

What John Kerry Fails to Understand About Israeli and Palestinian Cultures

The most tragic thing about the death of a young Palestinian boy at the hands of Israelis seeking revenge is clearly the act itself. So that I am not misunderstood, this young boy did nothing to deserve death, and his lynching is a tragedy and a crime.

Having said that, the rush of the U.S. Government to condemn the killing as if it can be equated with the kidnapping and shooting of three Israeli teens is ridiculous. One is an isolated incident of rage in response to the senseless murdering of three Israelis. Nearly every Israeli condemns the young Palestinian's death. The other act, the killing of the Israelis, *is Hamas policy*. It is a celebrated massacre that a large percentage of the Palestinian people, if not a majority, support.

Yet, typically, Secretary John Kerry treats them as equal.

In his statement, Kerry condemned the killing in "the strongest possible terms." He said it was sickening to think a young boy could be "snatched off the streets and his life stolen from him and his family."

"Those who undertake acts of vengeance only destabilize an already explosive and emotional situation," Kerry said. "We look to both the government of Israel and the Palestinian Authority to take all necessary steps to prevent acts of violence and bring their perpetrators to justice."

"At this tense and dangerous moment, all parties must do everything in their power to protect the innocent and act with reasonableness and restraint, not recrimination and

retribution.”

It is that last part that concerns me. He addresses “all parties” as if both parties have the same culture, values and ethics. Yet, unlike in the Palestinian territories, you will not find one newspaper in Israel cheering the death of the Palestinian boy. In truth you find the opposite—*disgust*.

In addition, Prime Minister Netanyahu called the Palestinian boy’s father to express his outrage. Raise your hand if you think President Mahmoud Abbas called the parents of the murdered Jewish boys (just to be clear, he didn’t).

The state-run Palestinian newspaper Al-Hayat Al-Jadida on Sunday featured a large World Cup logo, just as it has every day since the international sporting event began. But Sunday’s logo was a little different. Instead of the 2014 World Cup logo of three hands holding the globe, the Palestinian paper displayed three hands holding three people with their own hands in the air in surrender.

And instead of the name “Brazil” below the logo, Al-Hayat Al-Jadida printed “Khalil”—the Arabic name for Hebron, near where the three boys were abducted. The official Facebook page for Abbas’ ruling Fatah movement went a step further, featuring a cartoon depicting the three abducted Jewish boys as rats being baited by what appears to be a Palestinian fishing pole.

Culture of Death

According to reports, the murdering of the three Israeli teens was actually caught on audio as one of the boys had called 100 (the Israeli equivalent of 911). The killers could be heard singing and rejoicing as they shot the Jewish teens dead.

Hamas has created a culture of death. They often say, “We love death more than you love life.” Murders and kidnappings are cause for rejoicing.

When a suicide bomber maims and kills dozens of Israelis, candy is passed out on the streets of Palestine, while the proud mother of the now-dismembered suicide bomber is often filmed rejoicing that her son is a hero—enjoying 72 virgins in paradise. The supposedly moderate Palestinian Authority (Just because the Penguin is moderate in comparison with the Joker doesn't make him innocent!) names public squares after suicide bombers!

Meanwhile in Israel after the Palestinian boy was killed, there was no rejoicing. No candy was passed out to the children. There was no celebration or sense of victory. Our Israeli boys are dead... killing an innocent Palestinian won't bring them back.

Justice Minister Tzipi Livni on Thursday called for action against "terrorist" elements within Israel, saying that just as the military was responsible for combating Palestinian terrorism, the police were responsible for combating "homegrown," or Jewish, terrorism.

"We must not become confused. We must not let any citizen take the law into his own hands, even in the most difficult moments," she said at a conference of the Israel Bar Association in Eilat.

While PLO chief Mahmoud Abbas did condemn the kidnappings, what has he done to bring the culprits to justice? He is still in a unity government with the Hamas terror machine. While the Arab boy was killed by a member of a fringe element of Israeli society, the co-ruling party in the Palestinian Authority—*Hamas*—trained and may have dispatched the killers of the three Israelis teens! *Not apples and apples!*

Yes, there were calls for vengeance in Israel. What do you expect from a nation that listened to a recording of two Arab boys rejoicing as they shot three of our sons? And yet many of the same Israelis who rallied for revenge were horrified to

learn of the kidnapping and murder of the Palestinian boy last week.

Justice, Not Vengeance

And to be clear, 99 percent of Israelis don't want vengeance against innocent Palestinians, they want to dismantle Hamas—and every other terror organization. Still Abbas blames all Israel.

“Mr. Abbas accused Jewish settlers of killing the Palestinian youth and said the Israeli government bore responsibility for their actions. He called on Mr. Netanyahu to condemn the death.”

Again, this is not apples and apples. While the PA does bear responsibility for the kidnapping and murder of the three boys, you cannot lay the blame at the feet of Netanyahu regarding the young Palestinian. First of all, Israel has found and will prosecute the killers of the Palestinian. Secondly, they did not act on behalf of a political party. The killers of the Jewish boys are card-carrying Hamas members. No Israeli political entity, by any means, is encouraging the killing of Palestinians.

So Mr. Kerry, in the same way that you would not equate American values with that of the Taliban, don't be so silly as to equate the democratic, human-rights defending values of Israel, with the murderous, totalitarianism values of Hamas and the PLO.

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