

Turkish media's 'Palestinian activist': 'Erdogan, come liberate Palestine. Come establish the Ottoman Empire again.'

by Hugh Fitzgerald



The Palestinian mobs rioting in Jerusalem are being whipped up by various Palestinian, Arab, and Muslim leaders, each trying to obtain some benefit from the disorder. Mahmoud Abbas has been using the property dispute between Jewish owners and Arab tenants in the Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood of East Jerusalem to whip up Palestinian rage that he calculates will take attention away from his decision to cancel the elections he had announced with such fanfare in January, and so far, his calculation has proved correct.

Meanwhile, Abbas' Hamas rivals have been showing up in the Jerusalem demonstrations, taking charge, waving their Hamas flags in great profusion even inside the Al-Aqsa mosque, where in the past PA enforcers might have tried to suppress such a display, but given Hamas' popularity in the West Bank, and the widespread dislike of Mahmoud Abbas, they do not dare to do so now. Had the elections taken place, Hamas was predicted to win both the parliamentary and presidential elections, the latter with 60% of the vote. Hamas has been threatening that if there are evictions of Arabs from Sheikh Jarrah properties, it will step up its latest campaign of rockets and incendiary bombs launched from Gaza into Israel. On May 10, it let fly more than 150 rockets into Israel, even managing to close down the Knesset. Meanwhile, Palestinians in Jerusalem can see for themselves that it is Hamas operatives, not those of the PA, who have been most visible among the rioters, and they are being given credit for their steadfastness.

Another Muslim figure trying to exploit the Palestinian riots in Jerusalem for his own aggrandizement is Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan. On December 12, 2017, the newspaper *Yeni Safak*, which is close to Erdogan, published a plan for a pan-Islamic army that would pool the military resources of the entire Muslim world in order to launch an attack that would destroy the Jewish state; the clear implication was that Turkey should be the natural leader of such a force. Everyone understood that the plan came from Erdogan himself. Unfortunately for the Turkish president, his plan was met not with enthusiasm, but with silence. He did not realize then, and still does not, that many Arabs harbor resentment over how they were treated by their Turkish overlords during the 500 years of the Ottoman Empire.

Here is the latest on Erdogan's attempt to insert himself into the Arab unrest in Jerusalem, and to put himself, as is his wont, front and center: "Turkish President Erdogan Fans Flames of Jerusalem Conflict in Hardline Messages to Hamas, PLO

Leaders,” by Ben Cohen,