

HAMAS VICTORY MAKES IT HARDER TO HIDE FROM REALITY

By Don Feder

It was a big day for suicide bombers everywhere. Hamas emerged as the new 900-pound gorilla of Palestinian politics.

In the 132-seat Palestinian Legislative Council, Hamas (Allah is my explosives expert) won 76 seats, a clear majority, in Wednesday's elections.

Fatah, the party founded by the godfather of terrorism – the late, unlamented Yasser Arafat, currently led by Capo Regime Mahmoud Abbas – took a paltry 43 seats, less than a third.

Politicians rushed to demonstrate their profound understanding of Middle East politics.

Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist sagely opined that “Hamas is a terrorist organization that calls for Israel's destruction.” Did you figure that out all by yourself, senator?

Frist continued: “We must achieve the vision of two democratic states – Israel and Palestine – living side by side in peace and security.” Besides wearing swastika armbands and building gas chambers, is there anything the so-called Palestinians could do to convince the semi-sentient of what sort of nightmare state they have in mind?

Not satisfied with the foregoing cogent observation, Frist sternly declared, “In order for the Road Map to be kept alive, Hamas must immediately renounce and end all violence, disarm all militias and recognize Israel's right to exist, among other things.”

One is left breathless by this staggering naivete. It's like the Allies in World War II telling the world that as soon as Hitler renounces genocide and disarms the SS, there will be peace.

Our president, who has a reputation as a hard-headed foreign policy realist, gets soft as the Stay-Puff Marshmallow Man when it comes to Israel and the Palestinians.

Mr. Bush refused to rule out dealing with Hamas. "Peace is never dead," the president euphemistically stated. (How about after Pearl Harbor?) However, Bush cautioned, "If your platform is the destruction of Israel, it means you're not a peace partner, and we're interested in peace."

But Fatah's platform (the PLO's platform) is the destruction of Israel. Try finding the Jewish state on the official map hanging in Abbas' office. From the Jordan to the sea, it's all labeled Palestine.

In November, the al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigade (the business end of Fatah) publicly endorsed Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's call for Israel to be "wiped off the map."

In flyers distributed in the Gaza Strip, Fatah's armed wing declared, "We affirm our support and backing for the positions of the Iranian president toward the Zionist state which, by God's will, will cease to exist." Gosh, does that mean Fatah isn't a peace partner either?

Fatah's message is Hamas' message. One shouts it; other says it quietly. One carries an AK-47; the other a briefcase. One glories in violence. The other feigns statesmanship. One is nationalistic, in the national socialist mold. The other is proudly Islamo-fascist.

Here's the Palestinian peace party at work:

- In November, 2004, the PLO's "foreign minister," Farouk Kaddoumi, told Iranian television that a "two-state solution" was a temporary expedient. Kaddoumi, "At this stage there will be two states. Many years from now there will be one state."
- The PLO's Strategy of Phases, first enunciated in 1974 and never withdrawn, calls for the establishment of a Palestinian state in any territory ceded by the Zionists, to be followed in successive stages by the "liberation" of more and more land, until it's bedtime for Israel.
- Using PLO/Fatah approved curriculum, Palestinian schools inculcate virulent Jew-hatred and instruct students on the need to give the Israelis swimming lessons.
- Imams paid by the Palestinian Authority preach the joys of jihad.
- Palestinian Television (up to this point in time, controlled by the ruling Fatah party) exalts suicide bombers as "heroic martyrs."
- During a five-month period from February 8 to July 8, 2005, Fatah's military arm carried out 812 armed attacks against Israel – 47% of all terrorism during this period.
- Its celebrated moderation was demonstrated in two drive-by shootings on October 16, 2005, in which three Israeli civilians were killed and five wounded.

Still, the Europeans, the United Nations and Washington go through the motions of pretending that the PLO and its principal shareholder, Fatah, are moderates, the Middle East equivalent of the Continental Congress – brilliant minds, committed to democracy and human rights, doing the historic work of nation-building.

Bush welcomes Abbas to the White House. The United States and the European Union shower his government with hundreds of millions in aid each year. All treat a Palestinian state as inevitable— based on the *credibility* of the PLO, Fatah and Abbas.

Will the Hamas victory clarify the situation? Will it now be impossible for starry-eyed optimists to avoid a rendezvous with reality? Will the West end its dance-of-death with the Palestinians?

Don't count on it.

Nowhere have our leaders become more adept at truth-avoidance than the Palestinians – who appear to demonstrate Darwinian evolution in reverse.

These delightful creatures have been canonized by the media, pandered to by the international community and pampered by the State Department and Washington power elite for so long that nothing they do (including dancing in the streets when 3,000 Americans died on 9/11) penetrates the myth of their victimhood.

In yesterday's end-of-the-day e-mail to friends and supporters, conservative leader Gary Bauer noted: "Faced with a choice, the Palestinians voters picked the most ardent and committed Jews-haters and America-haters."

Yes, but either option would have elicited essentially the same results. The difference: Now it's harder to pretend that night is day, war is peace and cold-blooded killers are peace partners.

