

Keep drying the swamps and eliminating the waste

written by David M. Weinberg | 23.02.2025

Anybody following the news from Washington in recent weeks knows that President Donald Trump and his government efficiency czar Elon Musk have been drying up the swamp of wasteful spending. According to some reports, the Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) already has saved US taxpayers hundreds of billions of dollars.

But of course, DOGE is not just about dollars but also about the axing of programs that wield a radical ideological agenda and even anti-American policies.

It is now time to similarly cancel radical anti-Western, anti-Israel, and even antisemitic funding boondoggles on the international level.

Washington has made a good start on this by acting to shut down the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), which for years has funneled millions of dollars to anti-Israel advocacy groups and entities linked to terrorism.

Some of the terror-tied funding initiatives are publicly known. In November 2022, for instance, USAID awarded \$100,000 to a Palestinian activist group whose leaders hailed the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, a designated terror group. Just six days before Hamas's Oct. 7, 2023 assault on Israel, USAID handed \$900,000 to a terror charity in Gaza involved with the son of Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh.

A February report from the Middle East Forum found that USAID had directly awarded millions of federal dollars to organizations in Gaza controlled by Hamas. In one Biden-era case, it funded an "educational and community center in Gaza" controlled by a local group called the Unlimited Friends Association. The association openly collaborated with Hamas, inviting the terror group's officials to its office and boasting of US-funded projects in Hamas-controlled newspapers. In 2021, its director called for Jerusalem to be cleansed "from the impurity of the Jews."

A report released in January by NGO Monitor outlined millions in USAID funding for two nonprofits – Mercy Corps and American Near East Refugee Aid – that have closely coordinated with a Gaza-based ministry, run by a senior Hamas official identified by the US Treasury as previously responsible for part of Hamas’s smuggling operation. USAID humanitarian packages have been found in Hezbollah caches of weapons in Lebanon.

Sen. Ted Cruz (R-Texas) says that the full story of USAID funding Hamas “is vast and much of it was done in secret,” and he accuses the agency of purposeful subterfuge.

Worse still, under former president Joe Biden’s pick to run the agency, Samantha Power, USAID has taken the lead in accusing Israel of deliberately blocking Gazan aid deliveries, which Hamas is known to steal for its own use and for black market sales that fund its terror activities. USAID staffers went as far as to urge the Biden State Department to end military aid to Israel.

Also praiseworthy is the Trump administration’s early action to cut off funding for UNRWA which has a long record of glorifying terrorism and the rejection of Israel in its textbooks and schools. We now know of agency employees who participated in Hamas terrorist activities and of agency facilities that have been used as rocket storage and launch sites by Hamas. The complete dismantling of UNRWA is the next challenge. Its \$1.5 billion budget can much better be spent on real refugee settlement and peacemaking.

In fact, US defunding of the UN all-together may be warranted, at least for a while – as prophylactic treatment. Why should America give the UN more than \$18 billion a year when that organization underwrites a variety of departments and agencies that make up a global deep state extraordinarily hostile to the US and to Israel?

As Prof. Eugene Kontorovich has shown, this includes agencies that promote controversial agendas and questionable programs such as transgenderism, the training of LGBTIQ+ writers in the Third World, peacekeeping missions that have proven worthless and wasteful, and layers upon layers of massive bureaucracies that advance charges of apartheid, colonization, and war crimes against Israel while promoting runaway Palestinian statehood.

Then there is the estimated \$30 billion to \$45 b. that the evil Islamist government

of Qatar has invested in the US, infecting the worlds of American academia, media, and business, and clearly contributing to recent anti-American and anti-Israel protests.

The Institute for the Study of Global Antisemitism and Policy (ISGAP) has documented a gargantuan increase in Qatari funding for US universities since October 7 as well as direct connections between the amount of donations from Qatar and other Persian Gulf countries and the activity of Arab and radical Left groups that today terrorize college campuses.

Follow the money. Time to investigate and eliminate funding for the most nefarious and subversive activities on a global scale.

MOVING FROM the broad world to our narrower world, a hard-nosed review and massive recalculation of global support for the Palestinian Authority is also long overdue.

The tens of billions of dollars invested in corrupt Palestinian authorities since the halcyon days of the Oslo Accords have not brought about the building of even one hospital or significant housing project, nor has the largesse encouraged political moderation and maturity of Palestinian leadership.

Just the opposite: Flush with wild amounts of international largesse with few strings attached, the Palestinian national movement has become ever-more aggressive and hostile to Israel over the past 30 years, making true compromise impossible.

One of the most egregious PA policies is “pay-for-slay,” whereby Palestinian terrorists and their families are rewarded for the murder of Israelis on a sliding scale that prioritizes and glorifies the bloodiest attacks.

For example, Palestinian Media Watch has documented more than half-a-billion shekels in PA payments to Palestinian terrorists now being released by Israel in the horrifying terrorist-for-Israeli hostage trade deals. These terrorists have been paid by the PA ever since their arrests. PMW says that more than 300 of the 750 worst terrorists essentially are being released as millionaires.

All this raises questions about the enthusiasm of European countries and international aid agencies for paying for “rehabilitation” in Lebanon and Gaza.

With Hezbollah still running Lebanon (under the cover of a fig-leaf Lebanese government) and Hamas still holding sway in Gaza (under cover of what might be a “reformed” PA government), should billions of dollars more in cement and steel and gas be poured into these disaster zones?

Alas, we all know that nobody in the oh-so-concerned and very-humanitarian-minded international community, the biased-against-Israel international community, is going to invest in the rehabilitation of northern and southern Israel, areas that have been devastated and depopulated by Hezbollah and Hamas attacks.

But should the unhealthy habits-of-old subsidize the rearming and rehabilitation of Hezbollah and Hamas? Should the US, Canada, or Germany really participate in international donor conference after international donor conference about pouring more cash down the drains of these terrorist-controlled territories? Have they learned nothing from October 7?

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