

Inside the PA



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Editor's note:

Welcome to the tenth edition of "Inside the PA," a weekly on-line publication designed to provide an open-source and yet valuable insight into the workings of the Palestinian Authority. We will review important statements by senior PA officials and developments within Palestinian society as taken from the Palestinian and Arab media.

QUOTABLE

" By establishing a sound and transparent financial base, we will be able to succeed in the economy."

— Hamas leader Haniya, showing he is not worried about a cutoff in Israeli funding.

This Week in the PA

- *In Moscow, Hamas delegation prepares to visit Russia*
- *In Cairo, Hamas leaders meet to discuss strategy*
- *In Gaza City, PA seeks abductors of Egyptian attaché*
- *In Gaza City, Fatah appoints new president of Al Azhar University*

NEWS DIGEST

1. HAMAS WEBSITE DOESN'T EASE HATRED OF JEWS
2. ALL THE PALESTINIAN MISSILES
3. PA BRINGS CHILDREN TO ANTI-DANISH PROTESTS
4. HOW FATAH INTIMIDATES PALESTINIAN DEMOCRACY
5. EGYPT WARNS PA OF RETALIATION FOR ABDUCTION

Hamas Website Doesn't Ease Hatred of Jews

Hamas might be trying to convince the West of its moderate policies. But Hamas's vast media continue to portray Jews in the best tradition of anti-Semites.

The best example was Hamas's website, www.alqassam.com, which has been presenting videos of Hamas suicide bombers. In one message, Hamas pledged to drink the blood of Jews until they leave Muslim countries.



**Al Ayyam. Feb. 18, 2006
All eyes on the Palestinians**

"We are a nation that drinks blood, and we know that there is no blood better than the blood of Jews," the suicide bomber said in the video. "We will not leave you alone until we have quenched our thirst with your blood, and our children's thirst with your blood. We will not leave until you leave the Muslim countries."

The second Hamas video featured a suicide bomber who saw his operation as a path toward his marriage with scores of young virgins in paradise. The bomber was seen with his mother, who helps him put on his suicide belt.

"Jihad is the only way to liberate Palestine -- all of Palestine --from the contamination of the Jews," the second video said.

The videos, posted on the Hamas website in February 2006, as well as other messages in Arabic to the people, contrasted with messages by the Islamic movement to the West. In these messages, reflected in the Hamas weekly, Al Risala, the movement sought to portray its agenda as essentially peaceful.

On February 14, a Hamas representative said in a statement to the PA-owned daily Al Ayyam that fighters would abduct Israeli soldiers to win the release of Palestinians convicted of terrorist offenses. Nabil Nasser warned that Hamas would first seek to win the release of Palestinian inmates in Israeli prisons by peaceful means. The next step would be violence.

"We will not leave them alone," Nasser, a member of the National and Islamic Forces Prisoners Committee, said. "The next government will double its efforts to set them free using every possible means."

All the Palestinian Missiles

Palestinian terrorist groups have been competing in the race to develop the best missile for strikes against Israel.

Virtually every Palestinian group has claimed responsibility for the development and acquisition of short-range missiles. These groups have reported attacks on Israeli towns and cities over the last month.

The Syrian-aligned Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine said it has acquired and launched the Al Mustafa missile. The PFLP's military wing said the Al Mustafa was used against Israeli military targets along the border with the Gaza Strip.

On February 12, the PFLP said it fired two Al Mustafa missiles toward an Israeli military position along the border with the central Gaza Strip. The statement did not provide any details of the missile's capabilities.



Al Quds. Feb. 17, 2006
Two members enter the PLC surrounded by Israeli troops:
'Let the games begin.'

"One of its fighter groups launched two Al Mustafa missiles towards Israeli military locations, central Gaza Strip," the statement said. "The attack comes in response to continuous Israeli attacks and violence against Palestinian factions."

The PFLP has been the latest of several Palestinian insurgency groups to claim development or acquisition of missiles. Other groups include Fatah, Hamas and Islamic Jihad.

On February 12, Jihad said it fired two missiles toward an Israeli town. Jihad has claimed development of a new missile with a range of 12 kilometers.

Two days later, Fatah claimed responsibility for the launch of three Aqsa 101 missiles towards Israeli communities. The Fatah-sponsored Al Aqsa Martyrs Brigades said in a statement that three missiles were fired toward Kfar Azza in response to the "occupation's continuous crimes" in the Gaza Strip and West Bank. The statement threatened Israel with additional missile strikes.

Another Fatah-aligned group that has claimed missile strikes was the Popular Resistance Committees. The group's military wing, Brigades of Salah Eddin, claimed in a February 14 statement that it fired a missile toward the Israeli community of Netiv Ha'asara. The statement said the community was located in the northern Gaza Strip.

Hamas vowed to maintain Palestinian missile strikes when it takes over the PA. In a February 14 statement, Hamas denied reports that it was registering and collecting weapons of its military wing in the northern Gaza Strip.

"The movement's political leadership does not know the number of elements of its armed wing or the quantity of its weapons," Hamas legislature Fathi Hamad said. Later, the Hamas military wing also denied such a policy.



Al Quds. Feb. 19, 2006

The march to legitimate democracy tramples the U.S. stop sign.

Hamas's website said in a statement on February 15 that the movement was receiving funding and training from Hizbullah. The website, www.alqassam.com, said Hamas received funds from Hizbullah to set up its first Hamas cell in the West Bank soon after the Palestinian war against Israel began in 2000.

A Hamas member identified as Jaser Al Barghouthi reported how he formed the cell and recruited its fighters. Al Al Barghouthi said he sent Hamas operatives to Lebanon for training and funding by Hizbullah.

PA Brings Children to Anti-Danish Protests

The Palestinian Authority has recruited children for violent anti-European protests in wake of the publication of cartoons that disparage Muslims in the Scandinavian press.

On February 13, 500 Palestinian students, some as young as four years old, were taken out of schools in Hebron to protest the cartoons. The children were ordered to stomp on a Danish flag and shout anti-Danish slogans.

Palestinian media reports said the school was affiliated with Hamas. But the school was supervised by the PA Education Ministry.

The children were dressed in green Hamas headbands and waved Hamas flags. PA police did not intervene and the children, carrying a coffin marked "Denmark," marched through the center of Hebron.



Al Quds. Feb. 18, 2006

The bird of Islam becomes the problem of the world.

Over the last few weeks, the PA has helped organize mass protests while terrorist groups chased foreign observers out of Hebron and threatened to abduct diplomats in the Gaza Strip. On Feb. 12, Norway said it would reopen its representation office in the Jerusalem suburb of A-Ram. The office had been closed since February 2.

A Palestinian poll published last week reported that the huge majority of Palestinians have never seen the Danish cartoons. The poll, by the Ramallah-based Near East Consulting,

said only one percent of Palestinians were aware of the cartoons when they were published in September 2005.

Even today, only 31 percent have actually seen the cartoons. Still, 86 percent of the 1,300 Palestinians polled justify the Islamic violence against Denmark.

At the same time, 88 percent said they opposed the attacks on the Temporary International Peacekeepers, Hebron. Another 82 percent opposed strikes against the European Union offices in Gaza City and 93 percent disagree that Western civilians should now become legitimate targets.

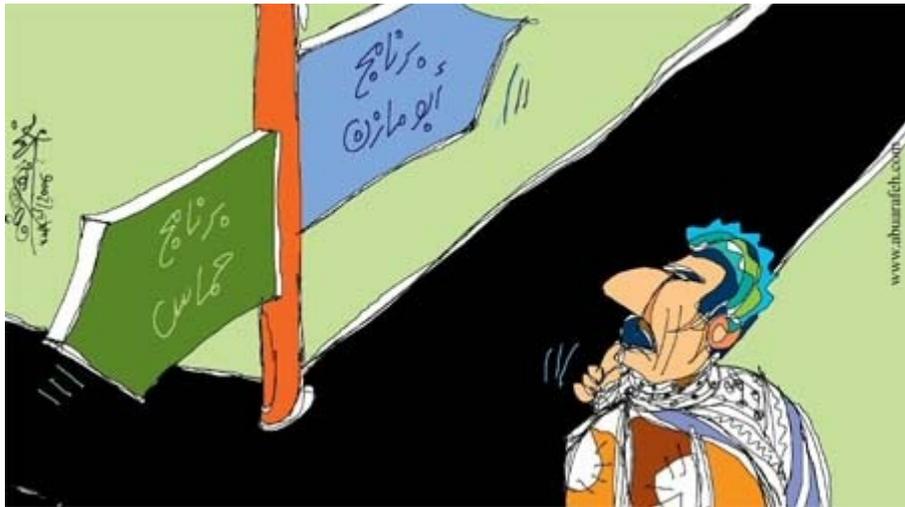
How Fatah Intimidates Palestinian Democracy

Fatah might be out of power in the Palestinian Legislative Council. But the movement led by Palestinian Authority Chairman Mahmoud Abbas continues its reign of terror against Palestinians.

Fatah gunmen have been rampaging through the Gaza Strip in an attempt to silence all dissidence and criticism. The gunmen have sought to stifle debate and change in wake of Fatah's resounding defeat in PLC elections on January 25.

The Palestinian Center for Human Rights issued a statement on February 14 that reported an attack on Ayoub Othman, a professor of English literature at Al Azhar University in Gaza City. Othman also heads the academic union at the Fatah-controlled Al Azhar.

Othman, the center said, was shot in the leg while he was leaving a supermarket in Gaza City on February 13. A week earlier, Othman received a telephone threat from an unidentified person that warned him to stop demand to hold elections for the university council. Fatah members on the council have opposed elections in fear of a defeat.



Al Quds. Feb. 19, 2006
Palestinian stands on a crossroad between
Hamas and PA Chairman Abbas.

"This assault comes within the context of a continuous and dangerous escalation of internal security chaos, especially in the Gaza Strip," the center said in a statement. "This recent spate of lawlessness has included the kidnapping of internationals, including journalists and staff of international organizations, as well as attacks on public institutions."

Over the past few years, PA security forces have been used by Fatah to silence dissidence and quash investigations of corruption and sexual harassment. In November 2004, Al Azhar University lecturer Yasser Al Madhoun was killed by a bomb placed under his chair.

In October 2005, about 50 PA security officers and Fatah members stormed the weekly meeting of the university council and assaulted its members. The assailants forced the university president and council members to march off campus as students watched. On February 16, Jawad Wadi was named president of the university.

Egypt Warns PA of Retaliation for Abduction

Egypt has warned of a downgrading of relations with the PA in wake of the abduction of an Egyptian military attaché in the Gaza Strip.

The Palestinian newspaper, Dunia Al Watan, reported that Egypt sent a harsh message to the PA that warned of a deterioration in relations with PA Chairman Mahmoud Abbas. The message blamed the PA for failure to capture the kidnappers of military attaché Husam Mosali in mid-February.



**Al Quds. Feb. 17,
Demands rain on the Palestinians.**

"The PA Foreign Ministry received an Egyptian message affirming Cairo will not let the incident pass, as it was aimed at marring PA-Egypt relationship," the newspaper said last week.

The newspaper said the Egyptian consulate in Gaza City halted the issuing of visas to Palestinians. The suspension was meant to continue until the PA captures the abductors, who claimed to be from an unidentified group termed Al Ahrar Brigades.



Al Hayat Al Jadida. Feb. 18, 2006
Taking out the red carpet from the PLC
and replacing it with the green carpet of Hamas.