The Real Story, Terry Glavin
Through the darkness, some light is getting in.

At last, the world's attention turns to the fountainhead of the Israeli-Palestinian agony. Right there, all this time: The United Nations Relief and Works Agency.

Feb 02, 2024

Subscribers will want to stick around through this one, especially paying customers. I've got something for you on the far side of the paywall.

I'm still a bit jetlagged from my visits in Israel, and I've been paying quite close attention to the predictably obscene debacle of the Trudeau government's Public Inquiry into Foreign Interference in Federal Electoral Processes and Democratic Institutions, among other things. But something I've been hoping for, going back years, may be just around the corner. Or not. Either way, it's a very big story.

In the confusion and mayhem of Saturday, October 7, the dispatch I was summoned to file for the National Post set out what this newsletter would later take to be the glimmer of a silver lining. It comes from my stubborn habit of hoping for something good coming from even the most unbearable, unspeakable sorrow.

At the Re'im Supernova festival site, they're planting trees where 364 of the nearly 1,200 victims of the Simchat Torah pogrom were shot, burned or beaten to death; 40 were taken hostage from here.

In the beat that I cover, that stubbornness is often the only thing that keeps me going.

Do note the date of that first dispatch I mentioned: October 8. It was well before anyone in the activist milieu could excuse their histrionics by reference to the horrific suffering of the people of Gaza. Subhead: *It has become commonplace in pseudo-left circles to justify Hamas bloodlust as merely the understandable response of a subjugated people to oppression and 'apartheid'.*

The thing that explains that depravity, the most hideous disfigurement of the 21st Century's "progressive" politics, is a phenomenon I'd been documenting for nearly 20 years. The damage it has done, globally, nationally and locally, is incalculable. What I've been drawing attention to is the "anti-Zionist" antisemitism that has been central to the various theses and propositions of the contemporary "progressive" project. It is not evil because it is antisemitic. It is antisemitic because it is evil.

As for the good I was hoping to come of those grotesque high-fashion eruptions of joy at the murder and dismemberment of Jews in Israel's southern kibbutzim, I set it out in the National Post three weeks after that first dispatch. *A dim hope amid the unfathomable horror of the Israel-Hamas war: It is to be hoped that not only will Hamas be crushed, but that anti-Israel activists are purged from Canadian institutions.*

I don't write the headlines. "Anti-Israel activists" is not quite the language I'd have chosen, but at least it's better than the commonplace "pro-Palestinian" formulation so many of my colleagues in the mainstream media still stupidly persist in employing. The Real Story extended-play version of that Post contribution is here: *Don't Let Them Get Away With It. The 'Pro-Palestine' movement is nothing of the kind.*

Remember. I filed that first dispatch while the Hamas Einsatzgruppen were still at large throughout Otef Aza, the southern district of Israel where you've got only seconds to shelter from incoming Qassam rockets and mortar fire at the best of times. The Real Story elaboration of that piece in the Ottawa Citizen and the National Post was *Everything Has Changed*: *It's not just about Israel. It's about civilization and its enemies.*

Here's the relevant bit from that newsletter:

In covering this story over the years, and during my visits to Israel, it has more than once occurred to me that there was something beneath the shifting terrain of the status quo that would one day have to be taken apart. Ever since 1967, the UN Relief and Works Agency *has either deliberately or inadvertently encouraged in Palestinians the delusion that their predicament is merely temporary, that one day the Jews would be driven into the sea.*

That delusion has to be broken now.

UNRWA exposed, for all to see.

We have never been so close to that hoped-for day when UNRWA is taken apart. That is cause for some hope.

My column this week in the National Post and the Ottawa Citizen: UNRWA *exists only to push the delusion that Israel is a temporary state:* *The problem with* UNRWA *isn't just a few bad apples, or a bushel or a peck of bad apples. It's the entire tree, trunk, root and branch.*

As UNRWA scandals go, the past few days have been shockers. A Wall Street Journal report revealing evidence that several UNRWA employees in Gaza participated directly in the October 7 atrocities, and intelligence estimates to the effect that roughly 1,200 UNRWA staff in Gaza - ten percent of the agency's 12,000 employees - are directly linked to Hamas or Palestinian Islamic Jihad. UN Watch has a tremendous roundup here.

When you're done reading this newsletter, come back here for this video of the tireless Montrealer Hillel Neuer, director of UN Watch in Geneva, giving his testimony to the U.S. Congress this week:

The point I was making in the Post and the Citizen this week: UNRWA scandals come and go. The problem isn't just a few bad apples. It's the entire tree, trunk, root and branch.

By now, we should all be well versed in the list of forces impeding a two-state solution and genuine, lasting peace in the Middle East: The various Palestinian terrorist organizations, messianic Jewish settler

movements, hardline Israeli political factions, Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad and what have you.

But none of these match UNRWA's pedigree in sabotage and obstruction. Because that's what UNRWA is for. It is not a "refugee" agency. It is not about "refugee relief." Ever since 1959, when the U.S. administration gave up after ten years of trying to reform UNRWA for fear of pushing the Arab states closer to Moscow during the Cold War, UNRWA has been about one thing only: Overturning Israel's victory in its War of Independence in 1948-49.

The Palestinian national identity has no history in the Holy Land prior to the Cold War. It was more or less conceived by Yasser Arafat and constructed in UNRWA's 58 refugee camps by indoctrinating generation after generation of Palestinian Arabs in an identity bound up in victimhood, resentment, the glorification of terrorism and martyrdom and a pathological hatred of the Jews. And of course Israel's destruction.

All along, all of us in "the west" have been financing this sociopathology and expecting Israel to somehow accommodate its impossible demands, not least of which is the demolition of the Jewish state by its surrender to a non-existent "right of return" vested in the 5.6 million descendants of roughly 700,000 Arabs displaced by the upheavals of 1948.

Despite the impression you've probably picked up from the headlines, the Israeli government is not calling for UNRWA's immediate abolition. But at the same time, there can be no "two-state solution" so long as UNRWA exists.