

MORE THAN: - A CHANGING OF THE GUARD

This Tuesday last was a very historic date in the history of the Republic. Barack Hussein Obama, an African American, was inaugurated as the 44th President of the United States. As such it served as a signal of just how far we've come as a nation. Even for those who opposed him, his ascension to this position of power in a land once divided and beset by slavery, Jim Crow and segregation, - is a cause for celebration. America has turned a corner. In his campaign President Obama has promised us change, - and indeed, I believe we shall have it. But of what sort shall it be?

In the weeks ahead we will explore in much more detail what these next four to eight years may mean for the country and the world. Suffice it to say that it is shaping up as a time of great change. As the President's new Chief of Staff, Rahm Emmanuel points out, crisis brings the opportunity for change and we are living in a time of crisis. The America we see in a few years may be very much unlike the one in which we live today. In some ways the change has already begun. And over the course of the last several months, Mr Obama has laid out markers in the road. He has given indication that he will support the homosexual agenda when it comes to the military. We can...ahem...look forward to continuance of massive federal deficits, - likely in his own words, to top the \$1trillion mark as the government tries to spend our way out of the economic slowdown.¹ There will be increasing government control of business and industry and finance. There will likely be increasing international control of these too. President Obama is looking to create about 600,000 Federal civilian jobs.² Taken together, all of this signals an unprecedented movement toward a socialist economy. Under a liberal administration and with an Democratic-dominated Congress, legislation to expand abortion rights, expand government control of education, increasingly limit the exercise the Constitutional guarantee to bear arms, - and free speech and religion, through hate crimes laws, all become very real possibilities. As the new Chief Executive stated in his well spoken but less than memorable inaugural address, "The world has changed". To meet the demands of that changed reality he called for policies that would "prepare the nation for a new age", - and again that would "meet the demands of a new age". The America that the Founders envisioned is being swept away in the name of a reordering of priorities and the triumph of a form of hyper-tolerance.

This is perhaps best reflected in the President's choice of the Gay Episcopal Bishop V Gene Robinson to pray at the inauguration ceremony. Bishop Robinson told the NY Times that he was "horrified" at how previous inaugural prayers had been, "specifically and aggressively Christian". He went on to say, "this will not be a Christian prayer, and I won't be quoting Scripture or anything like that. The texts that I hold as sacred are not sacred texts for all Americans, and I want all people to feel that this is their prayer". He said that he was considering addressing the prayer to "the God of our many understandings".³ That however is not God's understanding of the situation, - and that's all that really counts. 1Timothy 2:5 says, "**For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus**". And John 3:36 tells us, "**He who believes in the Son has everlasting life; and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him**".

As America navigates through these days ahead, - there is both a promise and a risk. We can follow God and the narrow road, or walk easily on the broad one. As we watch our nation and our Church abandon the principles on which each was founded, we can look again to God's Word for both. In 2Chronicles 7:14-15, we can hear the promise of God to those that repent, and seek the Lord. "**[I]f my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land. Now my eyes will be open and my ears attentive to the prayers offered in this place.**" It is when we repent as a nation and as the people of God, that He will bless us. That is the promise.

But here is the risk. If we do not, just like Israel, we will face His judgment. If we continue to serve ourselves and our addictions; - if we worship our gods of money and pleasures and toys and self; - then judgment is certain. Here is what

God told Solomon further along in that vision. It applied then to His beloved Israel. It applies to us too today. **“But if you turn away and forsake the decrees and commands I have given you and go off to serve other gods and worship them, then I will uproot Israel from my land, which I have given them and... 'Why has the LORD done such a thing to this land and to this temple?' People will answer, 'Because they have forsaken the LORD, the God of their fathers'”.** (2Chron 7:19-20, 21-22) Whom shall we serve? It is our choice!

ISRAEL'S BURDEN

“And in that day will I make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all people: all that burden themselves with it shall be cut in pieces, though all the people of the earth be gathered together against it.” (Zechariah 12:3)

There is coming a time, when all the world will turn against God's tiny nation of Israel. The day is taking shape even now. And it is no longer just the Arabs or Radical Islamists that are calling for – not just the defeat, - but the destruction of the Jewish homeland. Large scale violent demonstrations spread across Europe and hate-driven attacks are occurring even in America. Hamas is the big perpetrator, but often knowing – *what is really going on*, - the world press as willing accomplices in spreading the Palestinian lie.

Hamas is not just a Middle East terror organization, but is well known to have operatives even in the US. They routinely put civilians, including children in harms way, all for the publicity afforded them by the deaths of those very people they claim to represent. On January 12th, Hamas raided a UN / Red Cross facility, stealing the contents of about 100 trucks loaded with supplies for humanitarian aid and sold them on the black market to the highest bidders.⁴ Videos are available on the internet of Hamas fighters launching mortar rounds from a UN school, and weapons caches and anti-aircraft guns located in mosques.^{5 6 7}

Most shocking perhaps though is the complicity of the global press corps. Following is a quote from Mark Steyn from a piece run in the Washington Times on January 12th. *“In Paris, the state-owned TV network France-2 broadcasts film of dozens of dead Palestinians killed in an Israeli air raid on New Year's Day. The channel subsequently admits that, in fact, the footage is not from Jan. 1, 2009, but from 2005, and, while the corpses are certainly Palestinian, they were killed when a truck loaded with Hamas explosives detonated prematurely while leaving the Jabaliya refugee camp in another of those unfortunate work-related accidents to which Gaza is sadly prone. Conceding that the Palestinians supposedly killed by Israel were, alas, killed by Hamas, France-2 says the footage was broadcast ‘accidentally.’”*⁸

Then there is the case of the latest outrage. Israel stands accused of shelling a UN school, a warehouse full of humanitarian supplies, a hospital and several UN marked vehicles. Yet it turns out that in each one of those cases, the IDF was only returning fire. Hamas had placed fighters in the hospitals and school compounds to launch attacks at the Israeli forces. According to eyewitnesses, the UN vehicles opened fire on the Israelis first.^{9 10 11} And so it goes.

Yet through it all, Israel is supposed to ‘grin and bear it’. Secretary of State Clinton spelled out this reality in her confirmation hearings. The upshot is this: Israel can take on, - and even take out Hamas. But eventually there will be a terrorist Palestinian State.¹² And in perhaps a move in that direction, Israel announced a unilateral cease fire, with however the IDF remaining in place in Gaza until Hamas stops its rocket barrages.¹³ It wasn't long after Israel stopped offensive operations that Hamas was launching fresh attacks. In addition, the Gaza-Egyptian border will remain under the control of the terror group, allowing them to re-stock its arsenals within three to six months.¹⁴ The re-supply becomes possible because the “ceasefire mechanisms for controlling weapons smuggling” could take up to a year to put in place.¹⁵ In addition the Saudis have already promised up to a billion dollars in aid to the Gazans.¹⁶ That in turn could be claimed as a victory of sorts for the terrorist organization. And this all fits in with the Illuminist agenda; - a divided Israel / Jerusalem, and a Palestinian State. After all, it is the elites that are calling the shots in this great drama. Now, President Abbas' Palestinian Authority is also committed to these same goals. And these are only possible if Hamas is neutralized. It is all just part of the plan!

WHOSE PALESTINE ANYWAY? – PART I

With attacks against Jews and Israel becoming all the rage again, I think it time to revisit a subject we tackled before. The world lives a delusion. There is a thought, sometimes spoken, sometimes silent, that lurks behind the scenes whenever the subject is discussed. ‘Why is there an Israel at all?’ It is somehow suggested that the Jews are mere interlopers, hunkered on their ancestral homeland, no longer theirs. Iran’s Ahmadinejad tells the world that Israel was created out of European guilt for centuries of anti-Semitism culminating in the Holocaust. He suggests the Holocaust never really happened; - that Europe should carve a Jewish homeland from its own environs. Other more sophisticated voices opine that the world would be better off without Israel: That this infestation of Jews which began returning in force in the 1880’s only robbed the land from its rightful owners; The Palestinian People. ‘If it wasn’t for Israel’, they reason, ‘there would be no Middle East problem’. Whether or not they believe it themselves: These people are telling you a lie. There are not now, nor has there ever been a distinct group or a nation called the Palestinian People!

The Big Lie

“You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it.” (Jesus addressing the Jewish authorities in John 8:44)

Amid much controversy and ridicule and charges of racism, former Israeli Prime Minister Golda Meir once declared: “There is no such thing as a Palestinian people”.¹⁷ As politically incorrect as that statement was, it was one other thing: The absolute historical truth. The big myth that has been perpetrated tells us that Israel wrested the Land from the Palestinians occupying their homeland after wars of conquest. The fact is: Israel moved into the territories only after Arab countries initiated wars of annihilation against the Jewish presence. Those Arab countries included Egypt, Syria, Jordan, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Iraq and Yemen. Did you notice? No Palestine! It didn’t exist. In the entire period from Israel’s modern founding in 1948 until the end of the 6-Day War, in 1967, (while Egypt controlled Gaza and Jordan held the West Bank), - no mention was ever made of the Palestinian People.¹⁸ Curiously and conveniently, they only found their voice after that disastrous war. But let’s look at the History of the Land.

Back To The Beginning

In the beginning: There was no Palestine. The Israeli conquest took about 200 years beginning in 1200 BC. Before that Amalekites, Jebusites, Hittites, Amorites, and Canaanites among others, occupied the Land: - There were no Palestinians.¹⁹ Over time, as Israel struggled in their commitment to God, they struggled to maintain control of the land. Babylonians, Persians, Hasmoneans and Romans took their turns at ruling The Holy Land. Back around 63 BC, Rome turned the formerly independent Israel into an administrative district they renamed Palestine. (Since that time, all the peoples who would occupy the Land became known as Palestinians; - whether Greeks, Arabs or Jews.) In time the Caesars grew tired of an Israel always in revolt against Rome. In AD 70 and again in 135, Roman legions destroyed Jerusalem and dispersed hundreds of thousands of Jews into all the nations of the world. Yet through history, a remnant always remained. In the centuries that followed came Byzantine Greeks, the conquering armies of Islam, the Crusaders, Mamluks, Ottoman Turks, and after WWI, - the British. Then in 1948, Israel regained a part of the Land.²⁰

It is interesting to review the establishment of the modern state of Israel from the perspective of the international community. The land called ‘Palestine’ was an arid, largely unproductive territory sparsely populated by Jews and itinerant Arabs. It had not served as a national homeland for any nation since the expulsion of the Jews centuries before. Population and productivity and began to increase with the onset of the Zionist movement in the 1880’s. The arriving Jews were reclaiming the land. This brought more economic opportunity and drew in an Arab population looking for employment. In 1917, in the middle of WWI, while the Turks controlled ‘Palestine’; - The British government issued the Balfour Declaration which “looked favorably” on the notion of turning all of Palestine into a National Homeland for the Jews. After the war, Great Britain was awarded the administration of Palestine by the League of Nations.

By 1923, the British began to have a change of heart. At that time they divided Palestine into two districts; - 75% for Arabs and about ¼ for Jews. This was the creation of Jordan (or Trans-Jordan), a state designated for the Arabs of Palestine, located to the east of the Jordan River. The Arab population was not satisfied. They launched a campaign of attacks against Jewish Palestinians including the Hebron massacres of 1929 and the Arab Revolt of 1936-39. After WWII, Britain announced it was turning this troubling province back to the UN. In 1947, the UN divided the one-quarter of Palestine that was still allotted to the Jews even further. The Jews accepted this new arrangement while the Arab population rejected it, demanding all of the Land.²¹ As the British Mandate over Palestine approached its end, the Arab states threatened to completely destroy the emerging Jewish Nation. Their armies were armed with modern tanks, planes, and heavy artillery from Britain and France. They were well supplied with weapons and ammunition. The Israeli forces opposing them had no planes or artillery with which to oppose them and only about 10,000 rifles.²² Despite the odds and knowing the consequences of their actions, the Israelis went ahead with their declaration. The next day, five Arab nations invaded the new country. The troops of Iraq, Syria, Egypt, Tran Jordan and Lebanon invaded from all points of the compass. God's Word had spoken to this, thousands of years before. **“Before she goes into labor, she gives birth; before the pains come upon her, she delivers a son. Who has ever heard of such a thing? Who has ever seen such things? Can a country be born in a day or a nation be brought forth in a moment? Yet no sooner is Zion in labor than she gives birth to her children.”** (Isaiah 66:7-8) Israel had indeed been born in one day and the labor of war followed the birth of the nation.

Now before the Arab nations invaded, they broadcast word to the Arabs living in the Jewish-controlled territories to leave in order to facilitate the slaughter of the Jewish population there. This commitment to the destruction of the Jews was a natural outgrowth of the Arab / Nazi alliance. This ideological cooperation began when Hitler took office and involved Syria, the Muslim Brotherhood of Egypt and the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem who personally supervised the execution of Jews in Bosnia during the World War II.²³ In the event, about 300,000 to 400,000 Arabs left the land before or early in the war, creating the refugee problem that has persisted ever since.

After 8 months of fighting against overwhelming odds, Israel won its independence, taking about 50% more territory than was allotted by the second partition. The second Arab / Palestinian state that was to be set up by that partition, (besides Jordan), never came into being. Egypt occupied the Gaza Strip and Jordan took the Biblical lands of Judea & Samaria, or what became known as the West Bank. The Palestinian Arab population living there was given Jordanian citizenship, - as originally envisioned by the League of Nations plan. Although the British Balfour declaration had originally envisioned a Palestine that was 100% Jewish: Arabs occupied almost 85% of that territory. And those Arabs were not satisfied, demanding a full 100%. Interestingly, during this period from 1949-1967, - while Gaza was held by Egypt and the West Bank by Jordan, - no attempt was made to set up a Palestinian State. No mention was ever made of the 'rights of the Palestinian People'. The PLO, (Palestinian Liberation Organization) was not founded until 1964 and did not discover their "ancient" identity as a people until Israel took those territories after the Arab-caused '67 War.²⁴

That war began when Egypt, Jordan and Syria massed along the Israeli borders, intent on annihilating the Jewish State. Israel instead launched a preemptive attack that led to total victory. Israel took over the much more defensible borders of Gaza, the West Bank, the Sinai and from Syria; the Golan Heights.²⁵ (Much later when peace was made with Egypt, Israel gave back the oil rich Sinai.) Israel also re-conquered their ancient capital of Jerusalem. God's promise was in sight. And the Palestinian People were about to be born. [*That's right! Smack-dab in the middle of the 20th century.*]

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 - ⁵ Mortar bombs shot from UN school, http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zmXXUOs27II&feature=channel_page
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