

Promoting Palestinian Terrorism: A look back at the media coverage of the Palestine Papers

by Robert Harris (April 2012)

A media orchestrated political storm blew through the volatile Middle East last year with the release of over 1,600 confidential documents relating to Palestinian negotiations with Israel, in an effort to obtain a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The event was notable, not only for being the largest leak relating to the conflict itself but for the way in which it was spun by the media institutions involved, thus offering a rather unique insight into the way these agenda-driven outlets form the news.

releasing the papers:

holy sites desecrated.

Substance versus spin

NSU Recommendations on Refugees Issues" presents a robust if not combative stance:

Can PLO accept a solution to refugees without recognition of responsibility from Israel?

mentioned during negotiations with Ahmed Qurei that Israel was "giving up the Golan" in talks with Syria. Returning the Golan Heights to a bitter enemy would have made Israel considerably more vulnerable. Such a highly controversial move doesn't add weight to the idea Israel wasn't keen on making peace with its enemies.

portrayed as a contemptuous act by the Israeli's. However, according to Olmert, the reality was very different:

CIF Watch, [Christians for Fair Witness](#), provide detailed analysis of the numerous other obfuscations constructed by Al Jazeera and The Guardian from the leaks.

Contemporaneous accounts of the Olmert-Abbas process

coverage in 2008 relating to the talks. Olmert was said to have made generous concessions to Abbas, more than Barak made at Camp David.

Abbas adopted a tough stance, rather than meekly holding out a begging bowl, whilst Olmert conceded around 93%/95% of the West Bank territory demanded by Abbas/Fatah with territorial trades of between 5%/6.5% to make up the difference, and a corridor to link the West Bank and Gaza as one entity. The division of Jerusalem was to be dealt with at a later time in one such arrangement.

The reports at the time illustrated that Abbas was hardly a pushover. According to some sources he threatened to [Olmert was trying](#) to take a lead over Livni, who was challenging his leadership of the Kadima party.

reports on the issue state the same.

However, talks ended three months earlier, and there were strong dismissals of the offer from the Palestinian side, long before the Gaza war started. According to an [stated](#):

many parts of the documents were fabricated, as part of the incitement against the Palestinian Authority and the Palestinian leadership.

PA statement asserted that many ideas have been discussed as part of the negotiations process, including ideas they would never have agreed to. Such discussions stripped of context would be highly damaging.

fully briefed on the negotiations with Israel. He publicly sought permission from the Arab League to hold talks during some of the periods in question.

All the Arab countries know our position. We have been providing the Arab countries with details about the negotiations and all that we were offered.

These documents are designed to create confusion. I saw them [Al-Jazeera] broadcast things that they attributed to Palestinians. In fact, these were Israeli [proposals].

politically motivated against the Qatari regime.

Overt Incitement

Al-Jazeera featured some extraordinary commentary on the leaks. The language used makes it difficult to deny the [demonstrators in Gaza burned effigies](#) of Abbas and assistants, with Israeli flags hanging around the necks. A coffin featuring pictures of Mahmoud Abbas, Prime Minister Salam Fayyad, and Saeb Erekat, was also torched.

The Guardian published [his antisemitic themes](#).

Erekat [some commentators](#) that Al Jazeera and The Guardian were not only trying to taint Israel but destroy the PA in the eyes of Palestinians. Both outlets strongly advocated the involvement of Hamas over the PA:

The Palestinian Authority may continue as an employer but, as of today, its legitimacy as negotiators will have all but ended on the Palestinian street.

Thus, The Guardian clearly knew their coverage would cause a lot of damage. On the final day of the release of the papers, an [virulently antisemitic book](#) The wandering who?

terrorist advocacy is famed.

celebrated Palestinian terrorism.

Oh Allah, take this oppressive, Jewish, Zionist band of people. Oh Allah, do not spare a single one of them. Oh Allah, count their numbers, and kill them, down to the very last one.

With their support of militant Islam, Iraqi and Afghani insurgents, and with the [admitted in The Guardian](#) that he was one source of the leaks:

advisor to the Emir of Qatar after his stint at the NSU, and reputedly worked for Al Jazeera.

Transparency Unit", in Ramallah.

advanced here is that the papers prove that the efforts to achieve a two-state solution are at an end due to the weakness of the PA and Israel's arrogance. He argues that acceptance of the Jewish State cannot feature in any peace process. Swisher admires those "committed to liberating all of historic Palestine", thus echoing the [told Tzipi Livni](#):

Iran is against us, Qatar is against us

In the aftermath of the Palileaks furore, Qatar has been increasingly associated with the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. In February Abbas, Erekat, and Hamas leader Kalid Mashaal, [closely tracks Qatari foreign policy](#).

does not criticise Qatar, even though it is a monarchy with no independent legislature. Although not the most repressive nation in the region, it has a [fails to criticise Qatar](#) but has been known to