

How the AP Covered the Murder of Ori Ansbacher

by Hugh Fitzgerald



The [AP's report](#) on the murder of an Israeli girl, Ori Ansbacher, and on the deaths of two "Palestinian" teenagers, left much to be desired.

The body of Ori Ansbacher, 19, was found in the woods in the West Bank near Jerusalem on Thursday with stabbing wounds. She was buried Friday in the Israeli settlement of Tekoa amid calls by hard-line Jews for revenge.

First, Ansbacher had been working as a volunteer counsellor at the Yeelim Youth Center. That ought to be been reported; it would have made her more than just a name.

Second, calling the Israelis at her funeral "hard-line Jews"

already undermines them. What makes them “hard-line”? Apparently the fact that they had had enough of Arabs killing Jews, and wanted whoever had raped, killed, and mutilated the body of Ori Ansbacher to be caught, tried, and given a death sentence. These were not calls “for revenge,” but for appropriate punishment, by which these Israelis, in their despair and revulsion at the killing, meant capital punishment. Many people may not realize that despite the most horrific atrocities by “Palestinians,” Israel has never imposed that punishment on any Arab murderers. Only one person has been executed by the state in Israel’s entire history: Adolf Eichmann.

Over 600,000 Jewish settlers live in the Israeli-occupied West Bank and east Jerusalem, territories the Palestinians want as part of their future state. Most of the international community views the settlements as illegal.

This paragraph is both tendentious and irrelevant. It has no business being in this story, which is about the murder (and rape, and mutilation of the body) of an Israeli teenager, Ori Ansbacher, and the killing of two “Palestinian” teenagers who were engaged in the Great March of Return, to breach Israel’s security fence. Why is there mention of the “Israeli-occupied” West Bank and east Jerusalem, and why include the claim that the “Palestinians” want those territories “as part of their future state”? Is it meant to be an oblique justification, or at least explanation, for the rape and murder of Ori Ansbacher? Was she attacked because she was living in the “Israeli-occupied” West Bank? Would that have made her killing more understandable? Of course not; her attacker had no idea where she came from, nor would it have mattered if he did. He knew only that she was Jewish, and defenseless. He needed no other reason.

The remark that “the Palestinians want as part of their future state” the West Bank and east Jerusalem is misleading. Most

Palestinians, when asked, say clearly that they want their "Palestine" to replace all of Israel. They want the Jewish state to disappear. They deny that the Jews have a legitimate claim, any historic link, to the land. They want a "Palestine" that stretches "from the river to the sea." This paragraph suggests they have more modest territorial ambitions.

If the whole paragraph were not to be omitted, it at least should be reduced to this: "Ori Ansbacher was raised in Tekoa, and thus was one of the 600,000 Israelis who live in the West Bank and east Jerusalem, territories Israel won in the Six-Day War." That has the virtue of being true, and it leaves out both the loaded word "settlers" and the loaded phrase "Israel-occupied." And of what relevance to this story is the fact that "most of the international community views the settlements as illegal"? Most of the "international community" will vote for any anti-Israel resolution the Arab and Muslim lobby chooses to propose at the U.N. So what? Israel has a considerable legal and historic claim to those territories, based on the original Palestinian Mandate, on Resolution 242's call for "secure and defensible borders," and on the rules by which victors in a war customarily get to keep some of their spoils. That quite unnecessary last sentence about the supposed "illegality of the settlements" contributes nothing to the story of the killing of Ori Ansbacher. It only serves to undermine Israel.

Even more disturbing is what is not reported: that many "Palestinians" regard Israeli civilians as legitimate targets for murderous attack, that they know both that the Israelis will not execute them, no matter how many murders they commit, and that the Palestinian Authority will provide generous support to jailed terrorists, and if they are killed, to their families, in what is known as a "Pay For Slay" program.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu commended the security forces for "apprehending – within a few hours – the abhorrent murderer." He expressed condolences to Ansbacher's family.

Prime Minister Netanyahu did not merely “express condolences” to Ori Ansbacher’s family. He went to Tekoa to express his condolences directly to her family. There is a difference.

In the Hamas-ruled Gaza Strip, meanwhile, thousands of Palestinians attended the funerals of the teenagers.

The mother of 14-year-old Hassan Shalabi wailed as mourners brought his body on a stretcher for a final farewell at their home in the Nusseirat refugee camp.

“He was everything beautiful at home; his voice, his happiness fills the house. There is laughter and play when he is home,” said the mother, Fatma, soon after the body was carried away, wrapped in a Palestinian flag.

The AP report includes this supposedly heart-rending remark by the wailing mother of one of the protesters killed. But why was there nothing similar reported about the reaction of Ori Ansbacher’s family? Is it only the “Palestinians” who are deserving of such tugging-at-the-heart details? The report about Ori Ansbacher could, and should, have included some remark by her parents. There was this: “You were a child of light. You brought so much light and happiness to the house,” her mother Na’ama said. Or this description of Ori by her parents: Ori was “a holy soul seeking meaning, with a sensitivity for every person and creature and an infinite desire to correct the world with goodness.” The Ansbachers weren’t allowed to speak in this report; Fatma Shalabi was. Why?

The two [Palestinian] teenagers were standing 50-60 meters (160-200 feet) from the fence at separate protests when they were shot by Israeli forces, according to rights group al-Mezan.

Voice of America reports that the teens were killed – in two

different places – “at the fence.” The AP reporter who relied on Al-Mezan apparently does not know that the “Al-Mezan Human Rights Group” is an endless fount of anti-Israel propaganda. Ordinarily the Israelis use tear gas, rubber bullets, and stun guns to dissuade protesters from reaching the security fence; live fire is used only when they are very close to, or already at, the fence, and trying to cut through it. It is doubtful that live fire would have been used against anyone that far – 160-200 feet – from the fence. One remains skeptical of any report issued by Al-Mezan.

This part of the AP story should have been written thus: “The Palestinian group Al-Mezan claims the two teenagers were standing 50-60 meters from the fence when they were shot.” This removes the too-charitable description of Al-Mezan as a “human rights group” – just as CAIR’s description of itself as a “civil rights group” is so misleading. The verb “claims,” with its semantic freight of doubt, is justified because there has been no independent corroboration of Al-Mezan’s insistence that the two boys were “50-60 meters” from the fence when they were shot. We know, from the last ten months of protests, that Israel uses live fire only on those who are close to or at the fence.

In Gaza City, mourners buried Hamza Ishtiwi. The Health Ministry put his age at 18, but Mezan said he was 17. Footage of the teen lying on his back the moment after a bullet struck him in the neck spread on social media.

The Gaza Health Ministry matter-of-factly put Ishtiwi’s age at 18. Al-Mezan’s claim that he was actually 17 was likely made so as to be able to insist that both boys were minors; it’s a short step from that to describing these boys as “children,” as UNICEF subsequently did. Mention of the “footage of the teen lying on his back” is meant to make the scene more vivid, and readers of the report more sympathetic to the Arab version of events. No such details (and they would be very disturbing,

for she was raped, with extreme violence, before being stabbed many times) about the body of Ori Ansbacher are contained in this AP report.

Gaza's Hamas rulers have organized mass demonstrations along the frontier every Friday since March, in part to protest against the Israeli and Egyptian blockade on the territory imposed when the Islamic militant group seized power in 2007. Dozens of Palestinians have been killed and thousands have been wounded.

The Great March of Return organized by Hamas was not a protest against the blockade by Egypt and Israel, but a sustained attempt, every Friday since March 31, 2018, to damage and breach the security fence, and then to push into Israel, as a demonstration of Palestinian "resistance." It was, and remains, a propaganda stunt, as well as a direct assault on Israel's defenses.

The protesters frequently hurl rocks and firebombs, and Israeli soldiers respond with tear gas and live fire. Israel, which has been accused of using excessive force, says it does what it must to protect its borders.

The protesters do more than "frequently" hurl rocks and firebombs. They keep trying to breach Israel's security fence, and they keep up a nonstop barrage of rocks, Molotov cocktails, grenades, incendiary kites and balloons that have already set ablaze thousands of acres of Israeli territory, and even, sometimes, gunfire. They set tires alight to create a vast smokescreen, making it hard for the Israelis to see them, and from within which they can throw those explosives and grenades and let loose those incendiary kites into Israel.

Israeli soldiers do not only "respond with tear gas and live fire," as the AP reports. They have other ways to handle the marchers. Israeli soldiers use many other means to try to

prevent marchers from reaching the security fence. They respond first with tear gas, rubber bullets, and stun grenades. Only when those fail to halt protesters who have reached very near to the security fence do the Israelis use, as a last resort, live fire, taking care to aim below the knees except in the most threatening of circumstances, when the security fence is in imminent danger of being breached. But the AP report suggests that “live fire” is used routinely: the Israelis “respond” – just like that – with “tear gas and live fire.”

Let’s reword those two sentences to convey the truth: “The protesters hurl rocks, Molotov cocktails, grenades, incendiary kites and bombs, and Israeli soldiers respond with tear gas, rubber bullets, stun grenades, and as a last resort, live fire, initially aimed below the knee. Israel, which the Palestinians have accused of using excessive force, says it does what it must to protect its borders.”

That’s much better.

The U.N. children’s agency condemned the killing of the two Palestinians, warning of the “significant violence” Palestinian children endure.

“Children are children. They must be protected at all times. Children should never be a target. Nor should they be exposed to any form of violence, by any party,” UNICEF Middle East director Geert Cappelaere said in a statement.

Children should “never be a target.” Nor should they be deliberately placed in dangerous situations where they might accidentally be hurt. And if, as UNICEF insists, they “must be protected at all times,” who has not just failed to protect them, but deliberately put them in harm’s way? Who has put these Arab children in danger, “exposed them” to a “form of violence,” if not Hamas itself? Hamas has long used children as shields, sometimes placing its weapons near or within

schoolhouses. This terrorist group does not mind when “Palestinian” children are harmed or killed. They become “martyrs”; their stories can become part of the propaganda war against Israel.

Israel, on the other hand, has no desire to harm “Palestinian” children and makes great efforts to avoid doing so. But this does not mean that in the heat of violent exchanges, amidst the smoke from burning tires, with Molotov cocktails and grenades and incendiary kites being thrown at the Israelis, and the Israelis using tear gas, rubber bullets, stun grenades to halt the Palestinian marchers, that nothing goes awry. When the Israelis start to use live fire (which they do only when they believe there is imminent danger to their forces, or when the security fence is in danger of being breached), they cannot always distinguish through the smoke and distance and general mayhem who is a child. Is an 18-year old boy a “child”? What about a 14-year-old? Targets are constantly moving; some “Palestinians” hold small children in their arms as they rush to the fence. Accidents cannot always be prevented. In one case, a four-year-old Palestinian child was hit by shrapnel. He was certainly not an intended target. Why was a four-year-old brought to an area where violent clashes were in full swing? Hamas encourages families to bring their children to these violent events. It wants them to be harmed, and sometimes, despite Israel’s best efforts to avoid such casualties, some of them are.

In an ever-fluid situation, with Palestinians now marching straight to the fence, and now running amok, and with all kinds of projectiles being hurled at and from either side, with the smokescreen provided by burning fires helping to hide the Palestinians making their way to the fence, children are naturally among the casualties. The AP report fails to mention that while Hamas makes great efforts to cause such casualties, the Israelis make great efforts to avoid them. “Children are children. They must be protected at all times. Children should

never be a target. Nor should they be exposed to any form of violence, by any party," says UNICEF Middle East director Geert Cappelaere. Children may have been wounded, or a few even killed, but they have never been "a target" of the Israelis. And it is Hamas, not Israel, that has "exposed" them to many "forms of violence," sacrificing their welfare and safety in order to promote the endless Jihad against the Israelis.

Here's how that AP story might be rewritten:

The body of Ori Ansbacher, 19, was found in the woods in the West Bank near Jerusalem on Thursday with extensive stabbing wounds. She had been working as a volunteer at a youth center, and apparently went for a walk in the woods. She had been raped and her body mutilated. She was buried Friday in the Israeli settlement of Tekoah amid calls by Israelis for her killer to be executed. Only one person has been executed in Israel's history: Adolf Eichmann.

Her killer lived in Al-Bireh, near Ramallah, in the West Bank. Over 600,000 Israelis live in the West Bank and east Jerusalem, territories Israel won in the Six-Day War. The Palestinians claim they must be given up by Israel to become part of a Palestinian state.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu went to Tekoah to meet with Ansbacher's parents, Rabbi Gadi and Na'ama Ansbacher, to personally express his condolences. The murder of this young girl, and the manner of her murder, has shaken the country. "You were a child of light. You brought so much light and happiness to the house," her mother Na'ama said. And her father, Rabbi Ansbacher, described Ori as "a holy soul seeking meaning, with a sensitivity for every person and creature and an infinite desire to correct the world with goodness."

In the Hamas-ruled Gaza Strip, meanwhile, thousands of

Palestinians attended the funerals of the teenagers killed by Israeli fire while engaged in protests near the security fence.

The mother of 14-year-old Hassan Shalabi wailed as mourners brought his body on a stretcher for a final farewell at their home in the Nusseirat refugee camp.

“He was everything beautiful at home; his voice, his happiness fills the house. There is laughter and play when he is home,” said the mother, Fatma, soon after the body was carried away, wrapped in a Palestinian flag.

The Palestinian group Al-Mezan claims that when they were shot by Israeli forces, the two teenagers were standing 50-60 meters (160-200 feet) from the fence. There has been no corroboration from other sources.

In Gaza City, mourners buried Hamza Ishtiwi. The Health Ministry put his age at 18, but Al-Mezan claimed he was 17. Footage of the teen lying on his back the moment after a bullet struck him in the neck spread on social media.

Gaza’s Hamas rulers have organized mass demonstrations along the frontier every Friday since March, in which demonstrators hurl rocks, Molotov cocktails, grenades, and incendiary kites into Israel, under a smokescreen of burning tires, and attempt to breach Israel’s security fence and to enter the country to kill Israelis. They have not succeeded. Dozens of Palestinians have been killed and thousands have been wounded. Hamas is not deterred. It believes that the Great March of Return is of great propaganda value to the “Palestinian” cause, precisely because of the number of casualties.

The “Palestinian” marchers frequently hurl firebombs and explosives of every type. But their latest weapon – the incendiary kite – may be their most effective, for they have managed to set aflame thousands of acres in Israel. And the

Israelis have as yet found no good way to counter the damage those kites, with gasoline-soaked rags tied to them and lit, have caused.

Israeli soldiers respond first with tear gas, rubber bullets, and stun grenades, in their attempt to stop the marchers. Any marchers who get close to the fence or start to cut through it, can expect live fire, which is first aimed below the knees. Israel, which has been accused by the Arabs of using excessive force, says it does what it must to protect its borders.

The U.N. children's agency, as expected, condemned the killing of the two Palestinian teenagers, warning of the "significant violence" Palestinian children endure. It had no comment on the murder of Ori Ansbacher, also a teenager.

"Children are children. They must be protected at all times. Children should never be a target. Nor should they be exposed to any form of violence, by any party," UNICEF Middle East director Geert Cappelaere said in a statement. There was no comment by UNICEF on the use of children by Hamas for propaganda purposes.

Whoever wrote the original AP report might take a look at this suggested rewrite. There is always room for improvement, especially when it comes to the mainstream media's coverage of Israel and the "Palestinians." I allow myself to believe that in the version just above, I've made a start.

First published in *Jihad Watch* [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#).