



Sandbox

Sandbox is the weblog of Martin Kramer, and a feature of the website www.MartinKramer.org.

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Martin Kramer is...



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Civilians should be protected, unless...

« H E » email

posted Monday, 19 January 2009

In going back over earlier Hamas materials to which I've linked in years past, I rediscovered this August 2001



exchange between an interviewer and the late Hamas founder and leader Sheikh Ahmad Yassin (whose image is the background to this photo of present Hamas "prime minister" Ismail Haniyeh). In the interview, Yassin offered a rather unique interpretation of the Geneva Convention. It seems relevant to the present discussion about targeting and avoiding civilian casualties, and faithfully reflects the Hamas view to this day. The relevant segment:

Question: What is the consequence of the deaths of Sheikh Jamal Mansur and Sheikh Jamal Selim (the two top Hamas leaders killed in Nablus) for your organization?

Yassin: Their deaths push us towards more resistance and increase our determination. The way the two sheikhs were killed was

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cowardly. They were sitting in a media office, they were not in a military base or engaged in a military operation. Military people know they risk dying in battle, but civilians should be protected by the Geneva Convention.

Question: How about Israeli civilians, shouldn't they be kept out of the conflict as well?

Yassin: The Geneva convention protects civilians in occupied territories, not civilians who are in fact occupiers.

Question: Wasn't it cowardly to attack young people at a Tel Aviv disco (a terror attack for which Hamas has claimed responsibility)?

Yassin: They're the ones who are criminals. They took my house and my country. The soldier who attacks us, the pilot who shells us, where do they live? All of Israel, Tel Aviv included, is occupied



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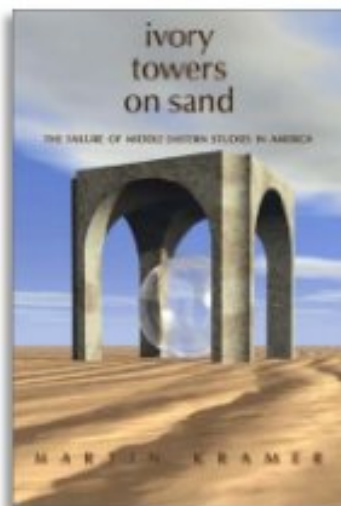
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Palestine. So we're not actually targeting civilians—that would go against Islam. The crime of occupation is not more legitimate in Tel Aviv [than it is in the West Bank, seized by Israel in 1967] because it is older. If Israel stole my house in Ashkelon in 1948, does it mean it's OK to have made me homeless? Up to this day Jews are running after Nazis and suing countries although their losses happened a long time ago.

So civilians who are occupiers are not protected, and Tel Aviv is occupied Palestinian territory. Remember this the next time you hear someone say that Hamas deserves sympathy as a movement of "resistance" against "occupation." Accurate translation: jihad to drive the Jews from "Palestine."

By the way, in that same interview, Yassin was asked if he was afraid Israel would try to kill him. His answer: "Please, they are welcome." A couple of years later, they they took him up on that.



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