even if UNRWA teachers taught only mathematics in their schools, and even if there was no anti-Semitic propaganda disseminated by them, UNRWA would still be a very negative force in this conflict and a very strong obstacle towards peace. Its basic function runs contrary to the possibility of ever achieving peace.

Now, why is UNRWA such a threat to peace? In what ways?

Well, a basic tenet of the peace process is the “Two states for two peoples” solution, meaning that Israel is the nation state of the Jewish people, and the future Palestine would be the nation state of the Palestinian people. Both peoples can exercise their right of self-determination, and this should not be threatened.

So a strong Jewish majority should remain in Israel. Any attempt to change this, or to threaten Israel’s Jewish character, for example by a massive return of Palestinian refugees, is perhaps the surest way to kill any peace agreement: there is overwhelming support in Israel – from Meretz in the Left to the Bayit Yehudi in the Right – that Israel’s nature should be retained.

The international community has accepted that. For example, the Clinton parameters of 2000 call for the resettlement of the Palestinian refugees in Palestine and not in Israel. In fact, no Western country is officially promoting a refugee return or the eradication of Israel.

The Palestinians however insist on their right of return, and show no willingness to forgo or even minimize this demand.

Insisting on the right of 5 million people (no less!) to resettle in Israel – signifies the refusal to accept the outcomes of the 1948 war; and the refusal to accept that the State of Israel is here to stay. It is a symbol of the Arab position that the whole land is theirs.

Now, why is UNRWA a threat? What does UNRWA do that jeopardizes this basic principle of the peace process?

UNRWA in its existence is the strongest agent and promoter of this Palestinian dream that all Palestinian refugees could indeed one day return to Israel, or at least be able to choose if they wish to do so. Again, I am not talking about this or that teacher inciting in class, but about the whole mechanism and function of UNRWA, which is doing everything it can to perpetuate and eternalize this conflict.

In what ways –

First, UNRWA identifies people as refugees without them being refugees at all. It has an unprecedented and unparalleled definition of who is a Palestinian refugee. So there is one definition for Syrian, Bosnian or Afghan refugees – and a separate one for Palestinians. Of the 5 million currently registered as refugees by UNRWA, the overwhelming majority does not meet the international criteria and standards of being a refugee.

Let me explain. Of the 5 million “registered refugees” by UNRWA, some 2 million live in Jordan and are citizens of that country. They were given citizenship in 1950. There is no other refugee in the world – not even one single refugee – who holds a passport and is still considered a refugee. Normally, when a refugee obtains the citizenship of a host country he is no longer considered a refugee. Not in our case. Palestinians in Jordan are both refugees and citizens.

That’s for the 2 million living in Jordan. But what about 2 million more who live in the West Bank and Gaza?

Their situation is very strange: they are considered “refugees from Palestine”, and at the same time they live in Palestine. Again, no other refugee in the world resides in his homeland while retaining the status of refugee. In other cases, these people are called “internally displaced persons” (idp’s), and do not have the right to return to their homes. Palestinians who were displaced in 1948, and settled in the West Bank and Gaza, should never have been considered idp’s in the first place. The world considers Nablus, Hebron and Gaza to be part of Palestine. So how come people residing there are refugees from Palestine?

The only explanation of course is that these people want to resettle in Israel and not in the future state of Palestine. Meaning, again, that they do not accept Israel's right to exist. This is their political vision, not their right. But why should a UN body unjustifiably give them an official stamp and tell them: "go on, keep on dreaming" and tell them that they are in fact entitled to their homes in Israel when it has nothing to do with international law or normal standards? Just to repeat: the overwhelming majority is not entitled to have the status of refugee. So what does it mean? Why did UNRWA grant them this status? It means that UNRWA is a political factor that supports a maximalist vision of the Palestinians.

The international community should not support and facilitate this dream through an unprecedented definition of refugee. And that is exactly what UNRWA is doing and how it is hurting the chances of peace. By giving millions of Palestinians the status of refugee, UNRWA in fact endorses the dream to eradicate Israel.

Another point. UNRWA has also, quite bizarrely in my view, taken upon itself the task of building a national heritage and a collective memory for the Palestinians, by having photo exhibitions, book publications etc., emphasizing their suffering and displacement. Have you ever heard of any other UN body, again – supposedly neutral, taking upon itself to build the national heritage of just one side to the conflict? Well, I haven't.

But it's even worse – because this heritage focuses entirely on the events of 1948 (the so-called Palestinian Nakba) and on the refusal to accept the outcome of that war. The international community acts on the one hand as if it wants to deal with the outcomes of the 1967 war – meaning the territorial issue of the West Bank – but UNRWA is making it impossible for the Palestinians to accept the outcomes of the 1948 war. So on the one hand the international community promotes the two states solution, but on the other hand it promotes the Palestinian dream of eradicating Israel.

And this is the main problem: that UNRWA facilitates and makes it possible for the Palestinians to refuse to recognize Israel.

The international community gives each year more than a billion dollars (that's the annual budget) to an organization that is devoted to a cause which means the end of Israel.

UNRWA gives the Palestinians an official stamp of the international community that their real home is not in Gaza, but in Israel. That their dreams are legitimate, and it never tells them to come to terms with the State of Israel.

If UNRWA really acted as a humanitarian project, and not as a political factor, the Palestinian refugee problem would go back to its natural dimensions, and would be much easier to solve. We should remember that there were some 50 million displaced people in the 1940's, when the Palestinians were displaced, but none of them remains today in that status. They were simply resettled because they came to terms with the outcomes of the respective conflict.

Some people say that supporting UNRWA does not mean endorsing the Palestinian Right of Return, or that Palestinians know that they are not going back to Israel. But this is wishful thinking. A major study by International Crisis Group – not an Israeli advocacy group – discovered that not only do Palestinians view their right of return as sacred; but that they also attribute almost “supernatural significance” to UNRWA as a symbol for international support of their demand.

So to sum it up, I think that the problem with UNRWA is that it facilitates and promotes a maximalist Palestinian vision of massive return and of eradicating the State of Israel. UNRWA encourages millions of Palestinians to keep dreaming on a One Great Palestine, instead of Israel, and the world gives UNRWA a billion dollars each year to promote this idea.

It is precisely those people both in Israel and outside Israel, who are in favor of the “two states” concept, who should understand that maintaining UNRWA as it is, is destructive for the chances of peace.

Ending UNRWA and Advancing Peace

Since the end of the Second World War, millions of refugees have left refugee camps, and refugee status, and moved to countries that accepted them—quickly or slowly—as citizens. Post-World War II Europe was an archipelago of displaced persons and refugee camps, housing 850,000 people in 1947—Czechs, Poles, Lithuanians, Germans, Latvians, Greeks, and many more nationalities. By 1952, all but one of the camps had closed. Hundred of thousands of Jewish refugees from Europe went to Israel after 1948, and then hundreds of thousands more arrived from Arab lands when they were forced to flee after 1956 and 1967. The children and grandchildren of these refugees, born after their arrival, were never refugees themselves; they were from birth citizens of the new land, as their parents had become immediately upon their own arrival. In this process many nations and agencies have played wonderful roles, not least the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

The exception to this refugee story is the Palestinians. In most of the Arab lands to which they fled or travelled after 1948 they were often treated badly, and refused citizenship (with Jordan the major exception) or even the right to work legally. And instead of coming under the protection of UNHCR, they had a special agency of their own, UNRWA, the UN Relief and Works Agency. In the decades of its existence, it has not solved or even diminished the Palestinian refugee problem; instead it has presided over a massive increase in its size, for all the descendants of Palestinian refugees are considered to be refugees as well. Once there were 750,000; now there are five million people considered by UNRWA to be “Palestinian refugees.” And UNRWA is now the largest UN agency, with a staff of 30,000. UNHCR cares for the rest of the world with about 7,500 personnel.

The political background to this story is simple: only in the case of Israel was there a determined refusal to accept what had happened during and after World War II, with the establishment of the Jewish state and the increase in its population by the acceptance of refugee Jews. Of all the world’s refugees, whom UNHCR tries normally to resettle, only the Palestinians are an exception. UNRWA presides over generation after generation of additional refugees, and Arab states and leaders make believe that some day they can turn back the clock and send them—and their children and grandchildren and great-grandchildren—to Israel.

To say this is not necessarily to criticize the day-to-day activities of UNRWA, for it was handed a mission by the UN. There are and have always been many UNRWA officials who are reliable international civil servants. And no doubt, any change in UNRWA's role should come slowly and carefully so as not to harm innocent people caught up in international political struggles. But UNRWA should cease to exist, and Palestinian refugees should be handled by UNHCR with the intention of resettling them. That process should begin with a redefinition of who is a refugee entitled to benefits, so that benefits are based on need rather than on status. Moreover, Palestinians who have citizenship in other countries should not be considered refugees at all—the standard practice for every other group of refugees in the world. Why, for example, should the nearly two million Palestinians in Jordan, over 90 percent of whom have Jordanian citizenship, today be considered refugees by UNRWA at all?

Lest that position seem idiosyncratic, consider this: in 2010 Canada cut off its funding of UNRWA, and the Netherlands government has [reported](#) that it is considering the same action. How did they explain this? The foreign minister told parliament that Holland would “thoroughly review” its policy and the ruling party called UNRWA's refugee definition “worrying.” UNRWA, said the party spokesman, “uses its own unique definition of refugees, different to the UN's. The refugee issue is a big obstacle for peace. We therefore ask the government acknowledge this discrepancy, which leads to the third-generation Palestinian refugees.” Correction: fourth-generation, actually.

It is worth noting that there are many other criticisms of UNRWA: that it overlooks terrorist group activity in some camps, or allows members of Hamas and other terrorist groups to hold UNRWA staff positions. But those are criticisms of how UNRWA is carrying out its mission, while the deeper problem is the mission itself. That mission might accurately be described as enlarging the Palestinian refugee problem forever and thereby making any Israeli-Palestinian peace agreement tremendously more difficult if not impossible to achieve.

Closing UNRWA would in the end be a great favor to Palestinians who live outside the West Bank and Gaza, assuming that the needed services it provides them could be provided by other agencies or the governments of the countries in which they live. Some of those individuals will some day move to the West Bank or Gaza, but they do not need UNRWA to do that. None of them will ever move to Israel, and the existence of UNRWA helps to maintain the cruel myth that they will.

The “peace process” seems stalled today; no negotiated final settlement is on the horizon. But there are many things that can be done that move toward peace, such as the building of Palestinian institutions and improvement of the economy in the West Bank. Starting the process of closing down UNRWA would be a move toward peace, as it would replace the permanent perpetuation of the Palestinian refugee problem with a process designed to reduce it in size and some day solve it.

Israel Not Invited to U.N. Conference on Refugees

UNRWA, the UN agency charged with handling refugee camps from the 1948 war, held a conference last week on the "humanitarian needs of the Palestinian Arab refugees" - but did not invite Israel. David Bedein reports.

, 13/06/04

Israel Not Invited to UN Meeting On Refugees

UNRWA, the UN agency charged with handling refugee camps from the 1948 war, held a conference last week on the "humanitarian needs of the Palestinian Arab refugees" - but did not invite Israel. David Bedein <"media@actcom.co.il">, of Israel Resource News Agency, was the only Israeli reporter to cover the event.

Excerpts from his report:

"67 nations, 34 relief organizations, the Palestinian Authority and the PLO were invited to attend the conference, held at the UN's plush international conference center in Geneva. Yet Israel was not invited to attend. Nor was any Israeli reporter invited to cover the event... I covered the conference anyway, since it would have been difficult for the UN to turn down press credentials that had been certified by a dues-paying UN member nation."

"According to the UNRWA spokesman: Israel was not invited to this conference because Israel is not a contributing nation to UNRWA. Yet until a few years ago, Israel provided more than \$750,000 dollars per annum to UNRWA, and exceeded the contribution of many of the Arab countries. So why not invite Israel to attend as an observer or a discussant? To that, UNRWA and the Swiss government had no answer... The PLO [sent] a senior delegation to the conference... yet UNRWA never asks for any contribution from the PLO."

"...the UNRWA conference, from its opening moment, was held in an atmosphere of invective against Israel. As conference participants entered the hall, they were greeted by more than 100 life sized pictures of Palestinian Arab refugees who have suffered at

the hands of Israel... which would lead any participant at the conference to come to the visceral conclusion that the total picture of Palestinian refugee reality is oppression at the hands of Israel."

"...In the central open conference room as the participants walked in, UNRWA screened short movies, all funded by the Swiss government, and played them consecutively throughout the conference, designed to show different aspects of UNRWA's services. You could not miss the invective against Israel in some of the films. "Hoda's Story" [for instance] clearly hints that the IDF intentionally kills children. No mention of the fact that her school was caught in cross fire between the IDF and the Palestinian armed forces."

"Had Israel been invited to attend the conference, Israel could have shared its publicly available intelligence reports on how the Palestinian armed forces use UNRWA offices, UNRWA medical clinics and even UNRWA schools as a base of operations... Israel could have been afforded the chance to distribute the recent publications on the Palestinian Authority's incitement of school children, and the recent booklets that tell the story of 113 Israeli school children who were murdered in cold blood by Palestinian terrorists."

"...Since the Swiss government paid for the movies, the spokesman of the Swiss government present at the showing was asked for comment on the one-sided nature of these films. His response was to shrug his shoulders and take no responsibility for their content."

"Meanwhile, one of the films screened by UNRWA would have been appreciated by Israel..." It was a film of the Syrian rehabilitation of the UNRWA camp in Nesirat, in northern Syria. "The film showed how the Syrian government had cooperated with UNRWA to relocate people who had been living in the stench of an overcrowded camp since 1950 into a much healthier facility in northern Syria, in a program financed with the help of the US and Canada. This could have been Israel's opportunity to share the approved policy of the government of Israel - which calls for the rehabilitation of UNRWA camps and their transformation into decent and humanitarian living conditions. That policy had been adopted by the Israeli government in 1983 and rejected by the UN in 1985, because of the UN commitment to not interfere with the 'inalienable right of return' for Palestinian Arab refugees to go back to their homes from 1948."

"Although UNRWA declared that the conference would not deal with the 'right of return,' UNRWA allowed the PLO Refugee Affairs Department to put up a table in which it distributed its materials to promote the 'right of return.' The PLO distributed precise maps of where and how the UNRWA camp residents could take back their homes from 1948."

"Asked about the fact that the Hamas terrorist organization had taken over the teachers

union and workers council of UNRWA, [UNRWA commissioner Peter] Hansen did not deny it, but went on to say that only one UNRWA employee had ever been arrested for terror activity. Hansen went on to say that UNRWA could not discriminate against the religious affiliation of his staffers - invoking a new understanding of civil rights and religious liberty, with Hamas recognized as a religious denomination. It is therefore not hard to imagine what message Hamas teachers are conveying in an UNRWA classroom... Had Israel been invited, Israel could have provided films of rallies for Hamas inside the UNRWA schools."

"The Conference... concluded with a unanimous resolution which called on all nations to protect Arab refugees and to protect UNRWA personnel, and to ensure the safe passage of UNRWA personnel to and from the UNRWA camps. Yet as the conference was concluding, a news report blipped on the computers of the reporters that residents of a UNRWA camp in Gaza had fired mortar shells into the Israeli city of Sderot, located in the Negev. The UNRWA shells had hit a factory and injured five people. No resolution dealt with the question of who is supposed to protect the people of Sderot from the armed personnel who fire mortars from the UNRWA camps."

Reporter Bedein also expressed some criticism of both Israel's Foreign Ministry, which has not responded publicly to the conference, and the US State Department, officials of which "indicated that they had concurred in the decision to exclude Israel" from the conference.

Arutz-7's Yosef Meiri noted that Conference Chairman Walter Fust summed up the conference without mentioning Israeli directly, but by referring to it twice indirectly: "Participants expressed great concern with regards to large scale destruction of infrastructure and housing which have recently caused emergency situations, particularly in Gaza... Participants were of the firm opinion that the question of responsibility for such destructions has to be addressed."

Fust also dismissed Israel's plan to withdraw from Gaza with disdain:

"I would also like to underline that this Conference was convened to send a positive signal of our common and sustained concern for the Palestinian refugees at a moment when the peace process shows little prospect of an imminent positive development."

The Mystery of the Missing Palestinian 'Refugee' Monument

A PLO propaganda tour kicks off in Germany.

July 3, 2012

David Bedein



For the past four years, adjacent to the UNRWA headquarters, the Al Aida refugee facility in Bethlehem hosted a two-ton key resting on top of the entrance to Al Aida, which is shaped in the likeness of a mammoth keyhole.

That mammoth key and keyhole were erected at the entrance to the UNRWA Al Aida refugee facility during a celebration on May 15, 2008, to mark 60 years since the creation of Israel and the displacement of Arabs who consider themselves to be refugees entitled to the "right of return" to Arab villages which no longer exist inside Israel.

This week, however, when a news crew visited the Al Aida refugee facility in Bethlehem, the journalists discovered that the massive two-ton key was missing.

Rather than contact the UNRWA lost and found department, the reporters asked UNRWA residents about the whereabouts of the missing key. They had no idea.

The reporters asked UNRWA officials, who also said that they did not know.

Had there been sudden misgivings about the key to the right of return, the subject that forms the basis of UNRWA education?

Hardly.

A google search on the Arab media led to the discovery of the key's whereabouts: The Palestinian Authority is taking the key on a tour of...Germany.

[Here](#) is the link to an Arab media report about the tour of the key in Germany.

This key has been taken on a PLO public relations campaign to promote German support for the right of descendants of Arab refugees to take back 531 Arab villages that they claim from 1948, which have been replaced by Israeli towns, collective farms and woodlands within Israel's 1967 lines.

Germany's role in any campaign to promote the "right of return" to homes from the 1940s may be considered to be unusual, since nine million Germans who were forced out of their homes after World War II have never demanded the "right of return" to places like East Prussia and the Sudetenland.

However, Germany plays an important role in the promotion of the Arab "right of return" to Arab villages from the 1940s which no longer exist.

A case in point: A consistent aspect of cultural life in the UNRWA camps are film screenings in the UNRWA youth clubs which motivate descendants of Arab refugees to long for the Palestinian "right to return" to villages that they left in 1948.

These films are organized through the Cine Club, orchestrated under the framework of a group known as the Shaml and sponsored by the Friedrich Ebert Foundation, which receives funds from the German government.

According to the Ebert Foundation's website, its primary mission is "promoting peace and understanding between peoples."

Yet UN article 194 is touted by the German-sponsored Shaml as proof for an absolute "right of refugee" return.

That article states that: "Refugees wishing to return to their homes and live at peace with their neighbors should be permitted to do so at the earliest practicable date, and that compensation should be paid for the property of those choosing not to return and for loss of or damage to property which, under principles of international law or in equity, should be made good by the Governments or authorities responsible."

Besides Shaml, the Ebert Foundation also aids PASSIA: the Palestinian Academic Society for the Study of International Affairs.

In 2004, PASSIA, a Palestinian Authority-based academic organization, published a multicolored bulletin still in circulation entitled "Palestinian Refugees," offering facts and proofs to promote the "right of return."

This publication highlights the German government-funded Friedrich Ebert Foundation as the sole sponsor of this brochure.

When the President of Germany, Horst Kohler, visited the Israeli Knesset in January 2005, an Israel Member of the Knesset, Gila Finkelstein, waved a PASSIA "right of return" brochure at President Kohler and walked out of the Knesset in protest.

Finkelstein met with President Kohler, to personally express her outrage that Germany would fund an effort that supported the "right of return," a code name for dismembering Israel.

Kohler promised to look into the matter.

In April 2005, President Kohler wrote to MK Finkelstein that he relied on the professional judgment of the Friedrich Ebert Foundation and rejected MK Finkelstein's protests.

Germany continues the policy of promoting the Arab "right of return," allowing the two-ton key from the UNRWA Al Aida refugee facility in Bethlehem on a tour throughout Germany.

Perhaps Israel should launch a campaign to help Germans return to East Prussia.

Ten Talking Points: How to Respond to UNRWA Attacks on its Critics

March 12, 2013

A senior public relations official of UNRWA met with our agency in Washington, DC on March 5, 2013 and viewed the film A CLASSROOM IN UNRWA, <http://israelbehindthenews.com/bin/content.cgi?ID=5382&q=1> and voiced comments that deserve a rebuttal.

Ten talking points to help respond to the UNRWA official:

1. The UNRWA official asserted that institutions built inside the UNRWA camps are not UNRWA's responsibility and are not under the aegis of UNRWA. The official explained that one of the schools in the UNRWA camp of Deheishe, near Bethlehem, where the film interviewed students and teachers, was registered as an Artas school. Artas is an Arab village several kilometers south of Deheishe. Yet in an on-the-record interview with our agency in 1991, Sandro Tucci, then head of UNRWA's Public Information Office, claimed that all property in the UNRWA camps belonged to UNRWA and was under the aegis of UNRWA.

See: <http://www.israelbehindthenews.com/library/pdfs/UNWRAReport.pdf>

2. The UNRWA official's claim that UNRWA school children are only identified as UNRWA pupils if they are wearing UNRWA uniforms is simply not accurate. Our agency has provided news coverage on UNRWA for the past 24 years, in cooperation with major news media such as NBC and BBC and PBS. Sometimes we have seen UNRWA students in uniform and sometimes they are not in uniform.

3. The UNRWA official claims that UNRWA "must" use school books from the host entity. However, UNRWA, whose PR theme to the world is PEACE BEGINS HERE, is not required to use texts from the host entities if the texts support Jihad to liberate all of Palestine, texts that emulate people who blow themselves up on buses, and texts that advocate the "right of return" through armed struggle. The UNRWA official said that he would not examine Dr. Arnon Groiss's

study of how the right of return through the armed struggle is preached in the UNRWA schools. See Dr. Groiss's translations of PA school books, which show that they do not fit the UNRWA motto of PEACE BEGINS

HERE: <http://israelbehindthenews.com/library/pdfs/RightofReturninUNRWASchools.pdf> , <http://israelbehindthenews.com/library/pdfs/PA-schoolbooks.pdf> , <http://israelbehindthenews.com/bin/content.cgi?ID=4648&q=1>

4. The UNRWA official asserted that the PA school books had been vetted by Prof. Nathan Brown, yet neglected to say that Brown remains a longstanding advocate for the PLO. See: <http://www.mei.edu/profile/nathan-brown> , <http://pomed.org/about-us/board-of-advisors/> , <http://electronicintifada.net/content/myth-incitement-palestinian-textbooks/5626>

5. The UNRWA official asserted that the PA school books had been given an endorsement by the recent commission headed by Prof. Bruce Wexler, without noting that the commission members who had actually reviewed the PA school books were ignored by Professor Wexler and issued dissenting reports which showed that Wexler purposely ignored their findings.

See: <http://israelbehindthenews.com/bin/content.cgi?ID=5329&q=1> , <http://israelbehindthenews.com/bin/content.cgi?ID=5331&q=1> , <http://israelbehindthenews.com/bin/content.cgi?ID=5347&q=1> , <http://israelbehindthenews.com/bin/content.cgi?ID=5332&q=1> .

6. The UNRWA official asserted that the teachers in the UNRWA schools whom we interviewed are not really UNRWA teachers. That would imply that the film's production team turned to actors from Palestinian Universal Studios who were hired to act as teachers for these films.

7. The UNRWA official claimed that Suhail al-Hindi, the Hamas UNRWA Union leader who featured in the film was removed by UNRWA. Except that Suhail al-Hindi was only suspended for a few days, and then reinstated in his position, after he appeared in a previous UNRWA film that was screened at the US Congress in September 2011.

8. The UNRWA official claimed that UNRWA wanted to introduce "holocaust education" in their schools, a claim which is simply not true. The head of the executive office of UNRWA sent a letter to our agency, which asserted that there never was any intention to insert holocaust education in their schools. The notion of an UNRWA proposition to insert holocaust education was used to gain sympathy and funds in the Jewish world for UNRWA. Please review the letter at: <http://israelbehindthenews.com/bin/content.cgi?ID=4310&q=1>

9. The UNRWA official claimed that UNRWA has introduced a human rights curriculum. Our agency conducted a review of that human rights curriculum on behalf of the Norwegian media which shows that the UNRWA concept of a human rights curriculum, makes no mention whatsoever of human rights for Jews or any religion except for Islam.

See: <http://israelbehindthenews.com/bin/content.cgi?ID=4420&q=1>

10. The UNRWA official responded to the statements of UNRWA students that they are learning to kill Jews in their education by saying that the students who said such things in the movie were manipulated by TV crews to say such a thing. As the head of a humanitarian agency, should the spokesman of UNRWA not at least flinch at the sight of young people who endorse the murder of others?

With Encouragement From a Vatican Official, Israeli Government Finally Denounces a Palestinian School System That Was Introduced More Than 13 Years Ago

January 8, 2014



See: Israel Government Report on Palestinian Incitement

www.israelbehindtheneews.com/bin/content.cgi?ID=7062&q=1

This past Monday, Israeli Intelligence Affairs Minister Dr. Yuval Steinitz and the Director General of his ministry, Brig.-Gen. (ret.) Yossi Kuperwasser held an unprecedented press conference on Monday in which they denounced the Palestinian Authority school system and shared evidence with the media that Adolf Hitler now plays a central figure as a role model in PA schools.

From the very genesis of the PA school curriculum in 2000, the new schools of the PA, many of which are located in facilities run by UNRWA, the United

Nations Relief and Works Agency, and funded by more than 40 donor nations, adopted a policy of teaching the next generation to venerate the 'right of return' to Palestine, all of Palestine, by means of holy war, martyrdom and education.

The PA rejected other curricula prepared by Ber Zeit University, a Palestinian academic facility located near Ramallah, which emphasized reconciliation and peace.

On March 1, 2000, Shimon Peres, then the Israel Minister of Regional Development, addressed the international colloquium of the Jewish media, where Peres lavished praise on the new Palestinian school curriculum for peace.

When I asked Peres to comment on the fact that the Palestinian school curriculum for peace which he referred to had been vetoed by the Palestinian Authority, Peres simply answered "I know," but encouraged me to go directly to the Palestinian Authority Minister of Education to get the new school books, since they would be issued in a few months' time, and that is exactly what I did.

On August 1, 2000, on the day that the new PA school books were issued, I traveled to Ramallah and met with the Palestinian Minister of Education, Dr. Nayim Abu Humus, who authorized our agency to buy all the new PA school books.

Dr. Abu Humus asked that we give publicity to the new school books, which we readily agreed to do. Returning to Jerusalem, giving a cursory review of the school books, our Arabic language journalist colleagues noted that the new PA school books were problematic.

I brought a set of the books to Dr. Shlomo Ben Ami, then the Israel Minister of Foreign Affairs and showed them to him, where he could see that the new maps produced by the nascent Palestinian Authority deleted Israel for every PA school child to see that only Palestine existed between the Mediterranean Sea and the Jordan River.

In those textbooks, there were lessons where Palestinian children read about the armed struggle to liberate all of Palestine. Palestinian children learned about Zionism as a war crime, and specific lessons instructed Palestinian children to revere those who murdered Jews.

Ben Ami looked at the new PA school books as if I had brought him the Manhattan telephone book for his perusal.

As I left the minister's office, Archbishop Pietro Sambini, the Pope's "ambassador to the Holy Land," called my cell phone with a request: Could I bring the PA school books to him immediately. – "the Pope wants to see them." The honorary chairman of the ADL in Israel, the late Jack Padwa, had informed the Archbishop that our agency had purchased these books.

Together with Padwa, I traveled to the Archbishop's office on the Mount of Olives and delivered the books to the Archbishop – the set that the Israel Minister of Foreign Affairs did not want to look at.

The Vatican's ambassador assured us that the Pope would commission the first translation of the new Palestinian Schoolbooks, which he did.

Archbishop Sambini brought the books with him to Rome, and initiated a study of the PA textbooks, which the Vatican determined to be anti-semitic and pro-war in nature.

One month later, at the recommendation of the Pope and with the encouragement of Archbishop Sambini, the Italian government announced that it would pull its money out of the Palestinian Ministry of Education's PA text book project.

Here are some pearls of wisdom that Palestinian children learned from the new PA school books of the Palestinian Authority, which were introduced between 2000 and 2006, and which have been used ever since.

1. Israel does not appear on any maps of the world in the new PA textbooks, while maps of Israel replace the name Israel with Palestine in all of the new Palestinian Authority school books.

2. The new Palestinian School Books “annex” sites in Israel to Palestine.

“Haifa is a Palestinian seaport,” (p. 7) (Lughatuna al-Jamila (Our Beautiful Language) Vol. 2, 5th grade textbook, p. 86).

“Galilee, Nazareth and Beit She’an are regions in Palestine,” (p. 7) (Al-Iqtisad al-Manzili (Home Economy), 10th grade textbook, pp. 36-37).

3. The new Palestinian school books mention Israel only as an enemy, in reference to “occupation of lands” in 1948 and 1967:

“There is no doubt that the Israeli occupation has a negative impact on [Palestinian] agriculture and its export,” (p. (Lughatuna al-Jamila (Our Beautiful Language) Vol. 1, 10th grade textbook, p. 102).

4. The new Palestinian school books present Zionism only as an enemy movement:

“The Palestinian people are under an oppressive siege, limiting their movement and way of life,” (p. 9) (Al-Tarbiyah al-Islamiyyah (Islamic Education), Vol. 1, 5th grade textbook, p. 49).

Accusation against settlements [from 1948!] of damaging water sources “the influence of settlement on sources of water in Palestine,” (p. 9) (Ulum al-Sihha wal-B’ia (Health and Environmental Sciences), 10th grade textbook, p. 122).

“The Palestinian family has problems...stemming from the occupation...it loses father, mother or son to death or imprisonment...endures the difficulties of

life...," (p. 11) (Al-Tarbiyah al-Wataniyya (National Education), 5th grade textbook, p. 23).

5. The new Palestinian School Books make the false claim that an "extremist Zionist" set fire to the Al-Aqsa Mosque in 1969, (p. 12) (Tarikh al'Alam al-Hadith wal-Mu'asir (History of the new Modern World), 10th grade textbook, p. 106) when it was really a mentally unstable fundamentalist Christian Australian.

6. The new Palestinian School books teach that the only ancient inhabitants of Israel were Arabs, ignoring any ancient Jewish presence.

"Concentrated...in the land of Al-Sham [Greater Syria]...was the culture of the Canaanite and Aramaic peoples who migrated there from the Arab peninsula," (p.14-15) (Tarikh al-Hadarat al-Qadima (History of Ancient Civilizations), 5th grade textbook, Foreword).

7. The new Palestinian school books teach that Palestinians must use war and violence – especially martyrdom – to accomplish their goals:

The heroic mother, "who incessantly presents one sacrifice [fida'] after another." (Lughatuna al-Jamila (Our Beautiful Language), Vol 2, 5th grade textbook, p. 31).

The warrior goes to war faced with one of the good options: victory or martyrdom in battle for the sake of Allah. (Ibid. Vol. 1, 5th grade textbook, p. 70).

"Allah gave the people of this land (Al-Sham and Palestine) an important task: they must stand on the forefront of the Muslim campaign against their enemies, and only if they fulfill their duty to their religion, nation, and land will they be rewarded as stated in the scriptures." (Al-Tarbiya al-Islamiyyah (Islamic Education), Vol 2, 10th grade textbook, p. 50).

8. The new Palestinian school books feature children with names such as Jihad (holy war) and Nidal (struggle). (p.22) (Tarikh al-Hadarat al-Qadima (History of Ancient Civilizations), 5th grade textbook, p.6).

9. The new Palestinian school books stress the importance of “return” of refugees to all of Palestine – by violence: “The wrong must be made right by returning them to their homes: we returned to the homeland after a long absence.” (Lughatuna al-Jamila (Our Beautiful Language), Vol 2, 5th grade textbook, p. 43). “Returning to the homes, the plains and the mountains, under the banners of glory, jihad [holy war] and struggle” (Lughatuna al-Jamila (Our Beautiful Language), Vol 1, 5th grade textbook, p.88).

Since Shimon Peres, now the President of Israel, constantly attests to the moderate and peaceful intentions of Machmud Abbas, the head of the Palestinian Authority, our agency has been submitting a request to Peres for a response to Abbas’s new educational system for the last six years. We have spoken to all of Peres’s spokespeople and to Peres’s advisers. Yet the response from Peres’s office is consistent refusal to respond.

At the press conference conducted on Monday, Israeli government education experts described Abbas’s school system as “war curriculum,” and stressed that Abbas’s schools were inculcating Palestinian youth with the idea that Hitler is a role model for every Palestinian child to emulate.

Our agency asked the spokesman of Shimon Peres for comment. After all, Peres convened a special briefing for visiting US Senators during the first weekend of 2014 to say that he had “full confidence” in Abbas as a peace partner.

Yet that same Machmud Abbas personally oversees the PA school curriculum of war.

The response from the office of the President of Israel: No comment.

However, the government of Israel finally heeded the initial warnings of the Vatican that the new Palestinian Authority school books are war-like in nature. Archbishop Sambhi, who died in July, 2011, while he was the Papal Nuncio in Washington, DC, would have been proud. In my last conversation with Archbishop Sambhi, shortly before his death, he asked if the Israeli government would ever make an official comment on the Palestinian school curricula. Now they have.

It took 13 years for the Israeli government to denounce the official curriculum of the Palestinian Authority, but now the Jewish state has done so, on the record.

THE U.N.'S CHILD DEATH CULT EDUCATION

New UNRWA textbooks caught urging war and jihad martyrdom to grade-schoolers.

April 6, 2014

3 3



Following our center's March 13 presentation at the British Parliament concerning the indiscretions of United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) education, Sir Peter Luff, MP for Mid Worcestershire, requested concrete evidence that would support the findings of the center that UNRWA is preparing its students for war.

In response to MP Luff's request, the Center for Near East Policy Research commissioned Dr. Arnon Groiss, who holds a Ph.D. in Islamic Studies from Princeton University and who has worked with the Arabic Language Service of the Voice of Israel Radio for the past 40 years, to prepare documentation as to how the values of armed struggle, jihad and martyrdom are taught in schools operated by UNRWA in the West Bank, Jerusalem and Gaza.

Below are the findings from Dr. Groiss's report:

Palestinian Authority (PA) schoolbooks used by UNRWA in its schools in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip promote the goal of a violent struggle for the liberation of Palestine. That struggle, which is never restricted to the territories of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip alone, is made more compelling in the books with the help of the traditional Islamic ideals of jihad and martyrdom (Shahadah), aided by the description of the violent return

of the refugees. Thus, the Palestinian child in UNRWA schools is exposed to an atmosphere of violence and is mentally prepared for his or her actual participation in that armed struggle in the future.

The following examples taken from recently published PA schoolbooks that have been in use in UNRWA schools during the current school year (2013/14) clearly attest to this phenomenon. One can find the spiritual foundation of the behavior expected from prospective martyrs in the following text, which appeared in an Islamic Education textbook for grade 6:

"Jihad in the cause of God for raising the flag of Islam and preventing oppression **and corruption on earth: ... When a Muslim man believes that God is the one who** gives life and death, gain and loss, and that victory and power are in His hand, he then liberates himself from others' control, and bravery and a desire to seek martyrdom in God's cause are enlivened within his soul."

(Islamic Education, Grade 6, Part 1 (2012) p. 22)

A comment in another Islamic Education textbook gives this general notion a dimension of certain urgency:

"We, Muslims, dearly need these days to approach Sublime God so that He would grant us power and victory!"

(Islamic Education, Grade 7, Part 2 (2013) p. 82)

However, most pieces glorifying jihad and martyrdom in the context of the conflict appear in language and literature textbooks, rather than in Islamic Education books, mainly in poems and language exercises. Examples:

"Palestine [By] Ali Mahmud Taha [Excerpts]

O brother, the oppressors have exceeded all bounds and Jihad and sacrifice are necessary

Would we let them rob Arabdom of the ancestors' glory and power?

...

So, draw your sword from its sheath, for it should be sheathed no more

O brother, O proud Arab, I see that our date is today, not tomorrow

O brother, we have a sister in Jerusalem to whom the slaughterers have prepared
the knives

O brother, rise towards the prayer-direction [Qiblah] of East and West and let us
defend the Church [of the Holy Sepulcher] and the [Al-Aqsa] Mosque

O brother, if on her soil my blood flows and the hand closes on its pebbles

And death calls and the sword turns mad and the fire burns there...

[Then] kiss the martyr on her ground who called to God in her name and fell as a
martyr

O Palestine, the youth will redeem your sanctuary; may both the sacrificing
person [fidai] and the redeemed one be exalted!

O Palestine, our chests will defend you; [It is] either life or destruction!

(Reading and Texts, Grade 8, Part 1 (2013) p. 44)
Verses taken from this poem serve in language exercises:

"O brother, the oppressors have exceeded all bounds and Jihad and sacrifice are
necessary

O brother, we have a sister in Jerusalem to whom the slaughterers have prepared
the knives."

(Linguistic Studies, Grade 8, Part 2 (2012) p. 14)

In the following poem one can find an explicit call for martyrdom: "By your life, this is men's death and whoever wishes a noble death – here it is."

The Martyr [By] Abd al-Rahim Mahmud [Excerpts]

"I will carry my soul on my palm and toss it into the abyss of destruction

For [I will have] either a life that gladdens [my] friends or a death that irritates
[my] enemies

...

By your life! I see my death but I hasten [my] steps toward it

I regard my death for my stolen right and for my country as a desired one

Hearing [weapon's] clink is pleasant to my ear and the flow of blood gladdens my
soul

As well as a body thrown upon the ground and skirmished over by the desert
predators

...

By your life! This is men's death and whoever wishes a noble death – here it is!"

(Our Beautiful Language, Grade 7, Part 1 (2013) p. 75)

A language exercise featuring a verse from this poem:

"By your life! I see my death but I hasten [my] steps toward it

I regard my death for my stolen right and for my country as a desired one."

(Linguistic Studies, Grade 9, Part 1 (2013) p. 41)

Other examples:

"When, among the rest of this world's mothers, Palestinian mothers alone continue for the sixth decade in a row to bury their children with trilling cries of joy!

When Palestinian fathers continue to commit their sons to the earth calmly and promise to keep doing so with the rest [of their sons]!

When the Palestinian [person] of whatever age, religion, gender and affiliation becomes a martyr project!..."

(Our Beautiful Language, Grade 7, Part 2 (2013) p. 58)

"Good Morning, O My Homeland [By] Lutfi Zaghlul [Excerpts]

...

Good morning, O my Homeland

...

A morning of glory and red liberty watered by the martyrs' blood"

...

...

(Reading and Texts, Grade 9, Part 1 (2013) pp. 9-10)

An exercise related to this poem is the following:

"I will connect the poetic verses with the feelings they express in the following [cases]:

...

A morning of glory and red liberty watered by the martyrs' blood... –

The hope for the liberation of Palestine."

(Reading and Texts, Grade 9, Part 1 (2013) p. 12)

The issue of the claimed "Right of Return" of Palestinian refugees and their descendants to their previous homes inside today's Israel is also described as part of the violent struggle for liberation. Examples:

"We Shall Return [By] Abu Salma [Excerpts]

Beloved Palestine, how could I live far away from your plains and heights

...

Tomorrow we shall return and the generations will listen to the footfalls during the return

We shall return with the thundering storms, with the sacred lightening and the shooting star

With the winged hope and the songs, with the soaring vulture and the eagle

Yes! Thousands of victims shall return; victims of oppression shall open every door"

(Our Beautiful Language, Grade 7, Part 1 (2013) p. 28)

"We Are Returning [By] Harun Hashem Rashid

Returning, Returning; we are returning

Borders shall not exist, nor citadels and fortresses

Cry out, O those who have left:

'We are returning'

Returning to the homes, to the plains, to the mountains

Under the flags of glory, Jihad and struggle

In blood, sacrifice, fraternity and loyalty

We are returning

Returning, O hills; returning, O heights

Returning to childhood; returning to youth

To Jihad on the highlands, to the harvest in the land

We are returning"

(Our Beautiful Language, Grade 5, Part 1 (2013) p. 50)
A language exercise featuring a verse taken from this poem:

"Returning, Returning; we are returning

Borders shall not exist, nor citadels and fortresses

Cry out, O those who have left: We are returning."

(Linguistic Studies, Grade 8, Part 2 (2012) p. 19)
There are other examples repeating the same motifs. The following one likens martyrdom to a wedding party:

"O my homeland,

I shall not cry in this wedding party

For our Arabness refuses that we cry over the martyrs "

(Linguistic Studies, Grade 8, Part 2 (2012) p. 60)

"The martyr's blood [watered] the ground."

(Our Beautiful Language, Grade 6, Part 2 (2012) p. 8)

"If I fall take my place, O my comrade-in-arms

Carry your [my?] weapon and do not let my blood that flows from the weapon
frighten you..."

(Linguistic Studies, Grade 9, Part 1 (2012) p. 14)

The following is an assignment for seventh graders:

"I will write up to ten lines about one of the martyrs whom I know, being assisted by the following elements: his name and place of birth, his life and achievements, the circumstances of his martyrdom, society's attitude to his family after his martyrdom, the martyr's rank in Islam."

(Our Beautiful Language, Grade 7, Part 2 (2013) p. 49)

In addition, the PA schoolbooks used in UNRWA schools feature language exercises with the following warlike messages:

"The army wins.

The enemy is defeated."

(Our Beautiful Language, Grade 4, Part 1 (2013) p. 65)

"The army defeated the enemy."

(Our Beautiful Language, Grade 4, Part 2 (2012) p. 45)

A story titled "An Evening Visitor" tells of a Palestinian father who lost his son in the 1967 war and later joined one of the Palestinian armed organizations and became a Fidai – a title given to members of such organizations. The story presents their raids against Israel from southern Lebanon in a favorable light and thus makes of them role models for the young children. Excerpts:

"Everyone knows that I have been in the South [authors' note: South: South Lebanon] for ten years. I have left the city [Amman] and the family to join the **fighters...**

We in the South face death any minute... Youths like Saleh [his killed son] fall every day on the South's land. We bury them and bury our grief with them..."

...

...

(Reading and Texts, Grade 8, Part 1 (2013) pp. 30, 33)

The foregoing does not cover the whole picture of preparing Palestinian schoolchildren for jihad and martyrdom. One could add the Palestinian national anthem itself, here cited to first graders, including the following verse: "...I shall live as a Fidai and continue as a Fidai and die as a Fidai..."

See the whole page in full, with an illustration of a teacher saying: "let us repeat the national anthem:" (the extracted verse is the fourth one).



"By resistance we shall win"

(National Education, Grade 8 (Gaza, 2013) p. 65)

From the above-given quotations taken from PA schoolbooks in current use by UNRWA, one could easily have a solid idea about the war education hundreds of thousands of Palestinian schoolchildren get, apart from other alarming aspects of anti-Israeli and anti-Jewish indoctrination that is antithetical to any chance of peace in the Middle East. That kind of "education" should cease immediately and it is the responsibility of UNRWA's democratic donor states to guarantee that.

Dr. Arnon Groiss is an Arabic-language journalist who has been working for the Voice of Israel Arabic Radio since 1973. He is also an expert on Middle Eastern affairs having earned his Ph.D. degree from Princeton University's Department of Near Eastern Studies, as well as an MPA degree from Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government. Dr. Groiss taught for several years at the Hebrew University in the 1990s and 2000s. Between the years 2000-2010 Dr. Groiss served as chief researcher and, later, as Director of Research at the Institute for Monitoring Peace and Cultural Tolerance in School Education (IMPACT-SE, formerly known as the Center for Monitoring the Impact of Peace – CMIP), a non-political NGO committed to studying the attitude to the "other" and to peace in the Israeli and in other Middle Eastern curricula. During his work there Dr. Groiss studied hundreds of textbooks of various school subjects and authored over ten reports on Palestinian, Egyptian, Syrian, Saudi Arabian, Iranian and Tunisian schoolbooks. The reports are available on the Institute's Web site <http://www.impact-se.org>. A summary of his ten-year research of this subject is to be found in "De-legitimization of Israel in Palestinian Authority Schoolbooks", published in Israeli Affairs, Vol. 18 (2012), Issue 3, pp. 455-484, where he compares the PA schoolbooks with other Arab and Middle Eastern ones, including their Israeli counterparts.

Dr. Groiss has presented his findings since 2000 to both policy makers and people of the press on numerous occasions in various places, including the US Congress, the European Parliament, the UK House of Commons, the Israeli Knesset, the Canadian Parliament, the French Assemblée nationale and elsewhere. On the basis of his

experience in this field, Dr. Groiss was appointed as a member of the Scientific Advisory Panel (SAP) of the Palestinian-Israeli Schoolbook Research Project commissioned by the Council of Religious Institutions of the Holy Land (CRIHL). The project was funded by the US State Department and ended in February 2013. Dr. Groiss' evaluation paper of this research project is to be found [here](#).

UNRWA Spokesman Challenges Our Credibility: We Respond by Challenging the Credibility of UNRWA

April 7, 2014

Following publication of "The Role of UNRWA in Preparing Their Students for War" in the April 4th edition of **Israel Resource Review**,

<http://israelbehindthenews.com/bin/content.cgi?ID=7223&q=1>

the UNRWA press spokesperson, Christopher Gunness, issued a statement that challenged the credibility of our research on UNRWA.

What follows is the statement issued by Gunness and our response which calls into question the credibility of UNRWA.

=====

From: **GUNNESS, Christopher** <C.GUNNESS@unrwa.org >

Date: Apr 7, 2014

Allegation 1. UNRWA is "using textbooks and employing teachers that encourage children to revere and engage in violence."

As agreed upon when the United Nations first established the UNRWA education program, UNRWA uses the textbooks provided by the governments where they were located. The rationale was that by following the host country curriculum, the children would be able to take state examinations at the end of each cycle and thus be able to transition to upper secondary and university education provided by the host government.

The curricula and the textbooks in all countries where UNRWA operates have been reviewed and reformed often with the support of major donors including the US and EU.

The Government of Israel approves the use of the PA curriculum in the Arab schools in East Jerusalem that fall under Israeli administration – the same curriculum used by UNRWA in the West Bank and Gaza.

UNRWA is not complacent as to the potential of bias in host country curricula and remains proactive in this regard. In 2013, UNRWA launched a “Curriculum Framework” that is designed to enhance host country curricula and establish standard criteria for analyzing and assessing all textbooks for issues related to bias, neutrality and in general to ensure they reflect UN values and UNRWA expectations. It also provides overall guidance to make sure that the students’ classroom experiences overall promote those values and principles.

To further strengthen human rights education and a culture of peace in all of its schools, UNRWA has launched a Human Rights, Conflict Resolution and Tolerance (HRCRT) program in all UNRWA schools since 2000 with generous funding from the US government. The HRCRT program directly empowers teachers to address these issues within the clear framework of international human rights law and UN values.

Allegation 2. UNRWA is “providing material support for, and working with, designated foreign terrorist entities such as Hamas.”

As a United Nations agency, UNRWA adheres to a very strict code of neutrality that prevents any employee from supporting or otherwise being involved with the activities of outside entities, including becoming involved in the activities of any political party.

UNRWA is in full compliance with all requirements of Section 301(c) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 and regularly provides certification reports to the

United States Government on the implementation and enforcement of regulations and policies relating to neutrality and 301(c).

Through a program funded by the United States Government, UNRWA also deploys international staff members to ensure the sanctity and integrity of UNRWA installations and programs through regular and unannounced inspections of facilities and interviews with staff, focusing primarily on the neutrality of facilities and personnel.

In addition to very comprehensive background checks prior to hiring employees, UNRWA also provides regular checks of existing staff, contractors and beneficiaries against the UN's lists of terrorists and terrorist entities as well as providing the names of all staff members and contractors to host governments and donor countries on a regular basis, including to the United States.

Allegation 3. UNRWA is "promoting the principle of the 'right of return' through the 'armed struggle'."

As laid out in the Refugee Convention of 1951, refugees maintain the right to return to the homes from which they fled unless and until an alternative is selected by both the refugees themselves as well as the governments which will integrate them.

However, as a humanitarian aid organization, UNRWA conducts no political activities and therefore does not undertake activities that would promote any specific solution to the refugee issue, including the "right to return" or any other potential options.

As a matter of principle and as an Agency of the United Nations, UNRWA does not promote or condone armed conflict or violence of any kind. On the contrary, UNRWA opposes all use of violence and advocates on behalf of a just and durable solution for Palestine refugees achieved through peaceful means such as negotiations.

Allegation 4. UNRWA should “ascribe to the accepted, legal UNHCR definition of a ‘refugee’.”

This allegation is based upon the widely misconceived notion that the children of refugees should not be considered refugees. In fact, under official policy and practice of UNHCR, the children of refugees are treated as refugees until there is a solution to their temporary displacement.

In practice, the operational definition of a refugee used by UNRWA is more rigid than the UNHCR definition, meaning that if UNRWA were to adopt the UNHCR definition, it is quite likely the number of Palestine refugees registered could significantly increase.

It is also important to note that UNHCR actively promotes three options for refugee populations. The first, which is strongly promoted by UNHCR in the vast majority of cases, is to return the refugees to their country of origin. The second is to integrate them into the locations to where they fled. The third is to resettle them in a third country. However, under any of these options, both the refugees themselves as well as the countries where they will ultimately reside must agree with the plan.

The following is our agency’s response to to Gunness’ attempt to rebut the allegation that UNRWA is “using textbooks and employing teachers that encourage children to revere and engage in violence”:

The professional who formulated the response: Dr. Arnon Groiss:

It might be important that children and grandchildren of 1948 refugees be able to get secondary and university education in their respective countries through the use of local curriculum and textbooks.

But such books must not propagate anti-peace and pro-violence notions that, in their turn, contribute to the perpetuation of the conflict – in total contradiction to UN principles to which UNRWA, as a UN agency, should be committed.

Furthermore, such books must not present a UN member state (Israel) as a heavily demonized illegitimate state. So long as they do, UNRWA should not use them in its schools because peace and non-violence are higher values than preparing schoolchildren to continuing their studies.

The curricula and textbooks in all countries where UNRWA operates may have been reviewed and reformed often, but the latest textbooks which we have reviewed (published mostly in 2013) still contain significant improper material that UNRWA must not teach (de-legitimization of Israel and the presence of its 6 million Jewish citizens and their holy places, severe demonization of Israel without any objective information that would balance the hateful language, non-advocacy whatsoever of a peaceful solution to the conflict and, instead, the promotion of a violent struggle for the liberation of Palestine without restricting that struggle to the West Bank and Gaza alone). That means that the process of revision and reform has so far been clearly futile.

The UN principles of a peaceful solution to the Middle East conflict and the UNESCO guidelines of non-hateful education should prevail under all circumstances. Israel's current policies cannot relieve UNRWA of its commitments as a UN agency.

The problem is by no means restricted to "potential bias." According to the well-documented findings we have presented in our reports (of which the general features are mentioned above), the books used by UNRWA make up a war curriculum.

Consequently, they should undergo a thorough revision – in line with the suggested list I have submitted – so that they indeed "reflect UN values" and

“make sure the students’ classroom experience promote those values and principles,” because they presently reflect and promote exactly the opposite.

The problem with the UNRWA Human Rights, Conflict Resolution and Tolerance (HRCRT) Program, of which the books for grades 1-6 we have seen, is that it solely deals with Palestinian society and almost never refers to the conflict with the Jewish/Israeli “other.”

The two references to the conflict I have found in these 12 books are of a demonizing character: one is a sentence saying that the children of Gaza fly kites in spite of the [Israeli] siege and the other features a photo of a Palestinian family in a tent and explains that its home was demolished [by Israel, presumably].

To sum up: UNRWA, being an international body, must not let hateful language and advocacy of violence into the textbooks it uses.

Such books should be immediately discarded and wholly replaced by others, or else, UNRWA should cease all its educational activity and pass its facilities and work force over to the local governments. It has been a negative element in the region’s educational history for too long.

REBUTTING SPECIFIC TALKING POINTS IN THE UNRWA STATEMENT

FORMULATED BY DAVID BEDEIN

The UNRWA quotes are in ***italics***: our response is in **CAPS**

Curricula and the textbooks in all countries where UNRWA operates have been reviewed and reformed often with the support of major donors including the US and EU.

AT NO TIME HAS THE US OR THE EU OR ANY OTHER DONOR NATIONS CARRIED OUT A STUDY OR REFORM OF UNRWA CURRICULA.

OUR AGENCY ASKED "US AID", THE MOST GENEROUS DONOR TO UNRWA EDUCATION, AS TO WHETHER US AID CONDUCTS ANY STUDY, FOLLOW UP OR INQUIRY INTO THE UNRWA CURRICULUM, WE RECEIVED A CLEAR "NO" FROM USAID, IN WRITING, ON MORE THAN ONE OCCASION.

UNRWA has launched a Human Rights, Conflict Resolution and Tolerance (HRCRT) program in all UNRWA schools since 2000 with generous funding from the US government.

OUR AGENCY ACQUIRED THE UNRWA "HUMAN RIGHTS" CURRICULUM AND COMMISSIONED A TRANSLATION AND ANALYSIS OF THE UNRWA HUMAN RIGHTS CURRICULUM AND FOUND THAT IT WAS DEVOID OF HUMAN RIGHTS TOWARDS "THE OTHER," AND MOST CERTAINLY DEVOID OF ANY MENTION WHATSOEVER OF HUMAN RIGHTS FOR JEWS AND/OR CITIZENS OF ISRAEL.

As a United Nations agency, UNRWA adheres to a very strict code of neutrality that prevents any employee from supporting or otherwise being involved with the activities of outside entities, including becoming involved in the activities of any political party.

OUR AGENCY DOCUMENTED THE PRESENCE OF HAMAS IN THE OPERATION OF THE UNRWA CAMPS AFTER HAMAS WON THE UNRWA UNION ELECTIONS IN 1999, 2003, 2006, 2009 AND 2012. IN ADDITION, OUR AGENCY HAS DOCUMENTED THE ACTIVITY OF HAMAS YOUTH CLUBS, KNOWN AS "AL KUTLA" YOUTH CLUBS, IN THE UNRWA FACILITIES. HOW DOES UNRWA NOT KNOW THAT?

UNRWA is in full compliance with all requirements of Section 301(c) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 and regularly provides certification reports to the United States Government on the implementation and

enforcement of regulations and policies relating to neutrality and 301(c). Through a program funded by the United States Government, UNRWA also deploys international staff members to ensure the sanctity and integrity of UNRWA installations and programs through regular and unannounced inspections of facilities and interviews with staff, focusing primarily on the neutrality of facilities and personnel. In addition to very comprehensive background checks prior to hiring employees, UNRWA also provides regular checks of existing staff, contractors and beneficiaries against the UN's lists of terrorists and terrorist entities as well as providing the names of all staff members and contractors to host governments and donor countries on a regular basis, including to the United States.

THE US CONGRESSIONAL RESEARCH SERVICE HAS PROVIDED DOCUMENTATION WHICH SHOWS THAT AT NO TIME HAS UNRWA EVER VETTED EMPLOYEES WHO WORK IN UNRWA FACILITIES IN JUDEA, SAMARIA, JERUSALEM AND GAZA TO DETERMINE **IF THEY ARE MEMBERS OF HAMAS.**

HOWEVER, UNRWA OFFICES IN LEBANON, SYRIA AND JORDAN DO VET EMPLOYEES TO DETERMINE IF THEY ARE MEMBERS OF HAMAS.

FOR WHATEVER REASON, THE US STATE DEPARTMENT AND THE US AID REPRESENTATIVES WHO WORK WITH HAMAS IN JUDEA, SAMARIA, JERUSALEM AND GAZA DO NOT HOLD UNRWA TO BE ACCOUNTABLE FOR THOUSANDS OF UNRWA EMPLOYEES WHO ARE OPENLY ACTIVE IN HAMAS.

UNRWA opposes all use of violence

IN THAT CASE, WHY DOES UNRWA USE SCHOOL BOOKS WHICH OPENLY ADVOCATE WAR, JIHAD AND MARTYRDOM?

UNHCR actively promotes three options for refugees' populations. The first, which is strongly promoted by UNHCR in the vast majority of cases, is to return the refugees to their country of origin.

WHAT UNRWA NEGLECTS TO SAY IS THAT UNHCR MENTIONS THE OPTION OF THE RIGHT OF RETURN WHILE UNRWA MANDATES THE RIGHT OF RETURN AS THE ONLY OPTION.

All textbooks reflect UN values and UNRWA expectations.

INDEED, "Peace begins here" is the UNRWA theme. A more accurate description of the UNRWA school system would be: "War begins here."

Refugees from 1948 War Are Now Our Responsibility

May 8, 2014

In March 1968, less than a year after the Six Day War, Rabbi Eugene Weiner addressed my senior high school class at Akiba Hebrew Academy in Philadelphia, PA about a moral implication of that war: Arab refugees from the 1948 war now live under Israeli control. Rabbi Weiner, who became a professor of sociology at Haifa University, shared his insight that "refugees from the 1948 war are now our responsibility" and implored Jews to take the initiative to move refugees out of "temporary" UN refugee camps and into permanent humanitarian conditions, or Israel will never see peace in our time.

Rabbi Weiner, who died in 2003, addressed a roadblock to Middle East peace: UNRWA, an agency created to promote the idea that Arab refugees must remain in "temporary" facilities while they wait for a "political solution." Five million Arab refugees and their descendants now endure the indignity of refugee conditions- instead of being encouraged to get on with their lives and not dwell on the false hope of the "right of return" to villages that existed before 1948.

Instead, the current Palestinian Arab leadership observes the Nakba day on May 15 – the day that marks the Arab League's failed invasion of the nascent state of Israel in 1948 – and the day that the Arab League relegated Arab refugees from that war to remain in UNRWA refugee camps for perpetuity, under the promise of return to Arab villages that existed before 1948 war.

Why is this Nakba different from previous Nakba observances?

Because this year, upwards of 300,000 Palestinian Arab refugees have been forced out of UNRWA refugee camps in Syria, now engulfed in a bloody civil war, and catapulted into even worse conditions in Jordan and Turkey. They know full well that they can never return to Syria, and they know that they cannot go back to villages from before 1948.

Most recently, our agency dispatched a reporter to visit a new Palestinian Arab refugee camp in Northern Jordan which is comprised of more than 140,000 refugees who have fled from UNRWA camps in Syria. Our journalist reported that the conditions were horrific. He was not allowed to film anything, however. Yet our reporter brought back the encouraging news that the new Arab refugee camps in Jordan are by UNHCR- a UN agency which promotes resettlement of refugees, not the "right of return" to Palestine, and he witnessed the UNHCR staff working tirelessly to find places where these people can move, so that they can begin a new life of dignity.

Western democracies, which fund 95% of the \$1.2 billion budget for UNRWA, can now redirect their energies to remove the blight of refugee camps, instead of supporting a policy that mandates the perpetuity of refugee squalor.

In the spirit of Rabbi Eugene Weiner's message from 46 years

ago, Israel must now lead the way to help Arab refugees forced out of Syria to seek a better life, in permanent humanitarian conditions.

David Bedein is the author of **"ROADBLOCK TO PEACE- How the UN Perpetuates the Arab-Israeli Conflict: UNRWA policies reconsidered", published on May 1, 2014, the day which marked 64 years since the creation of UNRWA.**

UNRWA Impediment to Peace

Presentation by David Bedein, May 2014, in Washington and London

Ten Talking Points:

1. This week, the Israeli government made history when Israeli ambassador to the UN, Ron Proser, addressed a symposium at the UN that dealt with UNRWA policies. Proser declared that UNRWA's policy of maintaining Arab refugees and their descendants in a situation of perpetual refugee status represented a threat to peace in the middle east. After many years of fence sitting, the government of Israel took a clear stand against UNRWA

education. <http://www.jpost.com/Diplomacy-and-Politics/Israels-UN-envoy-UNRWA-fuels-fiction-of-Palestinian-right-of-return-352762>

2. From our agency's examination of the 150 new school books that have been introduced into the UNRWA school

system, <http://israelbehindthenews.com/library/pdfs/UNRWAs-Problematic-Educational-Role.pdf>

we can discern a systematic war education curriculum that operates on the following principles:

- a. The Right of return by force of arms
- b. A commitment to Jihad to liberate all of Palestine
- c. Dedication to the act of homicidal martyrdom
- d. Denial of the legitimacy of the state of Israel and demonization of Israel

3. UNRWA education is not financed by the UN nor by Arab countries. UNRWA education is fully bankrolled by western nations. http://www.unrwa.org/sites/default/files/top_20_donors_overall.pdf

4. Western donor nations could condition aid to UNRWA on the cancellation of a curriculum which defies UN principles of peace advocacy and which fly in the face of the UNRWA slogan, "peace begins here." Some funding for UNRWA education comes in hard US currency, in cash, at the demand of UNRWA, which makes accountability somewhat impossible. <http://israelbehindthenews.com/bin/content.cgi?ID=4769&q=1>

5. Request of US AID to examine UNRWA education has been ignored:

a. In 2010, "US AID does not look at the curriculum."

b. In 2013, no response received.

6. One entity that examined the new PA/UNRWA texts was the Vatican, whose Sept 2000 report asserted that the new PA/UNRWA texts are manuals of war- a conclusion which caused Italy to withdraw funds from PA education. <http://israelbehindthenews.com/bin/content.cgi?ID=7073&q=1>

7. UNRWA policies contrast with UNHCR policies, which encourage refugees to get on with their lives. <http://israelbehindthenews.com/library/pdfs/UNRWAAchartcomparison.pdf>

8. UNHCR is handling the refugees who have fled from UNRWA camps in Syria. UNHCR is making a noble effort to locate nations that will be ready to absorb these 140,000 refugees who now wallow in a large makeshift facility in Jordan. It is important to emphasize that these new refugees are not being taught by UNHCR the inherent right of return to Palestine. The model of Chile is being examined, as a nation which adopted legislation which affirms citizenship and

benefits on any client of UNRWA who emigrates to

Chile. <http://israelbehindthenews.com/bin/content.cgi?ID=4480&q=1,4>

9. The time has come to introduce legislators of donor nations to adopt an "UNRWA Reform

Initiative": <http://israelbehindthenews.com/bin/content.cgi?ID=7115&q=4>

a. Not to use texts or teachers that encourage children to engage in acts of war.

b. Stop support for designated foreign terrorist entities such as Hamas. Legislation already on the books could serve to enforce the clause which forbids US/EU funds to an entity that absorbs Hamas into its midst.

c. Desist from promoting the "right of return" by force of arms.

d. Adopt internationally accepted UNHCR definitions of refugee status, and not bequeath refugee status on descendants of refugees from 65 years ago.

10. Two practical suggestions:

a. Sponsor new films of UNRWA facilities which speak for themselves. In an era of YouTubes, there are enough UNRWA facilities which proudly film themselves when they glorify Jihad and homicidal attacks.

b. Sponsor open lectures for policy makers and opinion makers with Arabic language experts who will discuss the UNRWA indoctrination which masks as "education."

Pope Set to Tour 'Martyr's Gallery' in UNWRA-Sponsored Club

The Pope is set to visit the Dehaishe refugee camp, where he will be 'treated' to a rogue's gallery of photos of terrorists

25/05/14



UNRWA in Refugee Camp
Israel news photo: Flash 90

On the Pope's travel agenda in his journeys in the Holy Land is a visit to the Dehaishe refugee camp, a hotbed of anti-Israel and anti-Jewish terrorism. On his visit, the Pope is expected to visit the Dehaishe Youth Club – perhaps the center of terror activity in the camp.

Among other things, the Pope will be “treated” to a rogue's gallery of images of “the martyrs” - sons of the camp who were killed blowing themselves up in Israeli population centers, or killed or captured by IDF soldiers as they attempted to carry out a terror attacks. According to David Bedein, director of the Israel Resource News Agency & The Center for Near East Policy Research and an expert on UNWRA policy in the Middle East, the club is operated by UNWRA, the UN refugee agency that exists solely to provide succor to Palestinian residents of refugee camps.

Despite having a chartered responsibility to encourage peace in the region, and despite promises to do so in the past, UNWRA has not removed the photos of these terrorists, Bedein says – and he knows this because a photographer took pictures of the club. The Pope, on his visit to the club, will be guided through the terrorist photo gallery.

While the Pope will no doubt mouth platitudes about “the suffering of the refugees,” said Bedein, “no one will ask why they are still refugees. No one will ask why the Palestinians refuse to move out of the refugee camps.” The reason, of course, said Bedein, is that the Palestinian leaders want to “preserve” their suffering in order to use it as a weapon against Israel, preferring to see peasants live in wretched conditions in refugee camps rather than allow them to live normally.

On his last visit to the UN, Bedein said that he was presented information about UNWRA's anti-Israel activities, and found some ready listeners. Representatives from Canada and the US promised to conduct an investigation on the matter. Bedein believes that if international pressure is increased on the UN group, it will be forced to change its ways. Israel's ambassador to the UN, Ron Prosor, has recently spoken out against UNWRA's activities as well, said Bedein. “Who ever heard of a social agency that encourages the murder of children?” asked Bedein in disbelief.











Opinion: How the UNRWA is Blocking Peace and a ‘Marshal Plan for Gaza’

July 31, 2014

Recently, the Israeli Minister of Science, Mr. Yaakov Peri, a member of the Israeli security cabinet and a former Israeli intelligence official, offered a refreshing solution to the current Israel-Gaza war.

Peri suggested a “Marshall Plan for Gaza” to revitalize the lives of the Gaza population. After all, 75% percent of Gazans wallow in “temporary” UN refugee camps that were founded in the wake of the 1948 war.

Peri’s Marshall Plan for Gaza sounds great – except for one hurdle: UNRWA, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency, which has operated the Arab refugee camps since 1948.

As a matter of policy, UNRWA will not allow any discussion of permanent resettlement of Arab refugees from 1948 – not even for their descendants. Instead, UNRWA insists that Arab refugees from 1948 remain refugees until there is a political resolution to the Arab-Israeli war – a development that is not at all imminent.

The UN policy is not new.

In 1983, at the initiative of Israeli government minister Mordecai Ben Porat, Israel embarked on a program to relocate Arab refugees to camps in the vicinity of their “temporary” Arab refugee camps – an initiative overruled by a 1985 UN resolution that declared that the resettlement of Arab refugees from 1948 would violate their “inalienable” right of return to villages that they left in 1948.

Only recently, UNRWA introduced a new school curriculum created by the Palestinian Authority. My news agency bought the new PA school books and translated them, and filmed UNRWA classrooms and UNRWA summer camps. This new UNRWA curriculum instructs a half million UNRWA students that their future lies only in the villages that they left in 1948, even if their homes were replaced by the Israeli cities of Ashkelon, Ashdod, Beersheva, Sderot, and more.

Furthermore, all new UNRWA school books rename Israeli cities with Arabic names. Hence, the UNRWA inspiration for Gazans to fire on Ashkelon, Ashdod, Beersheva, Sderot, and more.

The donors to this “refugees for perpetuity” policy are the U.S. government and other Western nations who fund UNRWA policies to the tune of \$1.2 billion each year.

Perhaps the time has come for UNRWA donors to reconsider their funding unless its policies change. Why should any nation fund a war education curriculum? After all, the UNRWA slogan is “Peace Starts Here.”

<http://www.jewishpress.com/indepth/analysis/behind-the-news-in-israel-david-bedein/summer-anti-semitic-demonstartions/2014/09/03/>

The gate to an UNRWA facility in Gaza.

Photo Credit: Wissam Nassar/FLASH90

During the summer of 2014, more than 100 synchronized anti-Semitic demos occurred across the face of the earth. As an MSW practitioner of community organizing for 40 years, I sensed professional facilitation of these massive protests. The question, however was: Where did the money come from to fund these efforts?

The finger points in one direction: Unchecked cash to UNRWA in Gaza.

And how does that cash get there? Each month, the Israel Civil Administration dispatches a Brinks truck to UNRWA camps in Gaza, to deliver \$13 million in cash dollars from donor nations who send their donations through the Bank of Israel, to pay UNRWA teachers and workers. However, the UNRWA teachers union and the UNRWA workers union in Gaza were taken over by Hamas eleven years ago - which means that all funds wind up in the coffers of terrorists. The Israel Civil Administration spokespeople admit that there are no controls over the cash flow to UNRWA in Gaza. So, this summer, at the direction of Hamas, cash for UNRWA humanitarian efforts wound up in the hands of demonstration organizers, who bankrolled events the world over that mobilized the "Palestinian diaspora," in conjunction with the "Right of Return" center in London, which tabulates Palestinian refugees who live outside of the Middle East. Indeed, Michael Kingsley-Nyinah, director of the executive office of UNRWA, made a speech in Jerusalem in February 2009 in which he confirmed that UNRWA is also responsible for three million Palestinian refugees who are registered with UNRWA as Palestinian refugees, even though they live outside of the Middle East - in addition to the five million who are registered with UNRWA as Palestinian refugees in the Middle East.

The simultaneous demos of summer 2014, which often turned violent, coincided with the 4,500 aerial attacks fired from Gaza, where UNRWA hosts 1.2 million Arab refugees – two thirds of the Arabs in Gaza – who have lived in “temporary” Gaza refugee camps since 1948, imbued with the mantra that they have a “right of return” to “their” villages – by force of arms and missiles.

And when these Gazans fire their missiles from their crowded refugee camps on Ashkelon, Beer Sheva, and Ashdod, their clearly stated purpose is to scare Jews out of “their” villages from 1948, which UNRWA teaches them to believe belongs to them... and another eight million people registered around the world as “refugees” with UNRWA.

In that context, the theme of UNRWA education, which has adopted the curriculum of the Palestinian Authority, is to fight to the death for the ‘right of return’, a notion nurtured by UNRWA and financed by western nations who blindly fund UNRWA, while spokespeople of the Israel Civil Administration mistakenly refer to UNRWA schools as the “alternative to Hamas”.... It would seem that the UNRWA cash cow may soon be challenged.

Israel will bear some of that responsibility.

A Dispassionate Look at UNRWA

September 24, 2014

In the New Year, Israel and nations concerned about the humanitarian rehabilitation of Gaza are looking for an agency to carry out that task at hand. A neutral entity has been sought in order to address that need.

There are those who have suggested that UNRWA take that role.

Yet UNRWA statements and actions during the IDF -GAZA summer war of 2014 would disqualify UNRWA from assuming any such role.

Let us examine UNRWA statements and actions, June 27 through August 23

Certain factors become readily evident:

- UNRWA, which has a mandate to function as a humanitarian relief organization, consistently and inappropriately politicizes its positions.
- That politicization is expressed via a virulently anti-Israel stance.
- UNRWA is controlled by or allows itself to be used by Hamas. Its representatives studiously avoid mention of Hamas behavior that is egregiously destructive to the civilians of Gaza.
- UNRWA statements are frequently tendentious. They include distortions of fact, and blatant misrepresentations.

HAMAS

UNRWA's relationship to Hamas is at the core of this review.

An examination of UNRWA press releases and public statements by UNRWA representatives for the time period of this report reveals that Hamas is almost never mentioned by name.

On July 11, for example, Robert Turner, Director of UNRWA Operations in Gaza, exhibiting a rare attempt to be (or to seem to be) even-handed, said:

“The United Nations has condemned indiscriminate rocket fire from Gaza on civilian areas in Israel and I do so again now.”

“Rocket fire from Gaza...” Perhaps the rockets fire themselves. There is no mention that Hamas is doing the bulk of the launching. And as to the fire being “indiscriminate... Does he suggest that there is a discriminating way to fire rockets at civilians?

Not once during this time period was there a complaint or accusation voiced publicly by an UNRWA representative with regard to the Hamas practice of launching rockets and firing mortars from or near civilian sites — most particularly in this context, UNRWA installations.

Were one to form an impression of the war based solely on statements emanating from UNRWA, one would not know that such a practice – involving extensive utilization of civilians as human shields, which is blatantly in defiance of international law – had been taking place.

The failure of UNRWA personnel to refer to Hamas’s use of human shields is particularly disturbing because UNRWA’s mandate is humanitarian: the agency’s first obligation is to the wellbeing of the Palestinian Arabs, referred to as refugees, for whom it maintains responsibility.

An UNRWA document declares explicitly that:

“UNRWA has a very clear mandate for protection...[which includes] obtaining full respect for the rights of the individual in accordance with the letter and spirit of the relevant bodies of law (that is, human rights law, international humanitarian law...)”

<http://www.unrwa.org/userfiles/201006109246.pdf>

At the very same time, article 28 of the Forth Geneva Convention states that:

“The presence of a protected person may not be used to render certain points or areas immune from military operations.”

Similarly the 1998 ICC Statute declares that:

“Utilizing the presence of a civilian or other protected person to render certain points, areas or military forces immune from military operations” constitutes a war crime.

It is not remotely within the realm of the possible that UNRWA, an international humanitarian agency, is unaware of these legal prohibitions.

Nor does it withstand the test of credibility that UNRWA staff might have been unaware of Hamas’s practice in this regard. Hamas even put out a video encouraging it:

<http://www.idfblog.com/blog/2014/07/08/hamas-uses-human-shields/>

What we are seeing is a willful readiness to ignore these Hamas practices – in spite of the obligation of UNRWA to respond to them. In this sense, UNRWA has most grievously failed those individuals for whom it has responsibility.

That UNRWA is prepared to do this is most telling. It strongly suggests that UNRWA does not function as an autonomous humanitarian organization, but rather at the behest of Hamas.

In the handful of times that Hamas was mentioned by UNRWA representatives, it was almost always to indicate that Hamas was **not** involved in one matter or another.

Not once, but three times in the course of days, rockets were discovered hidden in UNRWA schools. The first time was on July 16, when UNRWA announced that 20 rockets had been found.

The placement of rockets in the school was soundly “condemned” as “a flagrant violation of ...international law.” But once again, no group was identified as responsible.

UNRWA itself was then roundly criticized by international commentators for saying it had “informed the relevant authorities” in order to have the rockets taken away. This meant handing the rockets back to Hamas instead of having them dismantled.

Not so, UNRWA replied:

“...those authorities we contacted are under the authority of the national unity government in Ramallah now that Hamas has effectively left the government.”

<http://www.unrwa.org/newsroom/press-releases/unrwa-strongly-condemns-placement-rockets-school>

This rationale was not well accepted, as in point of fact there is no authority in Gaza except Hamas.

But perhaps the single most disingenuous statement in the press release cited above is this:

“This incident [i.e., rockets placed in an UNRWA school], **which is the first of its kind in Gaza**, endangered civilians.”

One blogger commented, tongue-in-cheek, that yes, this is the first time this number of rockets was found in this particular UNRWA school.

He was not far from the truth: Only in the very narrowest sense would this be the “first time,” as a link between UNRWA schools and Hamas has been well documented for many years.

A special report from the Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center, released in December 2002, indicated that a number of wanted terrorists were found hiding inside schools run by UNRWA.

A Shin Bet (Israeli secret service) report drawn up after Operation Defensive Shield **identified the UNRWA schools that had been used for storing ammunition.**

In the 2003 elections for representatives of the UNRWA union in the Gaza strip, Hamas-affiliated candidates — formally identified with the Islamic Bloc — gained 11

out of 11 seats in the teachers' sector. The Islamic Bloc has been charged by Hamas with **furthering the goal of Hamas within the schools.**

With regard to the first cache of rockets found in July, UNRWA refused Israel's request for pictures of those weapons, arguing that "any photographic material" is evidence needed for its investigation of the matter. The fact of such an investigation by UNRWA – which is not likely to result in an announcement of "findings," in any event – would in no way have precluded sharing of photos. However, such pictures might possibly have allowed identification of the rockets as the type utilized by Hamas.

When the second cache of rockets was found, UNRWA announced that staff had been withdrawn from the premises, "and so we are unable to confirm the precise number of rockets."

<http://www.unrwa.org/newsroom/press-releases/unrwa-condemns-placement-rockets-second-time-one-its-schools>

There was no explanation as to how it had been possible to confirm the 20 rockets in the first instance.

By July 29, a third cache of rockets had been found in an UNRWA school; there was very little press about this. One blogger cited information he had acquired that the rockets were discovered when the IDF learned of them from a member of Hamas they had captured.

But storage of rockets in an UNRWA facility was hardly the worst of what was encountered in the course of the war:

On July 30, three IDF soldiers were killed by a booby-trapped UNRWA clinic that housed the opening of a tunnel.

<http://www.jihadwatch.org/2014/07/three-idf-soldiers-killed-at-booby-trapped-unrwa-health-clinic>

Over 80 kilograms of explosives were built into the clinic walls.

<http://www.israelnationalnews.com/News/News.aspx/183566#.VA8sBpvlrIV>

There was no comment from UNRWA on this, but serious questions have been raised regarding precisely how much can go on without UNRWA staff being aware of what is taking place.

On July 26, IDF troops discovered a massive terror tunnel underneath Gaza that was dug 25 meters deep and had entire underground rooms built to withstand airstrikes.

In these bunkers they reportedly found large bags of UNRWA aid – sacks of rice and even building material. (The photo below is from the IDF.)

<http://elderofziyon.blogspot.co.il/2014/07/unrwa-supplies-found-in-terror-tunnel.html#.VA4N8GflrIV>

There has been no comment from UNRWA on this, either. But here it appears we see evidence of the linkage between UNRWA relief personnel and the Hamas personnel who work the tunnels.

UNRWA's relationship with Israel

While UNRWA personnel decline to accuse Hamas of endangering civilians or acting in defiance of international humanitarian law, precisely the reverse situation prevails where Israel is concerned. UNRWA spokespersons and various senior members of the administrative staff have few inhibitions when it comes to making these charges.

A few examples:

“We condemn this callous [hard-hearted, unfeeling] shelling and the extensive loss of life in the strongest possible terms” — UNRWA Commissioner-General Pierre Krahenbuhl

“I also condemn use of force by Israeli security forces on Gaza that cause civilian casualties in violation of international humanitarian law” — Robert Turner, Director of UNRWA Operations in Gaza

“Last night, children were killed as they slept next to their parents on the floor of a classroom in a UN designated shelter in Gaza. Children killed in their sleep; this is an affront to all of us, a source of universal shame. Today the world stands disgraced.

“...Our initial assessment is that it was Israeli artillery that hit our school...

“I condemn in the strongest possible terms this serious violation of international law by Israeli forces.” — UNRWA Commissioner-General Pierre Krahenbuhl

[An alleged attack was] “tragic and appalling” — Chris Gunness, UNRWA spokesman

“We call on Israeli security forces to end attacks against civilians & civilian infrastructure which are contrary to international law” — UNRWA tweet

“We are very disturbed that people with disabilities are among victims of Israeli strikes on #Gaza”

The charges leveled at the IDF by UNRWA are precipitous: there is a rush to judgment before sufficient investigation of the circumstances has been done. One can see this in the statement above by Robert Turner. He segues immediately from “our initial assessment” to “this serious violation of international law.”

UNRWA does not acknowledge that Hamas has bases of operation near its facilities and shoots from them at the IDF.

Thus, when there is shooting in the general area of an UNRWA installation, a charge is immediately leveled that carries with it the implication that the IDF is willfully shooting directly at the installation. There is no readiness to concede that either the IDF was shooting at a nearby Hamas base, or that it was actually a stray Hamas mortar or rocket that hit the installation.

Interestingly, it is John Ging, the former director of UNRWA Operations in Gaza, and now the director of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs of the United Nations, who is prepared to be truthful about the circumstances. He told Radio Canada that, **yes, Hamas shoots rockets into Israel from residential areas and from near UNRWA facilities.**

<http://legalinsurrection.com/2014/07/un-official-admits-hamas-firing-rockets-from-the-vicinity-of-un-facilities/>

Among the numerous incidents in which unreasonable charges were leveled at the IDF by UNRWA, this one stands out as notable:

UNRWA charged that Israel had shelled a school in Beit Hanoun in the north of Gaza, where people had taken shelter. The claim was that 15 people had been killed and over 100 injured. And what took place was labeled a “war crime.”

Robert Turner, Director of UNRWA Operations in Gaza, said that there was no information that there was military activity around the school.

“This was an installation we were managing, that we monitored [to ensure] that our neutrality was maintained.”

Hamas? According to Turner, UNRWA had no information of Hamas activity around the school.

A statement by the UNRWA Commissioner-General read:

“The security situation in the Beit Hanoun area was deteriorating rapidly and over the course of the day UNRWA had been attempting to negotiate with the Israeli Defense Forces a pause in the fighting during which they would guarantee a safe corridor to relocate staff and any displaced persons who chose to evacuate to a more secure location. Approval for that never came to UNRWA. In addition, the school’s coordinates had been formally conveyed to the Israeli authorities on 12 occasions, most recently at 10:56 this morning.”

<http://www.unrwa.org/newsroom/official-statements/statement-unrwa-commissioner-general-pierre-kr%C3%A4henb%C3%BChl>

At one point Chris Gunness, UNRWA spokesperson, tweeted that:

“Over the course of the day UNRWA tried 2 coordinate with the Israeli Army a window for civilians 2 leave & it was never granted.”

The direct implication is that people who were sheltered in the school might have gotten out except for Israel's failure to allow this to happen.

Israel's response to this:

"the Israel Defense Forces told the Red Cross to evacuate civilians from UNRWA's shelter in Beit Hanoun between the hours of 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. today. UNRWA and the Red Cross received the message.

" Hamas prevented civilians from evacuating the area during the window that the IDF gave them."

<http://www.idfblog.com/blog/2014/07/24/hamas/>

What is more, explained the IDF:

"In recent days, Hamas has fired rockets from an area of Beit Hanoun where an UNRWA shelter is located.

"Today, July 24, Hamas continued firing from Beit Hanoun. The IDF responded by targeting the source of the fire. Also today, several rockets launched from Gaza toward Israel fell short and hit Beit Hanoun."

According to the final IDF investigation:

"...one of the mortars fell in the school's courtyard while it was empty of people."

"In light of the investigation's findings, we have rejected claims of casualties in the school grounds as they were presented by various elements immediately after the incident took place,"

<http://www.haaretz.com/news/diplomacy-defense/1.607384>

Were people killed at the Beit Hanoun school at all? It remains unclear.

Israel has emphasized repeatedly that the IDF does not directly attack civilian installations.

As to the fallacious charge of “war crimes”:

“The law is clear that military targets may be attacked, even if civilian casualties are anticipated, so long as the importance of the military target is proportional to the anticipated civilian casualties and that reasonable efforts are made, consistent with military needs, to minimize civilian casualties. This sensible rule of proportionality was devised in the context of ordinary military encounters, in which the enemy is not using their own civilians as human shields. If the enemy is deliberately using civilians as human shields, the rules of proportionality should allow for more anticipated civilian casualties, especially if the target is of great military significance.

“...To be sure, the law of proportionality also required Israel to take reasonable steps, consistent with its military needs, to minimize Palestinian civilian casualties, even when attacking legitimate military targets. The key word here is ‘reasonable,’ and Israel has gone well beyond what other countries have done in analogous situations. They issued warnings, by leaflet, phone and other means-warnings that Hamas countermanded in its efforts to keep civilians in harm’s way and continue to have them serve as human shields to protect their terror tunnels. Israel did not issue warnings when it needed to act quickly to save its own soldiers from ambushes and other serious risks. Israel thus tried to minimize Palestinian civilian casualties, while Hamas tried to increase both Palestinian and Israeli civilian casualties.”

<http://matzav.com/was-israel-justified-in-going-after-hamas-terrorist-tunnels-the-key-question-for-any-legal-proceeding>

The charges of “war crimes” and “violations of international law” are leveled by UNRWA without basis in fact.

UNRWA distortions of fact and outrageous statements

According to Sami Meshesha, a spokesperson for UNRWA:

“[the] majority of dead and injured are women and children, which is of profound concern to UNRWA”

<http://en.alquds.com/en/stories/1375>

Were this the case, it would suggest random attacks by the IDF on innocent civilians. But in point of fact, this statement is fallacious.

The ratio of those killed in the Gaza operation is 81.9 male to 18.1 female. What is more, among males killed, almost half were men between the ages of 18 and 28, with men between the ages of 29 and 48 comprising another 20%.

What this indicates is that we are not looking at a pattern of indiscriminate killing of innocent civilians, but rather a high percentage of those likely to be combatants killed.

<http://honestreporting.com/analysis-of-gazans-killed-so-far-in-operation-protective-edge/>

The number of children counted among the dead was 18%, even though a full half of the population of Gaza is under 14 years of age.

These figures, put out by Al-Jazeera, indicate a pattern that is not random.

After the final ceasefire was established, Chris Gunness gave an interview to Linda Tamim, which can be seen here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7bMrsIFCLng>

It is in the course of the very first minute of this interview that he makes statements that reflect a breathtaking failure to acknowledge the Hamas role in the conflict, and that do a severe injustice to the IDF.

He says:

“...the defenseless people (of Gaza) have been subjected to a dehumanizing bombardment. They were ordered out of their homes by the Israeli army, they had to walk through battlegrounds, found themselves in UN compounds, some of them were hit in those compounds by the same army...”

“[This was] an industrial scale denial of their human dignity.”

Where is Hamas in this description? One might think that the Israeli army came into Gaza for the specific purpose of making the lives of the civilians miserable.

The most egregiously offensive statement made by Gunness is that “they were ordered out of their homes by the Israeli army.” As if this was one part of a package of strong arm techniques designed to cause misery.

This would not have been necessary had Hamas not chosen to store and launch weapons near those homes. In asking people to leave, the IDF was demonstrating a concern for human life, a concern that Hamas exhibited not at all.

As to civilians being hit in the compounds “by that same army,” he is leveling a blanket charge that is neither fair nor reasonable. Some Hamas rockets fell short of their targets and landed inside Gaza. Some Hamas mortar shells hit Gazan civilians.

On July 16, UNRWA spokesperson Chris Gunness tweeted the following:

“Great interviewee @ Shifa Hosp Gaza right now Prof Mads Gilbert ... call him 4 fatality & cas figs and atoms.”

Ron Prosor, Israeli Ambassador to the UN, then drafted a letter to UNRWA’s Commissioner-General protesting that what Gunness did was highly inappropriate because Gilbert was:

“...an outspoken proponent of terrorist attacks against civilians. In September 2001, Dr. Gilbert explicitly supported the ‘moral right’ of Al-Qaeda to perpetrate the 9/11 terrorist attacks against thousands of American civilians.”

<http://embassies.gov.il/un/statements/letters/Pages/UNRWA-Spokesperson-is-Biased.aspx>

UNRWA political involvement

The very thrust of UNRWA’s involvement in Gaza has become politicized. But here we have one very specific political statement, made by Chris Gunness, UNRWA spokesperson:

“Huge swathes of Gaza have been levelled. We cannot rebuild it with our hands tied behind our back.

“The blockade must end. We are beyond the realm of humanitarian action alone.”

Once again, Guinness leaves Hamas out of the picture. He does not acknowledge that the sea blockade is designed to prevent weapons from getting to Hamas, which would use them against Israeli civilians. And he certainly does not call for the demilitarization of Hamas.

He simply steps in and demands precisely what Hamas is seeking: the lifting of the blockade. So that Gaza can be rebuilt, he says.

For the record: He is in error regarding “huge swathes” of Gaza having been leveled. Less than 5% of the area of Gaza was hit by the IDF.

<http://send.hadavars.com/index.php?action=message&l=2090&c=30525&m=28855&s=a6cb16d3b3816334978bf4ecf04fe6e1>

Rising Above Personal Attacks, the Time has Come to Examine UNRWA Policy

December 10, 2014

United Nations Relief and Works Agency spokesman Chris Gunness launched personal attacks this week against a Palestinian critic of UNRWA who wrote an op-ed for *The Jerusalem Post*, followed by a vitriolic attack against the *Post* itself for publishing the piece. This past Sunday, however, Gunness related to substantive questions about UNRWA policy in a radio interview on the new Voice of Israel Internet radio network. Gunness's policy statements deserve close attention.

He argues that there are other refugees in the world whose refugee status extends for more than one generation, under the aegis of the other UN agency (the one that handles all other refugees in the world), the United Nations High Commission of Refugees (UNHCR). Yet he neglects to mention that Palestinian refugees are the only refugees in the world who are promised the "right of return" by a UN agency.

Gunness states that UNRWA's mandate comes from the UN General Assembly, and that is where the UNRWA definition of "refugee" comes from. Yet UNGA 302, which created UNRWA and from which UNRWA gets its mandate, did not define what a "refugee" is.

UNRWA itself invented a working definition of "refugee" in 1950. Its original refugee definition was: "For working purposes, the Agency has decided that a refugee is a needy person, who, as a result of the war in Palestine, has lost his home and his means of livelihood." So it is UNRWA that decides who is a refugee – not the UNGA.

Indeed, UNRWA changed the definition over time, including, around 1965, the accommodation of children and grandchildren through the male line, and at a later date extending the definition to all descendants.

Gunness states that the only factor that can change UNRWA policy toward refugees is the UN General Assembly, confusing UNRWA policies with the UNRWA mandate. While the UNRWA mandate to handle Palestinian refugees is etched in stone by the UNGA, donor nations can influence any internal UNRWA policy decision which donor nations may find objectionable or inconsistent with UN policies. Gunness claims that UNRWA “must” use the host nation’s textbooks, but does not explain that the choice to do so is an internal UNRWA decision that can be changed if a schoolbook or school teacher violates UN principles.

Gunness holds that Nathan Brown, a Professor of Political Science at George Washington University, is his sole source authority on Palestinian education, and ignores the fact that Brown works for pro-Arab organizations. Gunness ignores multiple independent studies of the new PA textbooks that were conducted by The Meir Amit Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center, the Vatican, IMPACT and CFNEPR over the past 14 years, all of which concluded that the new PA textbooks, used in UNRWA schools, encourage jihad, martyrdom and right of return to Palestine, by force of arms.

Gunness categorically states there is no evidence that Hamas terrorists are on the payroll of the UN. Yet successive reports of the US Congressional Research also show that UNRWA, which receives \$300 million per year from the US government, reports that UNRWA has never vetted its staff to see if UNRWA employs members of Hamas.

Meanwhile, the European Parliament funded a study that documented Hamas’s takeover of the UNRWA unions in March 2009. The pro-Hamas al-Resala newspaper, right before the September 2012 UNRWA union elections stated that, “It is noteworthy that Hamas has controlled the UNRWA staff union in the elections since its inception....”

Al Quds, a Fatah-leaning paper, wrote after the elections: “According to multiple sources within the Election Commission...

that the 'Professional' slate of Hamas won 25 seats out of 27, divided by 11 seats out of 11 in the teachers' sector and 6 out of 7 in the labor sector elections, and 8 seats out of 9 in the services sector election."

Gunness states that whenever there are allegations of UNRWA employees violating UNRWA's neutrality policy, "They are always investigated and disciplinary action is taken up to and including dismissal."

Yet in March 2013, in my presence, Gunness told staffers of the US Congress that Hamas leader Suhail Hindi, head of the UNRWA teachers' union in Gaza, had been dismissed.

However, Hindi was suspended for less than a week. Hindi functions in his capacity to this day.

So much for removing Hamas on staff.

In sum, the concern over UNRWA is that, as a UN agency, it is supposed to maintain absolute neutrality. In an interview with the *Post*, US State Department spokesman Edgar Vasquez stated unequivocally: "It is imperative that all sides respect the humanitarian and development role of UNRWA.

And we expect UNRWA personnel to uphold its stated policy of neutrality so that it can carry out its critical mandate."

In light of the UN policy of neutrality, I have repeatedly asked the US Embassy and US AID, which administers funds to UNRWA, why the US does not demand an overhaul of the UNRWA curriculum and an end to Hamas presence in UNRWA schools as a condition to render future US funds to UNRWA.

No response has been received – not from the US embassy and not from US AID.

Perhaps the time has come for the US Congress to hold hearings about UNRWA policies, which have now been clearly articulated by UNRWA spokesperson Chris Gunness, to determine if UNRWA is indeed preserving the sacrosanct principle of UN neutrality. After all, if UNRWA is found to be employing thousands of Hamas employees, funding for UNRWA from nations which designate Hamas as a lethal foreign terrorist organization could be suspended.

That includes the US, Canada, the UK, the EU and Australia.

Letter to Parliament

11 December 2014

To: Ms. Imogen Atkinson

Office of David Burrowes MP, Member of Parliament for Enfield Southgate

From: David Bedein, Director, Israel Resource News Agency & Center for Near East Policy Research

Thank you for your kind words about our briefing at the Henry Jackson Society.

The theme of UNRWA is "Peace Starts Here." Accountability for UNRWA policies, which do not promote peace, rests with donors to UNRWA.

The UN does not fund UNRWA activities. Donor nations do.

Our published piece in today's Jerusalem Post speaks for itself.

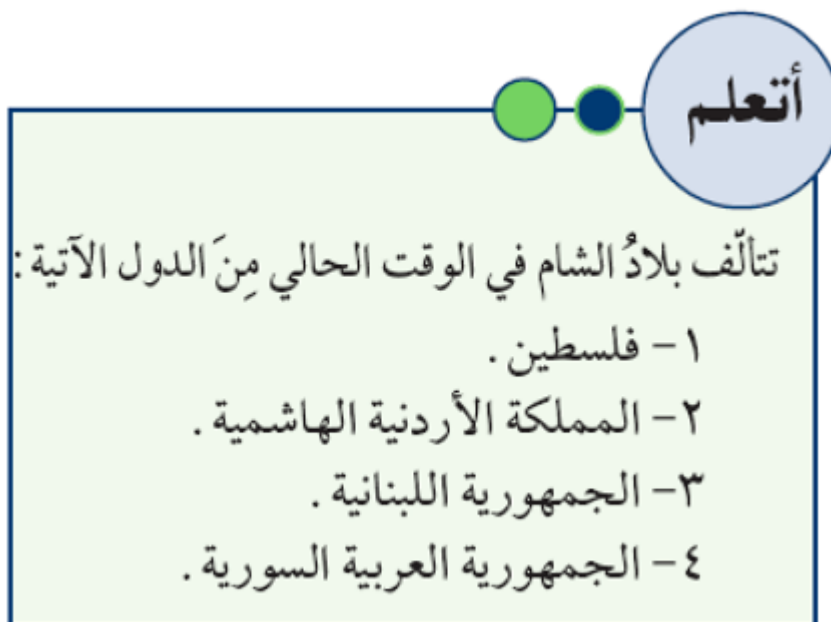
<http://israelbehindthenews.com/rising-personal-attacks-time-come-examine-unrwa-policy/12236/>

There are numerous indiscretions in UNRWA education policy which members of Parliament could question.

We suggest that MP Burrowes begin by asking six questions concerning Western-funded UNRWA education policies which affect the minds and hearts of 492,000 students who now study in UNRWA schools:

1. Why is Israel not mentioned in textbooks used by UNRWA?

EXAMPLE



The land of the Levant [Bilad al-Sham in Arabic] presently comprises the following states:

1. *Palestine*
2. *The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan*
3. *The Republic of Lebanon*
4. *The Syrian Arab Republic*

(History of the Ancient Civilizations, Grade 5 (2004) p. 30)

Note: Later editions feature “Palestine, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria” only, with no titles. The State of Israel is missing in both versions.

2. Why does Palestine replace Israel on maps of textbooks used by UNRWA?

EXAMPLE

فلسطين عربية إسلامية

الدرس
الرابع

٤

الشَّعب الفلسطيني جزء من الأمة العربية الإسلامية .



Lesson 4: Palestine is Arab and Muslim

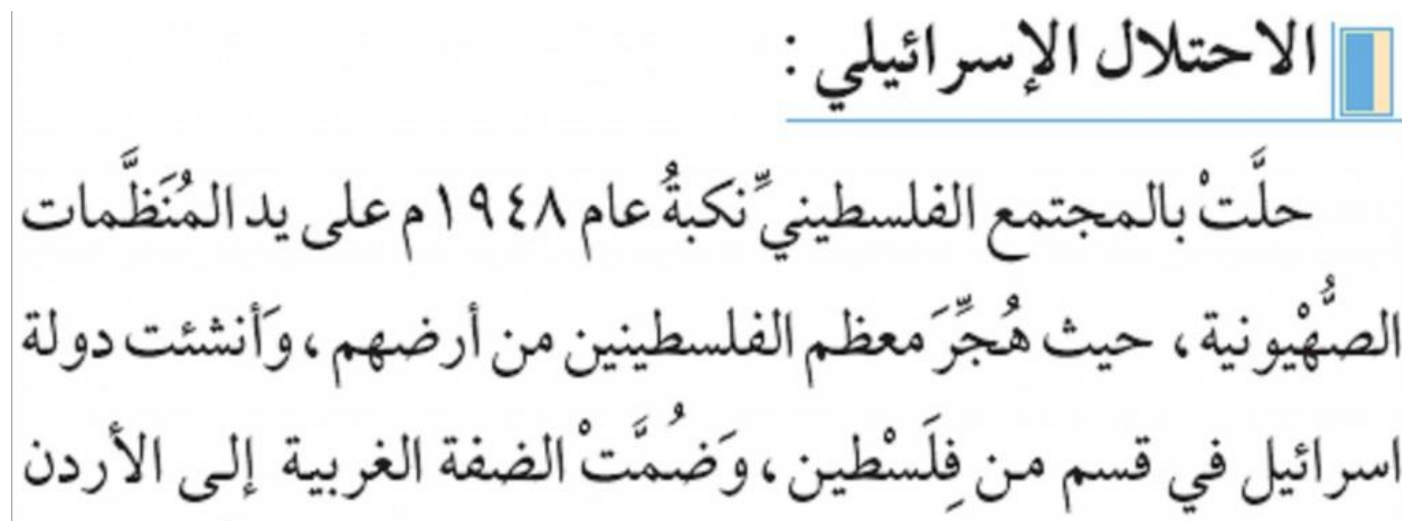
The Palestinian people is part of the Arab-Muslim nation

(National Education, Grade 2, Part 1 (2007) p. 16) [Latest edition of this book so far]

3. Why is the very creation of Israel in 1948, by virtue of the 1947 UN partition resolution, defined in UNRWA textbooks as “occupation”?

How can a UN body object to the existence of a nation that is a member in good standing of the United Nations Organization?

EXAMPLE



Israeli Occupation:

A disaster fell upon Palestinian society in 1948 at the hands of the Zionist organizations as most of the Palestinians were forced to emigrate from their land and the State of Israel was established on part of Palestine...

(National Education, Grade 5 (2013) p. 30)

4. Why does the UN allow textbooks used by UNRWA education to advocate war?

EXAMPLE

٥ أوفّق بين الأسطر الشعرية والعواطف التي تعبّر عنها فيما يأتي :

صباحُ مناظليكَ الصَّيْدِ فِي الْأَكْبَالِ فِي الْأَغْلَالِ .	اللهفةُ على تحريرِ المسجدِ الأقصى .
صباحُ المسكِ والعنبرِ صباحُ التينِ والزيتونِ والليمونِ والزعريرِ .	التفاؤلُ بتحريرِ فلسطين .
تناديني مآذُنُهُ : غيابك طالُ وتهتفُ بي : تعالَ تعالُ .	الحرصُ على التمسُّكِ بأرضِ فلسطينَ والثباتِ فيها .
صباحُ العاشقينَ ثراكُ ، لن يُلقوا بغيرِ حماكَ ما ارتحلوا . . عصا الترحالِ .	الإعجابُ بجمالِ الطبيعةِ في فلسطين .
صباحُ المجدِ والحريةِ الحمراءِ يرويها دُمُ الشهداءِ صباحُكَ أنتِ يا وطنيَ بشمسِكَ نقهرُ الظُّلَماءِ .	كراهيةُ المحتلِّ لما يعانيه المناضلونَ في سجونِهِ .

A language exercise indicating the liberation of Palestine by a violent struggle:

I will reconcile the following poetic lines with the feelings they express:

A morning of glory and red liberty watered by the martyrs' blood... [Bottom right]

– The hope for the liberation of Palestine [Second item on the left]

(Reading and Texts, Grade 9, Part 1 (2013) p. 12)

5. Why does UNRWA use textbooks which emulate martyrs who kill themselves while committing acts of murder?

EXAMPLE

الشَّهِيدُ

سَأَخِيلُ رُوحِي عَلَى رَاحَتِي
وَأَلْفِي بِهَا فِي مَهَاوِي الرُّدَى
فَإِمَّا حَيَاةٌ تَسُرُّ الصَّدِيقَ
وَإِمَّا مَمَاتٌ يَغِيظُ الْعَدَى
وَمَا الْعَيْشُ لَا عِشْتُ إِنْ لَمْ أَكُنْ
مَخُوفَ الْجَنَابِ حَرَامَ الْحِمَى
لَعَمْرُكَ إِنِّي أَرَى مَصْرُوعِي
وَلَكِنْ أُعِذُّ إِلَيْهِ الْخَطَى
أَرَى مَقْتَلِي دُونَ حَقِّي السَّلْبِ
وَدُونَ بِلَادِي هُوَ الْمُبْنَى
بَلَدٌ لِأُذُنِي سَمَاعُ الصَّلِيلِ
وَيُبْهِجُ نَفْسِي مَسِيلُ الدِّمَا
وَجِسْمٌ تَجَدَّلَ فِي الصَّخْفَحَانِ
تَنَاقَشُهُ جَارِحَاتُ الْقَلَا
كَمَا دَمُهُ الْأَرْضُ بِالْأَرْجَوَانِ
وَأَتَقَلَّ بِالْعِطْرِ رِيحَ الصَّبَا
وَنَامَ لِيَحْلُمَ حُلْمَ الْخُلُودِ
وَيَهْنَأَ فِيهِ بِأَحْلَى الرُّؤَى
لَعَمْرُكَ هَذَا مَمَاتُ الرِّجَالِ
وَمَنْ رَامَ مَوْتًا شَرِيفًا قَدْ
لَكَيْفَ اصْطَبَارِي لِكَيْدِ الْحَقُودِ
وَكَيْفَ احْتِمَالِي لِيَوْمِ الْأَدَى
يَغْلِبِي سَأْرَمِي وَجُودَ الْعُدَاةِ
وَقَلْبِي حَدِيدٌ وَتَارِي نَفْطَى
وَأَحْمِي جِيَاظِي بِحَدِّ الْحُمَامِ
فَتَعْلَمُ قَوْمِي بِأَنِّي الْفَتَى

الرَّاحَةُ: بَاطِنُ الْيَدِ.
الْمَهَاوِي: جَمْعُ مَهْوَى،
وَهُوَ مَا بَيْنَ الْجَبَلَيْنِ.
الرُّدَى: الْهَلَاكُ.
حَرَامَ الْحِمَى: أَنْ يَكُونَ
مَوْطِنُهُ فِي مَأْمَنٍ مِنَ الْعَدُوِّ.
أُعِذُّ: أَسْرِعُ.
تَجَدَّلَ: ارْتَضَى وَمَنْعَطَ.
الصَّخْفَحَانِ: الْأَرْضُ
الْمُسْتَوِيَّةُ الْجُرْدَاءُ، وَجَمْعُهَا
صَخْفَحٌ.
تَنَاقَشُهُ: تَنَاقَشَتْهُ وَتَنَاقَشَتْهُ.
الْأَرْجَوَانِ: الصَّبْغُ الْأَحْمَرُ.
الرُّؤَى: جَمْعُ رُؤْيَا، وَهِيَ مَا
يَرَاهُ الْإِنْسَانُ فِي نَوْمِهِ.
الْفَتَى: النَّارُ، أَوْ لَهْيُهَا.
الْجِيَاظِ: جَمْعُ حَرُوشٍ،
وَهُوَ مَجْمَعُ الْمَاءِ، وَيُرِيدُ بِهَا
الشَّاعِرُ هُنَا الْوَطْنَ.

(عبد الرحيم محمود)

٩٧

The Martyr [Excerpts]

I will carry my soul in my palm and toss it in the abyss of destruction

[Let it be] either a life that delights a friend or a death that infuriates the enemies

[Verses 1&2]

Hearing [weapons'] clash is pleasant to my ear

And the flow of blood gladdens my soul

As well as a body thrown upon the ground

Skirmished over by the desert predators

[Verses 6&7]

By your life! This is the death of men

And whoever asks for a noble death – here it is!

[Verse 10]

(Our Beautiful Language, Grade 7, Part 1 (2013) p. 75) [The piece here is taken from an older edition, p. 97]

6. Why does UNRWA use textbooks to indoctrinate students to engage in the “right of return” by force of arms?

EXAMPLE

إننا لعائدون

عائدون عائدون إننا لعائدون
فالحدود لن تكون والقلع والحصون

فاصبروا يا نازحون

إننا لعائدون

عائدون للديار للسهول للجبال
تحت أعلام الفخار والجهاد والنضال
بالدماء والفداء والإخاء والوفاء

إننا لعائدون

عائدون ياربنا عائدون يا هضاب
عائدون للصبا عائدون للشباب
للجهاد في النجاد والحصاد في البلاد
إننا لعائدون

We Are Returning

Returning, returning, we are returning

Borders shall not exist, nor citadels and fortresses

Cry out, O those who have left:

We are returning

Returning to the homes, to the valleys, to the mountains

Under the flag of glory, Jihad and struggle

With blood, sacrifice, fraternity and loyalty

We are returning

Returning, O hills; returning, O heights

Returning to childhood; returning to youth

To Jihad in the hills, [to] harvest in the land

We are returning

(Our Beautiful Language, Grade 5, Part 1 (2013) p. 50)

These examples represent only some of the issues ignored in the studies of UNRWA/PA education that were presented to DFID and the British government by organizations that whitewashed the current “spirit” of the schools in the UN refugee camps.



**One for the Guinness Book of World Records: The Myth of an
UNRWA Policy of Peace that Does Not Exist. December 27, 2014**

"We Are Returning

Returning, returning, we are returning

Borders shall not exist, nor citadels and fortresses

Cry out, O those who have left:

*We are returning
Returning to the homes, to the valleys, to the mountains
Under the flag of glory,
Jihad and struggle With blood, sacrifice, fraternity and loyalty
We are returning
Returning, O hills; returning, O heights
Returning to childhood; returning to youth
To Jihad in the hills, [to] harvest in the land
We are returning"*

(Our Beautiful Language, Grade 7, Part 1 (2013) p. 28: taught in all UNRWA schools)

On December 19, UNRWA spokesman Chris Gunness articulated UNRWA policies in an op-ed that ran in *The Jerusalem Post* titled, "UNRWA: A Different Perspective." Gunness proclaims the myth that UNRWA strives for peace and tolerance and acts as nothing more than an innocuous social welfare agency for refugees.

He compares UNRWA with UNHCR, the United Nations High Commission for Refugees, which, according to Gunness, registers refugee children "as refugees so long as their plight remains unresolved."

Unlike UNRWA, however, UNHCR resolves the plight of refugees through permanent resettlement, a policy which the United Nations does not forbid UNRWA from applying.

If UNRWA chose to operate according to UNHCR principles which protect the rights of refugees to be resettled, the plight of the Palestinian refugees from the 1948 war would have been addressed long ago.

By not resolving the refugees' plight and extending their refugee status to the 1948 refugees' children, grandchildren and to all future generations, UNRWA

does not allow the descendants of Arab refugees to see any end in sight to their refugee status.

Gunness neglects to say that UNRWA, unlike any UNHCR entity, is the only refugee agency which assures its population of the "right of return." New UNRWA school books openly promote the "right of return" in stories, language exercises and poems to an extent which cannot be concealed.

In terms of the UNRWA education which Gunness lauds, new Palestinian school books introduced into UNRWA schools between the years 2000 and 2006 demonize Israel, without advocating any possibility of a peaceful resolution of the conflict. New UNRWA school books obliterate Israel, which does not exist in them. New UNRWA school books replace all Israeli cities with Arab villages that existed before 1948. New UNRWA school books advocate war to liberate all of Palestine, and never confine that war to areas that Israel acquired during the 1967 war.

So where is the UNRWA "neutrality" that Gunness professes? The fact that Gunness notes that the new UNRWA books are used in Arab schools in Jerusalem where Israel maintains sovereignty cannot legitimize their approach.

Our agency has confirmed at the Jerusalem office of the Israeli Ministry of Education that no Israeli government agency has ever examined the new books that UNRWA used. It would be hard to imagine that any Israeli government agency would allow for any such curriculum to continue under UNRWA's supervision.

Regardless of the UNRWA policy to use the school books of the host entity, a school book which defies UN principles of peace should no longer be used in a UN school.

There is, indeed, an UNRWA curriculum which features human rights and tolerance.

Our agency carefully reviewed the UNRWA human rights curriculum for a Norwegian media outlet and found that UNRWA teaches peace, tolerance and human rights – for the Palestinian Islamic society only, with no mention of tolerance or acceptance of Jews, Christians or any other ethnic group.

Meanwhile, UNRWA's 30,000 employees make no pretense of neutrality. UNRWA employees are organized in professional unions without any affinity to organizations that advocate peace.

In Gaza, the UNRWA workers union and the UNRWA teachers union have elected Hamas in successive elections to lead their unions since 1999, with 93 percent voting for Hamas in the 2012 elections.

A mantra that Gunness repeats frequently, most recently on Fox News, is that "there is no evidence that Hamas terrorists are on the payroll of the UN."

However, the European Parliament funded a study that documented Hamas takeover of the UNRWA unions in March 2009.

Successive reports of the US Congressional Research note that UNRWA has never vetted its staff to see if the agency employs members of Hamas. <http://fas.org/sgp/crs/mideast/RS22967.pdf> In March 2013, in my presence on Capitol Hill, Gunness informed a senior staffer of the US Congress that Hamas leader Suhail al-Hindi, head of the UNRWA teachers union in Gaza, had been dismissed by UNRWA. However, Hindi was suspended for less than one week and continues to function in his capacity to this day.

Moreover, UNRWA schools in Gaza openly conduct Hamas paramilitary training programs known as El Kutla clubs, to prepare UNRWA students to fight to liberate all of Palestine and prepare them to die as child martyrs.

While Gunness reports that UNRWA acknowledged that Hamas rockets were in UNRWA schools, no investigation has ever been conducted to determine how

the rockets got there in the first place. Were these lethal weapons imported to UNRWA schools by the El Kutla clubs? To whom did UNRWA hand over the rockets? And why has UNRWA, a UN agency dedicated to peace, not stopped Hamas paramilitary training in the UNRWA schools? While the UNRWA theme is PEACE STARTS HERE, the current adage for UNRWA schools would be that WAR STARTS WITH UNRWA.

There is a bright side of things, when you look at how UNRWA can be ameliorated.

It is the donor nations from democratic nations in the West that allocate the \$1.2 billion budget for UNRWA, not the UN itself.

The US remains the largest donor, giving \$300 million of the annual UNRWA budget.

The new session of the US Congress provides an opportunity for it to hold open hearings on UNRWA policies.

Congress can invoke a US law on the books since 2003 which obligates the federal government to suspend funding for any agency that retains terrorist organization members on staff.

Indeed, after UNRWA Commissioner-General Peter Hansen confirmed to me at the UNRWA annual conference in Geneva in June 2004 that Hamas members were on the UNRWA payroll, Hansen was fired.

Canada, which chairs a Refugee Working Group made up of donor nations to UNRWA, can invite representatives of all donor nations to also conduct open hearings and invite residents of UNRWA facilities to hear if they want to live with another generation of empty promises to return to villages that existed before 1948.

The exclusive focus of UNRWA education is the “right to return” to villages that existed before 1948.

That can change with the input of donor nations, whose elected officials do care about the principles of the UN.

The choice is clear: Will UNRWA residents cope with yet another generation of refugee existence under the promise of the “right of return” or will they look forward to a future of dignity, rehabilitation and resettlement?

Perhaps the UNRWA funders will obligate UNRWA to replace books that advocate war with school books that advocate peace.

From Teheran to UNRWA: The New US-UNRWA Accord

July 23, 2015

As the eyes of the world focus on the dysfunctional US-Iranian accord, yet another dysfunctional accord with the US government has escaped public scrutiny: The new accord reached between the US government and UNRWA, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency, most recently posted on the web site of the US State Department.

<http://www.state.gov/j/prm/releases/frameworknew/234468.htm>

The US, the largest funder of UNRWA, (reaching \$400 million this year, one third of the UNRWA budget), could have predicated further funding of UNRWA on a humanitarian commitment to resettle UNRWA's client population: 5.4 million descendants of Arab refugees from the 1948 war – into decent permanent living conditions.

Yet the US-UNRWA accord mentions nothing of the kind.

Instead, the US-UNRWA accord mandates that thousands of these descendants of Arab refugees who have wallowed in the indignity of refugee life for 66 years, must continue to live in refugee squalor "until a comprehensive and just solution is secured," something which UNRWA will not allow to happen.

Dr. Arnon Groiss, a journalist from the Arabic language service of the Israel Broadcasting Authority, who has extensively studied PA textbooks used in the UNRWA schools, has concluded that no solution to the refugee issue is offered by UNRWA for the future of the Palestinian refugees except for one: the "right of return" to villages that existed before 1948.

Manifestations of the “right of return” in PA textbooks, as taught in UNRWA’s schools are not nostalgic literary pieces.

Rather, as presented to the students and shown here, the “Right of Return” plays a prominent role in the Palestinian political vision of a continued struggle against a delegitimized and demonized Israel until its eventual destruction.

The educational services provided by UNRWA to their 492,000 students promote this non-peaceful line, in contradiction to the Agency’s declared mission as a UN agency dedicated to peace.

Meanwhile, The US-UNRWA accord proudly features the UNRWA “Human Rights, Conflict Resolution, and Tolerance curriculum” as a step in the right direction.

However, Dr. Groiss has evaluated that curriculum and discerned what was missing: any mention of freedom of religion, religious equality and religious tolerance. In fact, the books are totally devoid of any mention of religion.

The US – UNRWA accord also lauds section 301(c) of the US Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended (hereinafter referred to as “section 301(c)”), which states: “No contributions by the United States shall be made to (UNRWA) except on the condition that (UNRWA) take all possible measures to assure that no part of the United States contribution shall be used to furnish assistance to any refugee who is receiving military training as a member of the so-called Palestine Liberation Army or any other guerilla-type organization or who has engaged in any act of terrorism.”

Yet no clause appears in the new US-UNRWA accord, which called for enforcement of this anti-terror clause.

Instead, the US–UNRWA accord relies on UNRWA itself to enforce this clause, which according to the accord “is committed to taking all possible measures in conformance with conditions on U.S. contributions to UNRWA pursuant to

section 301(c). The accord "expects UNRWA to maintain constant vigilance in its efforts and actions to fully meet the conditions on U.S. contributions as described in section 301(c)."

In other words, the US gives UNRWA the benefit of the doubt, stating that "The United States and UNRWA share concerns about the threat of terrorism," adding that "UNRWA is committed to taking all possible measures to ensure that funding provided by the United States to support UNRWA is not used to provide assistance to, or otherwise support, terrorists or terrorist organizations."

Just as the US accord with Iran places the burden of proof of any wrong-doing on the determination of the Iranian regime, the US allows UNRWA to determine if it has committed a security indiscretion.

At the same time, the US- UNRWA accord turns a blind eye to Hamas takeover of UNRWA facilities in Gaza. Sixteen years ago, the Gaza-based employees of the U.N. Relief and Works Agency held elections to choose union leaders. Hamas took advantage of the campaign and took over the entire teachers association and workers association. By 2012, more the 90 percent of UNRWA employees had become Hamas supporters.

As a result of the takeover, Hamas created an apparatus whose mission was to maintain its grip on the Gaza-based UNRWA schools. Al-Kutla Al-Islamiya (the Islamic Bloc) changed the school curriculum and introduced new textbooks, to disseminate Hamas ideology to young Gazans.

US STATE DEPARTMENT informed our agency that the US flatly denies the presence of Hamas in the UNRWA camps.

US government documents show that UNRWA, as a matter of policy, refuses to check if Hamas is present in UNRWA facilities.

All you have to do is to peruse the US government report entitled,

"U.S. Foreign Aid to the Palestinians" written by Jim Zanotti, Specialist in Middle Eastern Affairs on July 3, 2014

<http://fas.org/sgp/crs/mideast/RS22967.pdf>

That report reveals that UNRWA's terrorist screening list, required by UN resolution #1267, does not even "include Hamas, Hezbollah, or most other militant groups that operate in UNRWA's surroundings. UNRWA is unwilling to screen its contractors and funding recipients against a list supplied by only one U.N. member state."

And when it comes to widespread allegations against UNRWA for lack of transparency, the US-UNRWA accord could have set up a new system of accountability to address the cumbersome funding process for UNRWA.

Instead, the accord's financial responsibility section totally relies on UNRWA, saying that UNRWA is "expected to provide relevant information pertaining to its implementation of UNBOA recommendations and, in accordance with UN and/or UNRWA procedures and policies, required data for U.S. reporting against the United Nations Transparency and Accounting Initiative (UNTA)."

And if UNRWA does not provide that financial oversight, "as expected"?

Not a word.

The conclusion of the document says it all:

"The United States is committed to continuing its partnership with UNRWA to assist the more than 5.4million registered Palestinian refugees and other registered persons assisted by UNRWA until a just solution is achieved and UNRWA's mandate ends."

And if the UNRWA definition of a "just solution" is not achieved?

Not a word.

Instead, the US-UNRWA accord sentences an entire population of refugee descendants to the indignity of continued refugee life, with no end in sight, preparing them to return to their homes back within the 1967 lines, while the US government promises the rest of the Palestinian Arab population to settle them beyond the 1967 lines.

For whatever reason, the new US-UNRWA accord conveys one message:

WE TRUST UNRWA AND THE STATUS QUO.

More UNRWA teachers promoting violence on Facebook

September 2015

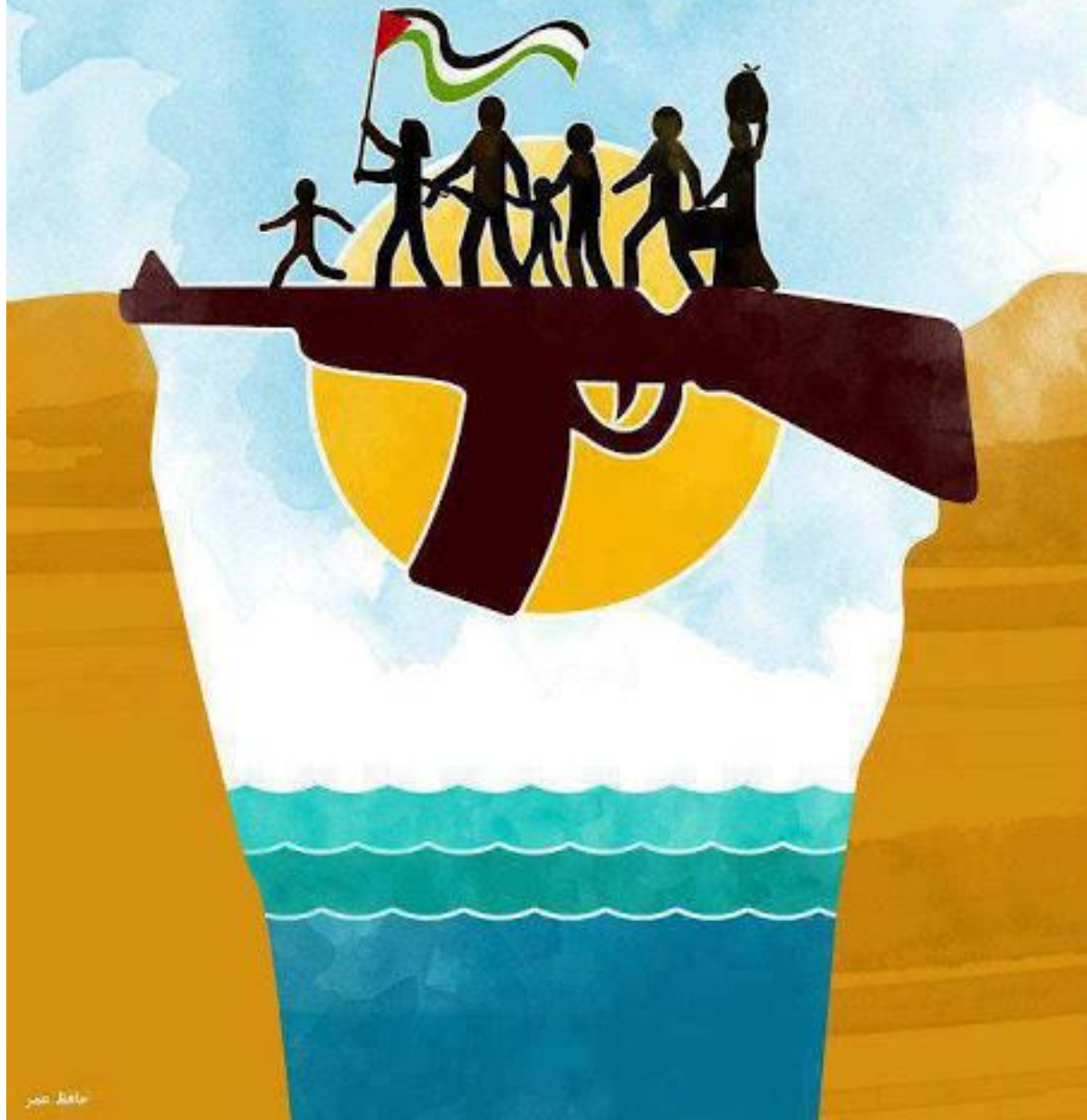
Khaled Abu Walid Kadous is an UNRWA teacher in Nablus.

Even though he lives in the area of British Mandate Palestine spends a lot of time posting about “return” to destroy Israel.



And he is not talking about a peaceful process, either.

جسر العودة





لَقَدْ خُلِقَتِ أَكْتَافُ الرِّجَالِ فَقَطْ لِحَمْلِ البِنَادِقِ ،
فَإِمَّا عِظْمَاءُ فَوْقَ الْأَرْضِ (أَوْ عِظَامٌ فِي جَوْفِهَا)

He may be a wee bit biased. Which is supposedly grounds for disciplinary action by UNRWA, we are told.

Riiiiight.

UPDATE: It turns out that he did not post these images but was tagged on them by someone else.

Kamal Zuhairi is an UNRWA teacher in Irbid, Jordan. He also **likes** to **teach** his kids to **fight** Israeli soldiers.



The caption calls for a third intifada.



This caption calls for bloody revenge.



These are UNRWA teachers, inciting violence under the UN name.

<http://elderofziyon.blogspot.co.il/2015/09/more-unrwa-teachers-promoting-violence.html#.VgmG8T-FOUm>

Last week, our agency facilitated an informal briefing for US embassy officials at the Knesset, with experts on the subject of UNRWA policies. The following letter to the US Ambassador to Israel presents five requests for UNRWA policy change.

David Bedein

January 26, 2016

Hon. Daniel Shapiro, US Ambassador To Israel

Dear Mr. Shapiro,

It was an honor to host the informal briefing for the delegation from the US embassy on the subject of UNRWA policies on January 20, 2016. We cordially thank you for your cooperation. The United States, as the largest donor nation to UNRWA, can perform an essential role in the advancement of UNRWA policies that will better the lives of the five million descendants of refugees from the 1948 war who live within or contiguous to UNRWA facilities. In that context, we cordially ask the US government and the US Congress to consider the following UNRWA policy initiatives:

1. Audit all funds which flow to UNRWA, which operates on a 1.2 billion USD budget. The lack of a current UNRWA audit allows for wasted resources, duplicity of services and an undesired flow of cash to Gaza based terror groups.
2. Introduce UNHCR standards to UNRWA, to advance refugee resettlement, which UNRWA officials do not now encourage. As UNRWA policy would now have it, permanent refugee settlement interferes with the “sanctity” of the UNRWA promise of the “right of return” to Arab villages that existed before 1948.
3. Cancel the new UNRWA curriculum, and delete school books which now incorporate principles of Jihad, martyrdom and the right of return – in a UN school system which is supposed to promote the UNRWA slogan of “Peace Starts Here.” An integral part of current UNRWA education in Gaza involves paramilitary training in Gaza based UNRWA schools. UNRWA schools, as a UN agency, should be required to demonstrate a commitment to UN principles of peace education. SEE:
<http://israelbehindthenews.com/israel-and-jews-in-the-newest-palestinian-authority-pa-schoolbooks-taught-in-pa-and-unrwa-schools-de-legitimization-demonization-advocacy-of-violent-struggle-rather-than-peace-of-jihad-martyrdo/14346/>

4. Dismiss UNRWA employees affiliated with Hamas, in accordance with laws on the books in the US since 2003 which forbids aid to an agency that employs members of a designated FTO terrorist organization. These laws have been ignored by the US, even though Hamas overwhelmingly took over the UNRWA trade union in Gaza and the UNRWA Teachers Association in Gaza in successive elections, since 1999. See: <http://israelbehindthenews.com/israel-and-jews-in-the-newest-palestinian-authority-pa-schoolbooks-taught-in-pa-and-unrwa-schools-de-legitimization-demonization-advocacy-of-violent-struggle-rather-than-peace-of-jihad-martyrdo/14346/>

<http://israelbehindthenews.com/library/pdfs/UNRWA-SCHOOLS-IN-GAZA.pdf>

5. Demand the cancellation of the UNRWA contract with the UNRWA “youth ambassador” Mohammad Assaf, who travels the world, encouraging insurrection and murder. Such a contract is certainly not appropriate to a UN agency.

Are the lyrics of the UNRWA youth Ambassador not lethal?

cc:

MK Tzipi Hotoveli, Deputy Minister, Israel Foreign Affairs Min. ssar@mfa.gov.il

Rabbi Abraham Cooper, Assoc. Director, Simon Wiesenthal Center acooper@wiesenthal.com

Rabbi David Saperstein, US Ambassador of Religious Freedom Sapersteind@state.gov

David Bedein, Director, Center for Near East Policy Research dbedein@IsraelBehindTheNews.com

cc: Members, Middle East Subcommittee, US House Foreign Relations Committee:

Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-FL), Chair,

MAJORITY MEMBERS

Rep. Steve Chabot, OH

Rep. Joe Wilson, SC

Rep. Darrell E. Issa, CA

Rep. Randy K. Weber Sr., TX

Rep. Ron DeSantis, FL

Rep. Mark Meadows, NC

Rep. Ted S. Yoho, FL

Rep. Curt Clawson, FL

Rep. David A. Trott, MI

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Rep. Brian Higgins, NY

Rep. David Cicilline, RI

Rep. Alan Grayson, FL

Rep. Grace Meng, NY

Rep. Lois Frankel, FL

Rep. Brendan F. Boyle, PA

Links to Hamas

August 16, 2016

Last week, officials of World Vision, an internationally known humanitarian organization, were indicted in Israel for secretly aiding military activities of Hamas, designated by the U.S. as a “Foreign Terror Organization.”

This week, Israeli security officials swooped down on officials of a much larger humanitarian organization which openly operates Hamas military activities.

That organization is United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, or UNRWA, the agency that hosts descendants of Arab refugees from the 1948 war in refugee facilities for perpetuity.

Knesset Member Avi Dichter, former head of ISA, the Israeli Security Agency, who now chairs the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Security Committee, pointed an unusually harsh finger at UNRWA, warning from the rostrum of Israel’s Knesset Parliament that “almost 100 percent” of UNRWA workers in Gaza are active in the Hamas terrorist organization.”

UNRWA operates with a budget of more than \$1 billion, provided by more than 40 western nations. The U.S. is the leading donor to UNRWA, at \$400 million each year.

Working with an Israeli-Palestinian team of journalists over the past few years, I have documented and filmed how UNRWA allocates cash from donor nations to conduct military training for children in the UNRWA classroom along with weapons training camps which Hamas organizes for UNRWA children.

Al-Kutla al-Islamiya, a division of Hamas, runs military activities, which attract UNRWA’s younger students, paving the way for recruitment in al-Qassam Brigades, the military wing of Hamas.

UNRWA “education” teaches children how to fight, shoot lethal weapons, use hand grenades and climb through various spaces all in preparation for war.

After exposure to al-Kutla, elementary and middle schoolers join a week-long war games program held in a military encampment, where they study “jihad, determination, to trust Allah and other Islamic values” in addition to military tactics.

Here is a case where a UN agency actually violates the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child, which states “children... should not be forced or recruited to take part in a war or join the armed forces.”

Yet all this occurs in the public domain, with full consent from 38 nations that donate more than a billion dollars each year to UNRWA, with the notable exception of Canada.

Ottawa suspended aid to the UNRWA general fund in 2008, in response to a report commissioned by the European Parliament, which documented how Hamas was elected to run the UNRWA teachers association and the UNRWA workers association. Now there is a move in the new Canadian government to restore Canadian tax dollars to the general fund of UNRWA.

Yet binding legislation passed by the U.S. Congress which requires UNRWA to vet personnel to determine if there are terrorists on their payroll is ignored.

UNRWA simply refuses to vet personnel in the UNRWA facilities, which operate in the areas under the control of the Palestinian Authority, and no one is asking them to do so, including the U.S.

After the March 2009 election, when Hamas was again elected to run the UNRWA workers union and UNRWA teachers association in Gaza, Congress asked the newly appointed Secretary of State Hillary Clinton for comment on whether she would demand the removal of terrorists from the payroll Of UNRWA.

Amazingly, Clinton told Congress that there was no evidence of Taliban activity in UNRWA – even though Taliban have never played a role in that part of the Middle East. It wasn't the Taliban people were concerned about, it was Hamas. In her four years as secretary of state, Clinton did nothing to impede Hamas domination of U.S.-funded UNRWA facilities.

The U.S. Congressional Research Service reports that the U.S. has never asked if UNRWA humanitarian funds wind up in the hands of Hamas or if Hamas is present in UNRWA.

Yet UNRWA remains in violation of U.S. penal code § 2339B – providing material support or resources to a designated FTO.

On the record, the Hamas Minister of Religion told us on camera, “Hamas’ relationship with UNRWA is good, very good! We assist UNRWA and Hamas cooperates with UNRWA on many levels. Now a direct connection exists between UNRWA and Hamas.”

The writer, author of “Roadblock to Peace – How the UN Perpetuates the Arab-Israeli Conflict: UNRWA Policies Reconsidered” has been active in efforts to reform UNRWA for the past 28 years.

He runs the Israel Resource News Agency and the Center for Near East Policy Research, which produces books, monographs and movies shot on location in UNRWA refugee facilities.

David Bedein is director of the Israel Resource News Agency’s Center for Near East Policy Research.

<http://www.foxnews.com/world/2016/08/12/arrests-un-linked-agency-officials-for-hamas-ties-calls-us-funding-into-question.html>



US Aid Admits: We Don't Interfere with Palestinian Terror Curriculum for Kids

How Schools of War are Funded by American Tax Dollars

August 17, 2016

Our office was the first entity to acquire the new Palestinian Authority textbooks in 2000. We acquired the new PA schoolbooks through direct contact with Yasser Arafat.

I had asked Arafat as to when he would express support for peace in the Arabic language.

Arafat's response was that there would be new Palestinian Authority (PA) textbooks, and he gave me a letter of authorization to meet with his minister of education to receive the new schoolbooks and to peruse them. Perhaps Arafat thought that he was calling my bluff.

However, I used the Arafat letter to meet with his PA Minister of Education, Nayim Abu Humus, on August 1, 2000 in Ramallah and then went on to purchase all new PA schoolbooks from the PA as they were issued in stages over a period of six years.

Our office became a resource as to whether PA schoolbooks are a source of peace advocacy.

Our experts were PhDs in Islamic studies, and researched the new PA schoolbooks which educate 492,000 school children in 699 UNRWA schools, many of which were built by US AID.

The printing and evaluation of new PA schoolbooks were left to the nations that sponsored these books: Holland, Ireland, Belgium, Finland and Italy.

Italy closed the door on the PA schoolbook publication project after the Vatican issued a report that the new PA/UNRWA schoolbooks read like war manuals. I had supplied the Vatican's ambassador in Jerusalem, Archbishop Pietro Sambri, who had asked to see the new PA schoolbooks at the directive of Pope John Paul II, with a set of the books.

Our agency dispatched experts on PA/UNRWA education to meet with staffers of the US Congress in August 2004 to discuss the war education that was inherent in the new PA/UNRWA curriculum. Following that meeting, US AID sent a letter on Sept. 8, 2004 to our office to clarify that US AID builds UNRWA schools but does not evaluate, review or vet the textbooks taught in the UNRWA schools.

However, over the past year, the US government issued official memos to the media and to the US Congress that the US does indeed vet the PA school books taught in the

UNRWA schools and that they pass standards of acceptable peace education curriculum that would be appropriate to any UN educational institution. A high ranking official of the US State Department, who supervises US AID personally, met with me a year ago and gave clear assurances the new school books used by UNRWA had been vetted by the US government.

For that reason, our office went to the expense of purchasing and translating the new PA/UNWRA books, and found them to be worse than ever before. The US Tel Aviv embassy staff met with our staff in January and made it clear that they were impressed with our research on the PA/UNRWA schoolbooks.

However, when I arrived in DC in March with experts on PA/UNRWA education to meet with staff of the Middle East Subcommittee, the US government issued a new stinging memo, declaring that the US was pleased with the current PA curriculum, adding false information that the PA had introduced Holocaust studies.

Last week, our staff met with US AID officials in Ramallah who reiterated what US AID had written to our agency in 2004, which is that the US does not vet the PA/UNRWA school books.

In the words of a senior US AID official in Ramallah:

"We do not interfere with the Palestinian curriculum."

It would seem that a war education curriculum hardly fits in with the hope that a Palestinian state would coexist in peace with Israel. The US administration also thought that we would not check the new PA school books and that we would not verify their statements with the US AID office in Ramallah.

We call their bluff.



UNRWA bags of building material used in Gaza tunnels Photo: IDF.

Is the US Complicit in UNRWA-Hamas Cooperation?

August 17, 2016

Last week, officials of World Vision, an internationally known humanitarian organization, were indicted for secretly abetting military activities of Hamas, designated by the US as a foreign terror organization (FTO).

This week, Israeli security officials began to swoop down on a much larger humanitarian organization, which openly operates Hamas military activities. That organization is UNRWA, the agency that hosts descendants of Arab refugees from the 1948 war in refugee facilities for perpetuity.

Knesset Member Avi Dichter, former head of the Shin Bet Israeli Security Agency, who now chairs the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, pointed an unusually harsh finger at UNRWA, warning from the rostrum of the Knesset that “almost 100% of UNRWA workers in Gaza are active in the Hamas terrorist organization.”

UNRWA operates with a budget of more than \$1 billion, provided by more than 40 western nations. The US is the leading donor, paying \$400 million each year.

Working with an Israeli-Palestinian team of journalists over the past few years, I have documented and filmed how UNRWA allocates cash from donor nations to conduct

military training for children in the UNRWA classroom and camps which Hamas organizes for UNRWA children.

Al-Kutla al-Islamiya, a division of Hamas, runs UNRWA military activities which attract UNRWA's younger students, recruiting them to the Al-Qassam Brigades, the military wing of Hamas.

UNRWA "education" teaches children how to fight, shoot lethal weapons, use hand grenades and climb through various spaces — all in preparation for war against Israel.

After exposure to al-Kutla, elementary and middle schoolers join a week-long war games program, held in a military encampment, where they study "jihad, determination, trusting Allah and other Islamic values," in addition to military tactics.

Here is a case where a UN agency actually violates the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child, which states "children... should not be forced or recruited to take part in a war or join the armed forces."

Yet all this occurs in the public domain, without a word from 38 nations that donate huge sums each year to UNRWA, with the notable exception of Canada.

Ottawa suspended aid to the UNRWA general fund in 2008, in response to a report commissioned by the European Parliament which documented how Hamas was elected to run the UNRWA teachers association and the UNRWA workers association. Now there is a move in the new Canadian government to restore Canadian tax dollars to the general fund of UNRWA.

Yet binding legislation — passed by the US Congress and requiring UNRWA to vet personnel to determine if there are terrorists on its payroll — is ignored. UNRWA simply refuses to vet personnel in its facilities, which operate in the areas under the control of the Palestinian Authority, and no one, including the US, is asking it to do so.

After the March 2009 election, when Hamas was again elected to run the UNRWA workers union and UNRWA teachers association in Gaza, Congress asked newly appointed Secretary of State Hillary Clinton for comment on whether she would

demand the removal of terrorists from the organization's payroll. Amazingly, Clinton told Congress that there was no evidence of Taliban activity in UNRWA – even though Taliban have never played a role in that part of the Middle East.

In her four years as secretary of state, Clinton did nothing to impede Hamas domination of US-funded UNRWA facilities. The US Congressional Research Service reports that the US has never asked if UNRWA humanitarian funds wind up in the hands of Hamas, or if Hamas is present in UNRWA. Yet UNRWA remains in violation of US penal code § 2339B — providing material support or resources to a designated FTO.

The Hamas Minister of Religion told us on [camera](#), “Hamas’ relationship with UNRWA is good, very good! We assist UNRWA, and Hamas cooperates with UNRWA on many levels. Now a direct connection exists between UNRWA and Hamas.”

Will UNRWA Schools That Operate in Jerusalem be Included in the Crackdown on Incitement?

August 26, 2016

Over the past few weeks, there have been a number of news stories in the Israeli media that Israel will finally “crack down on incitement in east Jerusalem schools” and that “the Jerusalem Municipality is censoring textbooks designated for Arab students in Jerusalem” in order to delete the war education which has dominated Israeli Arab schools in Jerusalem for the past 16 years, ever since these schools began to adopt the virulent PA curriculum that was introduced in August 2000.

This is one of those news

stories: <http://www.israelnationalnews.com/News/News.aspx/216932>

However, before jumping to conclusions that a new policy is about to be implemented, it is vital to note that representatives of the Israel Ministry of Education testified at the Knesset Parliament Education Committee on Oct. 27, 2015 that they do not supervise or oversee UNRWA schools, curriculum or the teachers that operate in Jerusalem.

Jerusalem Municipality Education Department officials reported to me in an interview three years ago that 42% of the Arab students in Jerusalem study in UNRWA schools.

Israel Resource News Agency, the news outlet that I oversee in Jerusalem, has submitted an official formal inquiry to the Israeli government and the Israeli Knesset Education Committee, to ask if and when UNRWA schools will now be included in the “crack down on incitement in east Jerusalem schools.”

We await an answer.

If UNRWA is not included in the crackdown on incitement in Jerusalem schools, that crackdown will be meaningless.

Since last October, Israel Resource News Agency has submitted numerous inquiries to all Israeli government officials to ask why it is that the Israeli Ministry of Education, operating in sovereign Jerusalem, does not take responsibility for UNRWA schools which operate in sovereign Israel.

We await an answer.

UNRWA Inadvertently Acknowledges There's a Hamas Leader on its Payroll

March 3, 2017

Dr. Suhail al-Hindi is a man of many titles. He's been the chairman of the Association of Palestinian Workers of UNRWA (the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East) since 2012. He is the principal of an UNRWA elementary school.

This week, he was elected to the governing council of Hamas' Gaza regime.

The Israeli Defense Ministry's Coordinator for Government Activities in the Territories (COGAT) is one of the sources cited in news reports of al-Hindi's new position. "The name Suheil Ahmad Hassan al-Hindi has emerged as one of those selected for membership in the Hamas politburo," says a report published on COGAT's website.

UNRWA identified al-Hindi as their employee when it issued a statement that al-Hindi could not serve on the governing Gaza council, since UNRWA employees are not allowed to assume political office. In this way, after years of UNRWA denying that it employed members of Hamas on its payroll, UNRWA inadvertently admitted to that it has done so.

According to multiple news outlets, UNRWA has now suspended al-Hindi, pending further investigation.

U.S. law forbids financial allocations to any agency that employs members of Hamas, designated by the US as a foreign terrorist organization (FTO). The US also funds almost \$400 million, or one-third, of the total annual UNRWA budget according to the institution's website.

How effective the UNRWA removal of al-Hindi will be remains a question. In 2013, UNRWA spokesman Chris Gunness asserted that Al Hindi had been fired

by UNRWA; however, al-Hindi was only suspended by UNRWA for a total of three days. This revolving-door problem with al-Hindi was confirmed by IDF Col. (res) Reuven Ehlich, director of the Meir Amit Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center.

Another senior official in Israeli intelligence warned that the election of Dr. Suhail al-Hindi to the Gaza governing council is an illustration of Hamas penetration into the Gaza school system and all UNRWA institutions in Gaza (the official spoke on condition of anonymity). Since Hamas is the ruling power in the Gaza Strip, its military training inside the educational system is not curbed by UNRWA.

The same official also noted that Hamas' influence in the UNRWA schools in Gaza has enabled Hamas to train young children from the age of 11 in the art of operating all forms of heavy weaponry.

Despite all this, UNRWA has not asked that all members of Hamas employed by UNRWA be fired. An inquiry to the U.S. State Department on this issue has not yet been answered.

UNRWA Does Not Have Any Intention of Changing Their Schoolbooks

April 10, 2017

UNRWA is now [running a campaign](#) in which it shows itself demanding specific changes to the textbooks used in UNRWA schools, as circulated by some pro-Israel organizations, even though UNRWA cannot make any changes in their school books.

UNRWA has contracted its schools in Judea, Samaria, Jerusalem and Gaza to require these schools to only use the school books given to the schools by the Palestinian Authority, which means that UNRWA cannot unilaterally mandate or direct any changes in UNRWA school books used for 492,000 school children in its schools in Judea, Samaria, Jerusalem and Gaza.

UNRWA is being [praised by Israeli gov't officials](#) for their intentions, even though UNRWA cannot make any changes in their school books.

At no time does UNRWA say that they will remove [members of terror groups](#) from the payroll of UNRWA in Judea, Samaria, Jerusalem and Gaza. Nor is anyone currently asking UNRWA to remove terrorists from their schools.

The new [UN Secretary General has launched a new campaign to renew UNRWA's \\$1.2 billion budget.](#) UNRWA currently has [68 donor nations.](#)

It is worth mentioning [Canada's role as Gavel holder of the RWG.](#)

UNRWA BLUFF – April 14, 2017

In February 2011, the Center For Near East Policy Research's short film, "FOR THE SAKE OF NAKBA," <http://tinyurl.com/mnke23r>, which exposed UNRWA incitement in the UNRWA school system under the Palestinian Authority, was presented by the producers to a synagogue in Chicago.

Only a few weeks later, UNRWA dispatched a speaker to that same synagogue to raise funds for a new UNRWA holocaust curriculum that UNRWA announced it would shortly implement.

This news of a proposed UNRWA holocaust curriculum seemed rather odd to Arab and Jewish journalists who had covered UNRWA for many years, because they had never heard of any such thing in UNRWA. However, as news spread of the initiative, US Jewish groups showered praise on UNRWA for its reported desire to sensitize Arab youth to the holocaust. Israeli intelligence also praised UNRWA for the same reason.

The UNRWA rep toured the US at the time and raised an undetermined amount of funds for the UNRWA holocaust education initiative. However, as reported at the time, there was widespread Palestinian Arab opposition to the UNRWA holocaust education initiative in the UNRWA communities, and the program never came to fruition.

Yet, these funds raised by UNRWA remained with UNRWA and were allocated to their Ministry of Education, which works together with the Palestinian Authority – to supply the UNRWA schools with all of the PA school books.

Arab and Jewish experts from the Center for Near East Policy Research reviewed all PA school books used in UNRWA, and concluded that the UNRWA/PA school system is based on full scale war indoctrination of the 492,000 students who learn in the UNRWA schools in Judea, Samaria, Gaza and Jerusalem. <http://tinyurl.com/zmyny9>

What became of the UNRWA Holocaust Education Initiative? We asked that of a senior UN official who supervises UNRWA. His answer, in writing, was that there never was any plan by UNRWA to implement any holocaust education initiative. <http://tinyurl.com/lpkzfok>

In other words, UNRWA raised funds for a program that never existed and never would exist. Yet UNRWA used this false front to improve its image in the Jewish community and in Israel.

Between 2011 and 2016, the Center for Near East Policy Research has dispatched experts to conduct yearly briefings for staffers and members of the US Congress regarding the UNRWA war curriculum.

Since the US donates \$400 million of the \$1.2 billion UNRWA budget, UNRWA was obviously not happy with this situation, and sent a representative to each of these briefings to passionately state that UNRWA runs no war curriculum in its schools, and that UNRWA was devoid of incitement.

The Obama administration kicked in with its own statements on the record that denied the very existence of incitement in the PA/UNRWA schools. <http://tinyurl.com/js4h9fn>

Now UNRWA has changed its tune, after President Trump, very early in his administration, made it known that he would no longer tolerate the current Palestinian school books which promote incitement to war. <http://tinyurl.com/lulley3>

Fearful that the new US Administration will cut the US contribution to UNRWA, UNRWA has suddenly changed its tune, sending out messages that it has created a peace education curriculum to eradicate the incitement which UNRWA had been saying for years did not exist.

UNRWA went to the trouble of circulating the precise changes that it intended to implement to overhaul the UNRWA curriculum. The Palestinian Authority, contracted by UNRWA as the exclusive supplier of their school books, once again objected to any changes that UNRWA was reportedly offering.

Consequently, there will be no PA/UNRWA peace education curriculum.

Yet the international and Israeli media universally reporting today state that UNRWA is about to implement a peace education curriculum.

Nothing could be further from the truth.

As with the story of the UNRWA Holocaust Education Initiative which never existed, UNRWA continues to spread the story of a peace education curriculum – with no basis in reality.

**David Bedein, Director of Israel Resource News Agency and the head of the Center for Near East Policy Research, Author, GENESIS OF THE PALESTINIAN AUTHORITY & ROADBLOCK TO PEACE: How the UN Perpetuates the Arab-Israeli Conflict: UNRWA Policies Reconsidered*

Did UNRWA Really Advocate a Change in Curriculum?

May 5, 2017

Over the past week, UNRWA spread the word that it intends to introduce a new curriculum for peace and tolerance in the UNRWA school system.

However, UNRWA reports widespread popular opposition to such an initiative. (1)

The fact that UNRWA admits that there is a problem in their schools represents a newsworthy development in itself.

However, the Center for Near East Policy Research checked all public and private sources in UNRWA. No intention, initiative or program exists in the UNRWA Department of Education for any change in the UNRWA curriculum.

UNRWA curricula in Judea, Samaria, Jerusalem and Gaza remain under the supervision of the Palestinian Authority Ministry of Education, which makes it clear that no plans are afoot for any change in the Palestinian Authority Education System.

Successive PA Ministers of Education have made it clear that the PA Ministry of Education runs schools with a unified curriculum for UNRWA, Hamas and the Palestinian Authority. The current war curriculum of the Palestinian Authority used by UNRWA speaks for itself. (2)

The presence of Hamas in UNRWA schools speaks for itself. (3)

Why, then, does UNRWA spread the word they intend to introduce a new curriculum?

This serves the UNRWA image with a new US administration at the helm. The US, indeed, pays for 33% of the UNRWA budget, which has reached \$1.2 billion.
(4)

UNRWA presents the US government with its supposed good intentions, blaming popular opinion, which would not allow UNRWA to act in a noble fashion.

UNRWA has used this PR approach in the past.

Between 2008 and 2010, UNRWA spread the news that it was going to introduce holocaust education. UNRWA dispatched professional fundraisers to raise the finance needed to teach the holocaust to the next generation of Palestinian school children.

Yet UNRWA expressed regret in 2011 that it could not implement the holocaust education program because of “popular opinion.”

However, The Center for Near East Policy Research checked out this development with Michael Kingsley-Nyinah, then the director of the executive office of UNRWA in New York, who replied to our query: “I am writing to clarify that there is no ‘Holocaust curriculum’ as such in UNRWA schools and there are no plans to introduce one.”(5)

However, UNRWA earned praise in the Jewish community because of their “intention” to introduce holocaust curriculum for the next generation of Palestinian Arab children, although such a curriculum was never planned in the first place.

(1)<http://israelbehindthenews.com/hamas-strongly-attacks-unrwa-intention-introduce-changes-curriculum-elementary-schools/15766/>

(2) <http://israelbehindthenews.com/jews-jewish-state-schoolbooks-used-unrwa-de-legitimization-demonization-indoctrination-war-2/15319/>

(3) <http://israelbehindthenews.com/unrwa-supply-line-hamas-next-round-fighting/15754/>

(4) <http://israelbehindthenews.com/jews-jewish-state-schoolbooks-used-unrwa-de-legitimization-demonization-indoctrination-war-2/15319/>

(5) <http://israelbehindthenews.com/there-is-not-and-has-never-been-a-plan-for-a-holocaust-curriculum-in-any-unrwa-school/7025/>

http://www.winnipegjewishreview.com/article_detail.cfm?id=5418&sec=2&title=DID_UNRWA_REALLY_ADVOCATE_A_CHANGE_IN_CURRICULUM



DEAR PRESIDENT TRUMP: END UN REFUGEE CAMPS NOW

May 5, 2017

At a time when the new Trump administration is focusing on United Nations cuts and on Middle East negotiations, the United States could invest its energy in a real legacy that can be achieved: a humanitarian solution for millions of descendants of the Arab refugees who fled from the new state of Israel in 1948. They have since lived in 59 “temporary” refugee camps, hosted by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) in Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, and Israel. Since the US provides about \$400 million of the annual \$1.2 billion UNRWA budget, it unwittingly prolongs a unique refugee status in perpetuity.

In the meantime, Hamas has gained control over the UNRWA workers’ unions and teachers’ associations in Gaza. That means that “humanitarian funds” actually flow to what has been designated by the US as a terrorist organization, where there is no pretense of transparency or accountability.

As the largest contributor to UNRWA, the US has the right to ask all other donor nations to revamp all UNRWA schoolbooks, which emphasize the “values” of jihad, martyrdom, and the ‘Right of Return’ by force of arms.”

How can an agency that operates under the aegis of the United Nations train children for war?

Over the last five years, our agency has filmed military training camps for UNRWA children, ages 10 to 15 years old, and interviewed Hamas leaders who praise and confirm the full cooperation of UNRWA in strict armed preparation of children.

Hamas Minister of Religion Ismail Radwan told us on camera in our 2015 film, “Children’s Army of Hamas,” that “the Hamas relationship with UNRWA is good, very good. Now a direct connection exists between UNRWA and Hamas.”

Trump could demand that UNRWA dismiss all employees affiliated with Hamas, in accordance with laws in the US, Canada, the European Union, the United Kingdom, and Australia, which forbid aid to agencies that employ members of a terrorist organization.

The US Congress enacted strict laws in 2003 in this regard; however, these laws have never been enforced.

The US could ask that paramilitary training of UNRWA students cease.

The US also could demand a strict audit of donor funds that flow to UNRWA from 68 countries and examine reports of wasted resources, duplicity of services, and the illegal flow of cash to terrorist groups.

At the same time, Trump could finally push UNRWA to adopt the principles of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees – which apply to all other refugees around the world – and order UNRWA to permanently resettle Arab refugees from the 1948 war.

Almost all refugee problems around the world have been resolved, yet since 1949, a half million Arab refugees have ballooned into five million who covet their refugee status, waiting to retake what they consider their land “from the river to the sea.”

The US could address the madness of continuing to create more and more refugees – children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and beyond – and instead apply UN standards of resettlement to UNRWA to resolve the problem.

There is much the Trump administration can do if it wants to establish a Middle East legacy that will last a lifetime.

Now is the time for a new president to launch a courageous initiative to eliminate a root cause of violence, and remove the label “refugee” from millions of Palestinian Arabs who have been marked with that status since 1949.

David Bedein is the director of Israel Resource News Agency and also administers the Center for Near East Policy Research. He is also the author of “Roadblock to Peace – How the UN Perpetuates the Arab-Israeli Conflict: UNRWA Policies Reconsidered” and “The Genesis of the Palestinian Authority.” His website is www.israelbehindthenews.com.

[Dear President Trump: End UN refugee camps now](#)

Lobby to Reform UNRWA Launches in Knesset

New lobby seeks to end UNRWA policy of incitement and perpetuating Arab refugee status for generations.

July 18, 2017

A new Knesset lobby calling for the reform of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) will be launched this week.

The Knesset Lobby for UNRWA Policy Reform, which is chaired by MK Sharren Haskel (Likud), will hold its first session tomorrow (Wednesday) in the Likud Conference Room in the Knesset.

The session will deal with UNRWA's policy of eternally perpetuating the refugee status of the Palestinian Arabs. Palestinian Arabs are the only population in the world whose refugee status is inherited, and are the only refugees who do not fall under the purview of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

The session will also deal with the prevalence of incitement against Israel and Jews in the textbooks used in UNRWA schools.

David Bedein, the director of the Center for Near East Policy research and the initiator of tomorrow's event, explained why the lobby will focus on reforming UNRWA instead of abolishing the organization.

"UNRWA operates under the mandate of UNGA, [the] United Nations General Assembly, and only they can "dismantle" UNRWA," Bedein explained.

"If Israeli and Western democratic nations were to cut funds to UNRWA, two scenarios would likely occur:

1. The radical Islamic state of Qatar, which has established a presence in Gaza and in Judea/Samaria, would likely step in to replace any income lost from Western cuts to UNRWA.
2. Saudi Arabia, which recently increased its funding of UNRWA to become the number three donor, would likely increase its contribution to UNRWA."

Bedein added: "If Qatar and Saudi Arabia became the largest donors to UNRWA, no leverage could be brought against UNRWA to cease connections with Hamas or other terror groups."

The lobby's goal is instead to pressure UNRWA to reform so that no funds will be directed towards terrorist groups, no paramilitary training will take place in UNRWA

schools, its curriculum will no longer incite against Israelis, its treatment of Arab refugees will be brought up to UNHCR standards, and it will end all affiliation with the Hamas terrorist organization.

UN Terror Agency Under Scrutiny by Congress and the Knesset

by DAVID BEDEIN



A UN-educated Palestinian child attends a Hamas war camp in Gaza.

AUGUST 10, 2017 – JERUSALEM – The United Nations Relief and Works Agency, or UNRWA, allocates \$1.2 billion from 68 donor nations to 59 “temporary” Arab refugee camps that were established in the wake of the Arab-Israel war in 1948. At that time, 500,000 Arabs fled the nascent State of Israel. That refugee population has grown to five million descendants of Arab refugees, with their children indoctrinated by UNRWA schools to believe that they will retake villages their grandparents left in 1948, even though these villages no longer exist.

Over the last few years, our agency has documented how Hamas conducts military training for UNRWA children in weapons training camps. Young children are handed machine guns and schooled for war, with top Hamas officials on site encouraging jihad, and lecturing on the importance of taking back these villages by force of arms.

Once again this summer, Hamas ran military programs with live weapons camps for 120,000 teenagers – including tens of thousands who attend UNRWA schools during the school year.

Al-Kutla al-Islamiya, a division of Hamas which runs their military activities, teaches UNRWA children how to fight, shoot lethal weapons, and use hand grenades in preparation for war for their “right of return.”

After exposure to al-Kutla, elementary and middle schoolers join the week-long war games program held in a military encampment, where they study “jihad, determination, to trust Allah and other Islamic values” in addition to military tactics.

So there you have it. Without batting an eyelash, a bonafide UN agency openly violates the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child, which states that “children should not be forced or recruited to take part in a war or join the armed forces.”

One might think that UNRWA would object to Hamas recruiting its students to become terrorists. The opposite is the case. On the record, the Hamas Minister of Religion told us in a filmed interview that “Hamas’ relationship with UNRWA is good, very good!” In addition, Hamas has a long history of promoting UNRWA educators and administrators to top positions. Its founder, Sheikh Ahmed Yassin, was a teacher in the UNRWA school system for 17 years. And its unions have been controlled by Hamas for decades. Last spring, UNRWA’s former union head Suhail al-Hindi was named to the Hamas cabinet, along with UNRWA’s infrastructure chief Muhammad al-Jamassi.

While the US is the lead Western donor to UNRWA, doling out \$400 million each year to this Palestinian refugee agency, there has been little oversight of UNRWA.

On paper, binding legislation which was passed by the US Congress back in 2003 does require UNRWA to vet personnel to determine if there are terrorists on their payroll.

Yet the US has never insisted that UNRWA vet its personnel.

The US Congressional Research Service now reports that the US has never checked to see if its humanitarian funds wind up in the coffers of Hamas.

Now the US Congress has taken off the gloves, and directed the General Accounting Office, the GAO, to make a final determination as to whether UNRWA is engaged in fomenting terror incitement.

Senator James Risch (R-Idaho), chairman of the US Senate Subcommittee on Near Eastern and South and Central Asian Affairs, disclosed to me that his office made the official request of the GAO, the US General Accounting office, for the first official investigation of the alleged involvement of terror groups with UNRWA. The question that the GAO has been asked to determine is whether UNRWA will be found in violation of US penal code § 2339B – providing material support to an entity designated as an FTO, a “foreign terrorist organization.”

In that context, there is a newly formed Knesset Lobby for UNRWA Policy Reform, chaired by MK Sharren Haskel from the Likud, which met in its first session at the Knesset in late July. The lobby will reconvene in late October, after the US GAO report on UNRWA terror involvement is released. Knesset Member Avi Dichter, who chairs the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Security Committee, points a harsh finger at UNRWA, warning that “almost 100 percent of UNRWA workers in Gaza are active in the Hamas terrorist organization.”

Don't Dismantle UNRWA, Reform its Policies

August 10, 2017

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: The desire of Prime Minister Netanyahu to dismantle UNRWA, while understandable in light of the agency's egregious history of collusion with Hamas, is not a practical proposition. Israel can, however, demand that funding to UNRWA be conditioned on the agency's reform in multiple areas.

Virtually every media outlet took UNRWA's condemnation of the Hamas tunnels found under an UNRWA school at its word. Yet none of them reminded the world that both the UNRWA school teachers' union and the UNRWA workers' union of Gaza have been under the tight control of Hamas since 1999, without a word of disapproval from the agency. Nor does UNRWA appear to object to the use of its facilities by Hamas to teach violence and war. This summer, for example, Hamas will conduct its annual summer military training camp to train upwards of 50,000 UNRWA students, aged 9-15, in the use of live weaponry.

The statement by the Prime Minister of Israel that UNRWA should be "dismantled" indicates that the Israeli government holds UNRWA responsible for the existence of the Hamas terror tunnels under its school. Adi Schwartz, in his piece "[Dismantle UNRWA](#)" (BESA Perspectives Paper #528), concurs with the PM that UNRWA should cease to exist.

Unfortunately, however, it is not within Israel's power to "dismantle" UNRWA. The agency operates under the mandate of the UN General Assembly, and only that organization can shut it down. Even if 30 or 40 nations vote to change the UN mandate, the Arab League and the automatic majority of "non-aligned nations" would vote down any decision perceived as pro-Israel.

If Israel and the Western democratic nations were to cut funds to UNRWA, two scenarios would likely occur:

1. The radical Islamic state of Qatar, which has established a presence in Gaza and in the West Bank, would likely step in to replace any lost income.
2. Saudi Arabia, which recently increased its funding of UNRWA to become its number three donor, would likely increase its contribution.

If these two Gulf states were to become the largest donors to UNRWA, no leverage could be brought against the agency to cease connections with Hamas or other terror groups.

What, then, can the Israeli government do about UNRWA?

Jerusalem can demand that the 68 donor nations to UNRWA condition the release of funds on reforms of the agency in six areas:

1. Ask for an audit of donor funds given to UNRWA. This would address widespread documented reports of wasted resources, duplication of services, and undesired flow of cash to the Gaza-based terror groups that have controlled UNRWA operations there for the past 18 years.
2. Introduce UNHCR standards to UNRWA to advance the resettlement of Arab refugees. Palestinian refugees have spent 68 years relegated to refugee status. Current UNRWA policy is that any refugee resettlement would interfere with the "right of return" to pre-1948 Arab localities. By adopting a political stance in favor of Palestinian maximalists, UNRWA flouts its own commitment to the welfare and future of Palestinian refugees.
3. Cancel the UNRWA curriculum, which is based on jihad, martyrdom, and the "right of return" by force of arms.
4. Cease paramilitary training in all UNRWA schools. It is an absurdity that UNRWA, a UN agency with a purported commitment to "peace education," allows such training on its premises.

5. Insist that UNRWA dismiss employees affiliated with Hamas, in accordance with laws on the books in western nations that forbid aid to any agency that employs members of a terrorist organization.
6. UNRWA recently hired a "youth ambassador", Muhammad Assaf, to travel the world and encourage insurrection and violence. This would be an appropriate time to demand that UNRWA cancel its contract with a promoter of war.

Now that the Israeli government has finally come to the conclusion that UNRWA is an impediment to peace, it should act within the bounds of reality to curb the agency's misconduct. It is possible to reform UNRWA, not dismantle it.

