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Rt. Hon. President Barak Obama
Rt. Hon. P. M. of Canada
Rt. Hon. Palestinian Authority
Rt. Hon. P. M. of Israel

Israel needs to end its colonialism



Palestinian Heba Al Masri, 17, stands by the rubble of her family house, destroyed by Israeli strikes in the town of Beit Hanoun in the northern Gaza Strip on Tuesday.

Centuries of European colonialism have provided the world with certain basic lessons about subjugating colonized peoples: The longer any colonial occupation endures, the greater the settlers' racism and extremism tends to grow. This is especially true if the occupiers encounter resistance; at that point, the occupied population becomes an obstacle that must either be forced to submit or removed through expulsion or murder.

In the eyes of an occupying power, the humanity of those under its thumb depends on the degree of their submission to, or collaboration with, the occupation. If the occupied population chooses to stand in the way of the occupier's goals, then they are demonized, which allows the occupier the supposed moral excuse of confronting them with all possible means, no matter how harsh. The Israeli occupation of Palestine is one of the only remaining settler-colonial occupations in the world today.

And it is not limited to East Jerusalem and the West Bank: Although Israel withdrew its settlers and army from Gaza in 2005, it is still recognized by the United Nations as an occupying power, due to its complete control of Gaza's airspace, sea access and of almost all of its land borders. Over the years, Israel has used all forms of pressure to prevent the Palestinians from achieving their national rights and gaining independence. It hasn't been enough for Israelis to believe their own claims about Palestinians; they have sought incessantly to impose this narrative on the world and to have it adopted by their Western allies.

Unsurprisingly, all of this has led to complete shamelessness in mainstream Israeli rhetoric about Palestinians. After all, if one is not held accountable, then one has the freedom to think — and do — what one wants. With no internal or external checks, one can act with impunity. The Israeli left is a relic, all but extinct, and the extremist right is entrenched in the Israeli political establishment. Attacking the Palestinians has become officially sanctioned policy, embedded in Israeli public consciousness and politely ignored in Western political circles.

There is now an extremist, racist ideological current in Israel that not only justifies the recent onslaught on the Gaza Strip, but actually encourages the use of enormous and disproportionate violence against civilians, which has led to the extermination of entire families. Moshe Feiglin, deputy speaker of the Knesset, recently called on the Israeli army to attack and occupy Gaza, paying no heed to anything but the safety of Israeli soldiers. He then

demanding that Gaza be annexed to Israel, and asked the army to use all means at its disposal to "conquer" Gaza, by which he meant that obedient Palestinians would be allowed to stay, while the rest — the majority — should be exiled to the Sinai Peninsula. This cannot be understood as anything less than a call for ethnic cleansing.

Ayelet Shaked, a Knesset member for the Jewish Home Party, a member of the governing coalition, called on the Israeli army to destroy the homes of terrorist "snakes," and to murder their mothers as well, so that they would not be able to bring "little snakes" into the world. And Mordechai Kedar, a professor at Bar Ilan University, publicly suggested that raping the mothers and sisters of "terrorists" might deter further terrorism. The university did not take any measures against him.

Such statements are no longer isolated incidents, but reflective of the general sentiment within a country where chants of "Kill the Arabs" are increasingly common. It is no longer an aberration to hear these opinions expressed in public, or by politicians and academics. What is unexpected — and unacceptable — is that such statements are not met with any sort of condemnation in official Western circles that claim to oppose racism and extremism. The rise in Israeli racism and extremism against Palestinians would not have happened without the unconditional support that Israel receives from its allies, most significantly the United States.

Israel cannot continue to be the exception to the rule of international law and human rights. The international community must hold it accountable for its rhetoric and its actions, and begin to treat it like all other countries. It should not be allowed to continue to enjoy its state of exceptionalism and to use this to wreak destruction on the Palestinian people. After 47 years of occupation, two decades of stalled peace talks and almost eight years of a strangulating siege of the Gaza Strip, the international community must demand that Israel clearly state what it intends to do with its occupation of the Palestinian people. Since the Palestinians are not the occupiers, but rather those living under occupation, this question cannot be asked of them. If Israel wants to continue its occupation and hinder Palestinians' path to freedom and independence, then it should be aware that the Palestinian people will continue to resist with all the means at their disposal. If Israel intends to end the occupation, then it will find that the Palestinians are more than ready for an agreement.

What the Palestinians are enduring today in Gaza should be a clarion call for the entire world to end the bloodshed. But it will take more than a ceasefire. It will take peace. And peace cannot happen without an end to the occupation. Ali Jarbawi is a political scientist at Birzeit University, located near the West Bank city of Ramallah, and a former minister of the Palestinian Authority. This article was translated by Ghenwa Hayek from the Arabic. (The New York Times)

I sincerely hope that the Regressive Conservative Party M. Ps., launch their drive to dump this liability prone P. M. and his caucus well before the coming election. A gentle reminder, Jason Kenney, he dumped you and replaced your portfolio by one of his stooges Minister of Immigration. I remind you that if you wait too long Mr. Harper is quite capable of dissolving parliament before its term, July 2015. He did this on two previous occasions. Don't blame me in that I didn't warn you of impending disaster. Does Harper have a Kim Campbell succor? Always a Bridesmaid never a Bride?

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"Long Live Israeli Apartheid".**