

Palestinians Denounce Israel But Count On Its Medical Care

by Hugh Fitzgerald



Saeb Erekat spent his life denouncing Israel and Israelis. But when he came down with Covid-19, he insisted on being treated at the Hadassah Hospital, where he received – as he knew he would – a standard of care unobtainable in Palestinian hospitals.

He is one of many Palestinians who have counted on Israeli medical care. A report on this phenomenon is here: “Palestinian Leaders Want Israel Destroyed – Until They Need a Doctor,” by Reuven Berko, [Algemeiner](#), December 4, 2020:

The coronavirus-related death of senior Palestinian figure Saeb Erekat in Jerusalem’s Hadassah Hospital has rekindled a debate in Israeli society about medicine and morality, and the Palestinians’ cynicism and ingratitude in their relations

with Israel.

Erekat, whom I knew personally, is a perfect example: he worked tirelessly not only to delegitimize, but to try to destroy Israel by means of economic strangulation through his unending promotion worldwide of the BDS campaign. He accused Israel of being an “apartheid” country, actively supported the “resistance” (a euphemism for Palestinian terrorism, which aims to kill Israelis), called for a tsunami of millions of “returning Palestinian refugees” to overwhelm Israel and demographically destroy it as the homeland of the Jewish people, and advocated ending coordination between Israel and the Palestinian Authority (PA).

Still, he was never rebuked by any Western government or human rights organization. In fact, Erekat was treated no differently than other members of the PA and Hamas who openly support and coordinate terrorism and indoctrinate their children with poisonous antisemitic curricula – often subsidized by European governments and large left leaning US foundations.

Given his past behavior, it’s ironic that Erekat would look to Hadassah Ein Kerem Hospital in Israel’s capital city for help in his coronavirus plight.

“Ironic” is too kind a way of describing Erekat’s behavior – spending his every waking moment undermining the Jewish state while, in his hour of need, he had himself taken to an Israeli hospital. Other words – such as “base hypocrisy” – come more fittingly to mind.

The Jerusalem-based Sheikh Ikrima Sabri behaved the same way. For years, he spewed vicious propaganda and anti-Israeli and anti-American incitement from his pulpit. But when he urgently needed heart surgery, his first choice was – the Zionist-run Hadassah Hospital in Jerusalem. The Jewish doctors saved Sabri’s life, and he returned to defaming

Israel and inciting violence and terrorism against Jews.

There are many other examples of this moral double standard, and every month the Hamas and PIJ leadership send hundreds of sick Palestinians to Israeli hospitals for complicated medical procedures.

It is interesting that there are so many terrorists among the Arab medical establishment that has made such a prominent contribution to terrorism and murder. Ayman Zawahiri, a medical doctor, was one of the original founders of Al-Qaeda; Abdel Aziz al-Rantisi was a senior Hamas figure and a physician, as is Mahmoud al-Zahar (a surgeon) and Ibrahim al-Yazouri, (a pharmacist); all of them terrorist operatives to the core. But instead of fostering a modern Palestinian public health system, and building new hospitals and improving the quality of medicine in the Gaza Strip, Hamas and the Palestinian Islamic Jihad leaders invest the international community's "humanitarian assistance" money in positioning missile arrays inside United Nations schools and infirmaries, building a network of underground command and attack tunnels throughout the Gaza Strip, and fortifying the bunkers they constructed under Shifaa Hospital in Gaza City.

The poor quality of medical care in Gaza (and the somewhat better care in the PA-ruled territories of the West Bank) reflects a conscious choice by the Palestinian leaders. They chose to invest money that they received from foreign donors for the Palestinians not on improving their hospitals, training and hiring competent doctors and nurses, buying needed medical equipment, but instead on placing tens of thousands of missiles and rockets inside schools, mosques, infirmaries, creating a vast underground system of attack tunnels and fortified bunkers, and paying for weaponry – all of that requires money that could have gone to improving medical care for the Palestinians. It was their choice to invest so much of their aid money in terror rather than in

medical care.

It is no wonder, then, that the Palestinian public health system cannot deal with complicated medical problems and sends its difficult cases to Israeli hospitals. In 2014, the wife of PA leader Mahmoud Abbas was treated in Israel. In 2018, an Israeli specialist was sent to Ramallah to treat Abbas himself, resulting in a dramatic improvement in his health and apparently saving his life. Over the years Israel has provided medical care for the relatives of the Hamas and PA leaders, whose main pastime is to spend their days thinking about and planning how to destroy the State of Israel...

The Western press has failed to mention that first Abbas' wife, and then Abbas himself, were both successfully treated by Israeli doctors. Of course this information is kept very quiet by those treated, who don't want it known that they rely on Israeli doctors for special treatment, which would jar with their constant denunciations of Israel's cruelty towards the Palestinians. And they certainly don't want their own people to learn of the special medical care that they receive from Israel. You won't find any mention of these patients in the Palestinian press.

Abbas and his wife are not the only members of his family who have been treated by Israel. Mahmoud Abbas' younger brother, Abu Louai, was treated in Assuta Hospital, a private hospital in Tel Aviv. Abu Louai is 76 years old and suffers from cancer. He lives in Qatar. The PA press has not and will not ever publish this information, nor will the rest of the Arabic press should they ever get the news. Notice that Abu Louai chose or rather, his brother chose for him, to be treated in an Israeli private hospital, even though the alternative was not, in his case, a poorly-funded Palestinian hospital, but a state-of-the-art hospital in enormously rich Qatar. No doubt Mahmoud Abbas wanted the best care for his brother, and his

own experience with an Israeli specialist who treated him in Ramallah for a life-threatening condition led him to insist that his brother be treated by Israeli medical personnel. Even a hospital in Qatar wasn't good enough. And when Abbas' brother-in-law needed a heart operation, he too was treated in an Israeli hospital. In other words, Abbas, his wife, his brother, and his brother-in-law have all been treated for life-threatening illnesses by Israeli doctors.

One of the scandalous absurdities arising from Israel's unparalleled humanitarian policies toward the very terrorist groups trying to destroy the Jewish state – never reported in the Western media – is that the very same terrorist organizations have tried to turn some of its patients into suicide bombers. For example, in 2005 Hamas sent a Gaza woman named Samir Ibrahim Bas to Soroka Hospital in Beersheba for life-saving treatments. But Hamas secretly padded her underclothing with 20 pounds of high-powered explosives so she could blow up the doctors treating her in the Israeli hospital.

A Palestinian patient who needed life-saving treatment offered by Israeli doctors instead was prepared to blow herself – and them – up in a suicide bombing planned by Hamas. Fortunately, the 20 lbs. of high-powered explosives hidden inside her underclothing was discovered in time. Could there have been a more diabolical act than murdering the very people who are trying to save your life?

Beyond the medical treatments given to the very terrorists sworn to destroy the Jewish state, Israel opened up a field hospital on its Syrian border in the Golan Heights to treat those seeking help. The Israeli doctors and nurses asked no questions of any of the hundreds of wounded. The patients included soldiers from the hostile Syrian Army – still technically at war with Israel.

It was thus ironic that in the past two weeks, at the same exact Golan Heights site where Israel operated the field hospital treating wounded Syrians, Israeli soldiers found a system of IEDs set to kill an IDF patrol.

It didn't matter that Israeli doctors had treated hundreds of wounded Syrians at that very site. They were Israelis, Jews, and that in the view of fanatical Muslims outweighed whatever good they may have done in treating those hundreds of wounded Syrians, including soldiers whose state was still at war with Israel. Hence the Arab ingratitude, expressed in I.E.D.s set to kill IDF soldiers.

In Israel, we know the truth. For example, in October 2014, just two months after Hamas started a war with Israel in which it launched more than 10,000 missiles at civilian targets, Sarah Haniyeh, the daughter of Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh, was treated at Tel Aviv's Ichilov Hospital following complications she suffered in a Gaza hospital. Around the same time, but unreported, Hamas leader Haniyeh's mother-in-law and granddaughter also left Gaza for treatment in Israeli hospitals...

Like Mahmoud Abbas, Ismail Haniyeh, the head of Hamas, wanted only the best medical treatment – for his daughter, his mother-in-law, and his granddaughter. Naturally he arranged for all of them to be treated by Israeli doctors in Israeli hospitals.

Another absurdity that separates Israeli medicine from Palestinian cynicism and hypocrisy is the example of terrorist Yahya al-Sinwar, head of the Hamas political bureau in the Gaza Strip, who, while imprisoned in Israel in 2007, was operated on to have a brain tumor removed. Now, having been released in 2011 in the Gilad Shalit prisoner exchange deal, he continues to furiously beat the Hamas drum for more and more missiles, and more and more killings.

Yahya al-Sinwar was operated on for a brain tumor in 2007; his life was saved by Israeli doctors while he was imprisoned in Israel. Upon his release in 2011, he went right back to calling for more attacks on Israeli targets, more killings of Israeli civilians. Like Sheikh Ikrima Sabri, like Mahmoud Abbas and his relatives, like Ismail Haniyeh and his relatives, Yahya Sinwar was a beneficiary of Israeli medicine. And like them, after having his life saved, Sinwar went immediately back to denouncing Israeli Jews and calling for the destruction of their state. These recipients of Israeli medical care were unembarrassed; they did not think of themselves as hypocrites; they knew that you could accept aid from Infidels and still want those Infidels dead.

At present, Hamas holds Israeli civilians and IDF soldiers hostage in unthinkable conditions. No one knows where they are, their conditions, or whether they are even alive. Hamas refuses to let the Red Cross visit them. At the same time, convicted Palestinian terrorist murderers go on hunger strikes in Israeli jails, secure in the knowledge that they can rely on the oath sworn by their Jewish doctors, which the terrorists cynically leverage for their own ends, to get effective "get out of jail free cards."...

One can imagine the kinds of torture, mental and physical, which Israeli civilians and IDF soldiers held by Hamas are being subjected. Meanwhile, Palestinian terrorists held in Israeli prisons go on hunger strikes for various reasons, such as a demand to be set free from administrative detention (the demand, which Israel has now met, by Maher al-Akhras), and better living conditions – though inspections by international monitors report that Israeli prisons are well-kept and the prisoners well-treated.

The Palestinian murder doctrine is not meant to bring healing or peace, but to sow death. Hamas' missiles in UNRWA infirmaries, the Red Crescent ambulances used to transport

terrorists and the Hamas bunkers under Shifa Hospital all give witness to that awful truth. It's time to put a stop to this lunacy.

The "lunacy" to which the author refers is that of continuing to provide Israel's excellent medical care to the Palestinian leaders, of both Hamas and the PA, and their extended families. If that care had the slightest mitigating effect on their blood-curdling views, that would be one thing. But the receipt of Israeli medical care has not led to any change of heart by these leaders, who continue to preach murderous hatred, to promote the killing of Israelis, and to urge the destruction of the Jewish state.

The Palestinian leaders and their relatives should no longer be given access to Israeli medical care, given that none of them have changed their expressed intent to destroy Israel. The Israelis should reveal to ordinary Palestinians just how many of their leaders, and relatives of those leaders, have asked for and received treatment in Israeli hospitals. That should spark resentment among those millions of ordinary Palestinians who did not have that option, but have to settle for substandard care in Palestinian facilities. And then the Israelis should publicly address the leaders of Hamas, the PIJ, and the Palestinian Authority, asking them "how long will you deny your own people the level of care you have always arranged for yourselves and your families, by using Israeli hospitals"? And "how long do you expect us to keep treating you, when you go right back to calling for the killing of Israelis and the destruction of Israel"? How long will you continue to divert to your own pockets money that should be spent on medical personnel and facilities in both Gaza and in the PA-run parts of the West Bank? Finally, how long will you spend vast amounts of your aid on weapons and on terror tunnels, money that could be spent on hospitals in both Gaza and the PA-run parts of the West Bank, to improve the lives of your people?

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