



## **Primer: Palestinian Culture is Prohibitive for Assimilation**

### **Background**

On October 7, 2023, Hamas terrorists infiltrated Israel from the Gaza Strip and brutally massacred more than 1,200 civilians and Israel Defense Force personnel.<sup>1</sup> The savage attack saw concertgoers slaughtered as they fled into the desert, entire families burned alive in surrounding towns, young women raped and murdered, bodies of dead victims dragged through the streets, and credible reports of babies beheaded.<sup>2</sup> American citizens were among the victims of Hamas's attack—including 32 Americans killed and 11 others missing or abducted and taken into Gaza—among them toddlers. In total, over 240 hostages were seized and taken back into Gaza, primarily women, children, and babies.<sup>3</sup>

The resulting military response launched by Israel against Hamas in Gaza has sparked calls from global elites, regional actors, and even some U.S. political figures for the United States to accept Palestinian refugees. While Israel remains an important ally of the United States, and it is in America's interests for the Iranian-backed Hamas terrorist organization to be destroyed, the push for Americans to import tens of thousands of Palestinian refugees is a dangerous and destructive policy that must be firmly rejected.

### **Issue Focus: Widespread Calls for Resettling Gazan Refugees**

Similar to past efforts to resettle tens of thousands of Afghan refugees in the United States following the Biden administration's disastrous execution of U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan, the outbreak of the Israel-Hamas War has seen calls for the West—and the United States in particular—to import Palestinian refugees into American communities. Just as the push to resettle Afghans was foolish and self-destructive, so too are current demands that the U.S. government resettle Palestinians.<sup>4</sup>

More than 100 congressional lawmakers, led by Sen. Dick Durbin (D-IL) and Rep. Pramila Jayapal (D-WA), have signed a letter to the Biden administration demanding that Palestinian refugees from Gaza be granted Temporary Protected Status (TPS) and Palestinian non-citizens already in the United States receive Deferred Enforced Departure to prevent removals back to the Palestinian territories.<sup>5</sup> If Palestinians in Gaza are granted TPS, they would be eligible to enter the United States and receive work authorization. In 2022, more than 7,000 Palestinians were issued nonimmigrant visas to travel and temporarily reside in the United States.<sup>6</sup> The letter hints heavily at providing a similar number of authorizations to Gazans for the coming year.

Non-profits such as the International Refugee Assistance Project have also publicly pressed the United States to refuse bans on Palestinian visas and to adopt policies that embrace the importation of Palestinian refugees in the wake of the October 7 massacre.<sup>7</sup>

Even Nikki Haley, the former South Carolina governor and ambassador to the United Nations, initially expressed some level of support for vetting Palestinians from Gaza for implied resettlement in an interview, claiming, “There are so many of these people who want to be free from this terrorist rule.”<sup>8</sup> However, she clarified her stance the following day, saying that she opposed bringing Gazan refugees to the United States.

In a *Wall Street Journal* opinion piece, two Israeli lawmakers in the Knesset called for the West to resettle Palestinians from Gaza as the Israel-Hamas War escalates, pointing out that both Europe and the United States have provided refuge to millions of displaced refugees from prior conflicts.<sup>9</sup> While from an Israeli perspective there may be some geopolitical sense in pressing allies to take in displaced Palestinians to temper regional sentiments, the policy is ultimately destructive to Western societal cohesion and antithetical even to Israel’s long-term political interests, as mass pro-terrorist demonstrations in European capitals and American college campuses have shown.

These calls for refugee resettlement come at a time when even Israel’s Arab neighbors in Egypt and Jordan refuse to import more Palestinians into their countries, knowing all too well the danger Palestinians pose to their societies’ stability.<sup>10</sup> The history of Jordan in particular speaks to the regional unease toward a culture largely seen as radical and dangerous, even if Palestinians remain useful as props to some regimes in order to agitate Arabs and Muslims against Israel.

If neighboring Arab states firmly and publicly refuse to accept Palestinians into their societies, so too should the United States.

### **Analysis: Palestinian Culture Is Antithetical to American Civil Society**

One would be hard-pressed to identify a people or culture more fundamentally at odds with the foundations of American self-government than Palestinians. Two important empirical studies underscore a culture poisonous to the health and integrity of American communities.

A large-scale, broad-based study released in 2013 by the Pew Research Center, which the Center for Renewing America referenced two years ago to spotlight the danger posed by Afghan refugees, raises significant concerns.<sup>11</sup> The study was conducted over five calendar years (2008-2012) and surveyed 39 countries and territories, including both Gaza and the West Bank.

Among the key findings:

- 89 percent of Palestinians want Sharia Law (Islamic Law) to be the official law of their land.

- 75 percent of Palestinians support Islamic courts having authority over civil and family law separate from the existing legal system.
- 44 percent of Palestinians believe Sharia Law should be applied to all citizens, including non-Muslims.
- 40 percent of Palestinians believe suicide bombings are at least sometimes justified for “defending” Islam—this is the highest percentage of Muslims in all countries and territories surveyed.

With regard to specific provisions within Sharia Law:

- 87 percent of Palestinians believe a wife should always obey her husband.
- 46 percent of Palestinians support honor killings, wherein it is acceptable to execute a female member of one’s family if she has allegedly engaged in premarital sex or adultery.
- 81 percent of Palestinians favor stoning to death as punishment for adultery.
- 66 percent of Sharia-supportive Palestinians believe death is the appropriate punishment for leaving Islam and converting to another religion.
- 48 percent of Palestinians believe polygamy is acceptable.
- 47 percent of Palestinians believe women should not have a say in whether they wear facial coverings.
- 72 percent of Palestinians support cutting off the hands of those convicted of theft.

A more recent study from November 2023 from the Arab World for Research and Development (AWRAD), a non-profit based out of the West Bank, provides contemporary insight into the uniquely violent and death-obsessed proclivities of Palestinians.

According to the AWRAD survey, 75 percent of Palestinians in both Gaza and the West Bank support the October 7, 2023, massacre. Another 11 percent of Palestinians are indifferent to what occurred.<sup>12</sup> Put another way, nearly 9 in 10 Palestinians either support or do not care about the gruesome slaughter of innocent civilians. Further, the survey shows widespread Palestinian support for Hamas, with 76 percent of Palestinians holding a favorable view of the terrorist group.<sup>13</sup>

The survey contains additional data points that further illustrate the danger of importing Palestinian refugees into the United States, including:

- 45 percent of Palestinians hold a favorable view of the Iranian-backed terror organization Hezbollah.
- 84 percent of Palestinians hold a favorable view toward the Islamic Jihad terrorist group operating inside Gaza and the West Bank.
- And perhaps most damning, a full 98 percent of Palestinians hold a hostile or negative view toward the United States.

The Palestinian emphasis on death and martyrdom in the name of Islam is well-known. Palestinian schools, mosques, and civil infrastructure teach children to hate Jews and to aspire

to kill them through suicide attacks if necessary. Their textbooks are replete with anti-Semitic propaganda and echo the call of the Hamas charter to eradicate Israel from existence.<sup>14</sup>

During the Second Intifada, from 2000 to 2005, Hamas, Islamic Jihad, and other Palestinian terrorist organizations employed child suicide bombers in dozens of attacks against Israeli civilians and Israel Defense Force (IDF) soldiers.<sup>15</sup> One of the more infamous examples included the attempted use of a 16-year-old mentally handicapped boy as a suicide bomber; fortunately, the IDF thwarted the attack and saved the child's life, as well as the lives of dozens of Palestinians near him at a West Bank checkpoint.<sup>16</sup> The practice of Palestinian child suicide bombers was so egregious in the early 2000s, even Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch issued public condemnations.<sup>17</sup>

The slogan of so-called "Palestinian resistance" is a chant that states, "From the River to the Sea, Palestine will be free." Contrary to lies perpetuated by intersectional Marxists, this slogan is not a call for a peaceful political solution with Israel, but rather an explicit call to wipe out Israel and its Jewish citizens from the Jordan River to the Mediterranean Sea.<sup>18</sup> Congress rightfully censured pro-Hamas lawmaker Rep. Rashida Tlaib (D-MI) after she used the slogan to obfuscate the October 7 atrocities.<sup>19</sup> The entire locus of Palestinian culture revolves around the so-called *Nakba*, or "catastrophe," of Israel's restoration as a nation-state in 1948.

Prior to the restoration of Israel in 1948, Palestinian religious leaders, who then resided under the British territorial mandate of Palestine, allied with Adolf Hitler and Nazi Germany. The Grand Mufti of Jerusalem, Mohammed Amin al-Husseini, not only personally met with Hitler, but toured at least one concentration camp in Trebbin during his visit to Germany in 1941. The Mufti admired Hitler's genocide against Jews in Europe and hoped for replication in the Middle East.<sup>20</sup> Husseini even helped Hitler recruit Bosnian Muslims into the paramilitary *Schutzstaffel* to fight alongside the Nazis during World War II.<sup>21</sup>

This death-obsessed cultural legacy continued with the establishment of various militant Arab nationalist movements, including Fatah, to expel the Zionists (a term used derogatorily by many Palestinians both then and now to link historical Jewish connection to Israel as illegitimate) through revolution and martyrdom. One of the founders of Fatah, Yasser Arafat, became the most well-known Palestinian leader through much of the late 20th Century. Arafat had a long history of connections to numerous terrorist groups and actions, including the Al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigade.<sup>22</sup> Despite these deep connections, Arafat was the face of the Palestinian people and represented the Palestinians during the failed Oslo Peace Accords.

During the First Intifada that began in 1987 and ended in 1993, new violent jihadist entities like Hamas emerged alongside Fatah to vie for leadership and control within Palestinian society. While other terrorist groups such as Islamic Jihad had existed prior to the First Intifada, Hamas represented the Palestinian obsession with violence better than perhaps any other entity given its use of suicide bombers, its intentional targeting of unarmed civilians, and its explicit hatred of Jews going back to the legacy of al-Husseini.

The historical ease with which Arabs residing in the territory of Palestine allied with Nazi Germany comports with the culture's modern death-worship. When Israel gave up all of Gaza in 2005, as part of yet another attempt to trade land for peace, Palestinians in Gaza elected Hamas to govern them.<sup>23</sup> Members of Fatah were summarily hunted down and murdered by both Hamas terrorists and supportive Gazan citizens following Hamas seizing full control over the Gaza Strip.<sup>24</sup> No election has been held in Gaza since the 2006 referendum.

The Gazan use of foreign aid, not for clean water and functioning infrastructure, but rather for weapons and rockets, is further evidence of a culture that glorifies violence and hatred. Palestinians in Gaza looted and destroyed the fully intact farms and agricultural equipment Israel left in 2005, instead of using such technology to feed their people.<sup>25</sup> Hamas and their Gazan allies continue to dig up water pipes, paid for by U.S. tax dollars and other European nations, for use as homemade rockets to indiscriminately launch on Israeli civilian centers.<sup>26</sup>

### **Policy Approach: American Interests Must Be Prioritized**

Given the calls for the United States to import thousands of Palestinians into American neighborhoods, it is critical that policymakers and elected officials respond forcefully and prohibit such a proposal. As Israel works to dismantle and destroy Hamas in Gaza, the United States should adopt a separate strategy for neutralizing the refugee push.

Specifically, the Biden administration and elected officials in Congress should:

- **Adopt Regional Resettlement Parameters:** While Jordan and Egypt have refused to accept Palestinians into their nations, the responsibility for displaced Arabs in Gaza should be one pushed onto the Arab League. While Palestinian culture is uniquely radical and violent, they still share far more in common with their Arab neighbors than anyone in the West. The official policy of the U.S. government should be to relocate Gazans to surrounding Arab nations and enforce “culture zones” that provide for easier transitions for refugees and more commonality among host nations.
- **Isolate Qatar:** In particular, Qatar, which hosts the Hamas leadership in exile and has a lengthy history of funding international Islamic terrorism, should be forced to accept Palestinian refugees. Further, Qatar should be forced to hand over Ismail Haniyeh and Khaled Mashal—the billionaire political leaders of Hamas—to the Israeli government. In turn, the United States should immediately relocate the U.S. Central Command forward headquarters out of Qatar to a friendlier nation—such as the United Arab Emirates—if Qatar refuses to comply.
- **Prohibit Palestinian Immigration:** Congress should pass legislation zeroing out available visas to anyone from the Gaza Strip due to that population's high propensity for violence against civilians and support for terrorism. Further, Congress should reform the Temporary Protected Status and Deferred Enforced Departure programs to prohibit such provisions from being applied to any nationality or group from which there is a substantial risk of terrorism against U.S. citizens.
- **Dismantle the Pro-Terrorism Apparatus at Elite Universities:** The infusion of woke intersectionality and pro-Palestinian propaganda into American universities has created a ticking time bomb of radicalism that goes beyond mere Marxist adherence to critical

theory. The intimidation, violence, and extreme anti-Semitism on display at America's universities in the aftermath of October 7 is a dire warning that policymakers must act upon. Congress should consider substantially raising the tax rate on Ivy League endowments to help pay down our debt or—in the case of potential supplemental aid packages—fully offset foreign aid spending to Israel from the coffers of the very American institutions fomenting anti-Semitic and anti-American radicalism.

- **Strip Accreditation From Universities Accepting Foreign Money:** A bombshell report from the Network Contagion Research Institute revealed that over 200 U.S. colleges and universities failed to disclose nearly \$13 billion in contributions from foreign regimes, including authoritarian nations like China, Saudi Arabia, and Qatar.<sup>27</sup> Congress should use the opportunity to amend the Higher Education Act and prohibit acceptance of foreign contributions with a commensurate penalty of loss of accreditation and access to federal loans, subsidies, and grants.

The cultural practices of Palestinians are mostly focused on grievances against Israel, Jews, and the United States, with a society fundamentally oriented toward violence and extremism as a means of addressing its grievances. Many Palestinian customs and beliefs are simply antithetical to the foundational ideas of our constitutional republic. When 89 percent of Palestinians believe Sharia Law should be the “law of the land” and 40 percent believe suicide bombings against civilians are justified for defending Islam, there is simply no common foundation from which to appreciate our first freedom: religious liberty.

If 75 percent of Palestinians believe in a shadow civil jurisprudence, predicated not on constitutional common law but rather on the Koran and the Hadith, then vast swaths of the American legal system are essentially illegitimate in the eyes of Palestinians. Consider also that the majority of Palestinians have a favorable view of Hamas and 86 percent either support the barbaric acts of indescribable violence carried out against innocent men, women, children, and babies, or remain indifferent to what occurred.

Lastly, more than 98 percent of Palestinians hold a negative or outright hostile view of the United States. Contrary to claims by candidates running for higher office or the intentionally destructive calls by some Members of Congress, the United States should not import from a culture that rewards and glorifies violence thousands of people who hate this country.

## **Conclusion**

Lawmakers and U.S. officials must take into account these cultural realities in response to calls for the United States to accept Palestinian refugees. It is clear that our values, rooted in Western history and Biblical thought, are simply incompatible with Palestinian values consumed by their conflict with Israel.

The push by globalist elites and far-left politicians in the United States to resettle tens of thousands of Palestinians in American communities is a recipe for disastrous outcomes. Regional resettlement of Palestinian refugees remains the absolute best option for both

Palestinians and parties in the West invested in the defeat of radical Islamist terror groups like Hamas.

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