



ISRAEL NEWS
A collection of the week's news from Israel
From the Bet El Twinning / Israel Action Committee of
Beth Avraham Yoseph of Toronto Congregation

that would ensure its
downfall. (JNS Feb
11)

IDF Ready to Rapidly Re-Enter Gaza if Ordered

By Yaakov Lappin

The Israel Defense Forces

stands ready to redeploy throughout the Gaza Strip, should the Cabinet give the order, according to military sources, as Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu set an ultimatum for Hamas to release hostages by noon on Saturday.

The timeline for such a redeployment would be very rapid, according to the sources, and the IDF's presence in Gaza can be re-established in very little time, similar to the speed with which the Israeli military withdrew, military sources told JNS on Tuesday.

On Monday, Army Radio reported that the IDF is preparing to return an additional division to the Gaza Strip, with the headquarters of the reservist 252nd Division re-mobilized to Gaza City. This division left the Netzarim Corridor that separates northern Gaza from the rest of the Strip in December.

According to the report, IDF Southern Command has approving plans and battle procedures for possible return to combat. All leaves have been canceled for forces in the sector until further notice. The IDF also indicated that civilian safety guidelines in the border areas remain unchanged, though the situation is being reassessed.

Currently, the IDF's 162nd Division is holding the northern area of the buffer zone separating northern Gaza and Israel, and protecting the border communities in the western Negev. The Gaza Division remains in the southern part of the buffer zone, protecting the southern border communities.

Col. (res.) Dr. Eran Lerman, vice president of the Jerusalem Institute for Strategic Studies and former deputy director of the Israeli National Security Council, told JNS on Monday, "The capabilities of Hamas to rebuild its civilian rule throughout the Strip have already materialized, because Israel did nothing to replace it in the last year."

On the other hand, he assessed, as long as Egypt does not turn into an overt enemy, Hamas "will not significantly rebuild its military power, and it will be possible [for the IDF] to maneuver quickly and with full force based on everything learned this year."

On Monday, the IDF completed its withdrawal from the strategic Netzarim Corridor, as part of the first stage of the ceasefire and hostage release agreement with Hamas.

The corridor became one of the symbols of Israeli military control by creating a buffer that split the Strip between its northern and southern parts, preventing free movement between them. In October 2024, when the IDF re-entered northern Gaza after an eight-month absence, it used checkpoints to screen civilians moving south and arrested more than a thousand terrorists. Since then, tens of thousands of Gazans returned to northern Gaza after the corridor was vacated, and it is likely that many terrorists returned with them.

While vehicle traffic moving north in Gaza must pass through checkpoints staffed by a private U.S. security contractor, pedestrian traffic is unscreened.

On Feb. 10, the IDF Spokesperson's Unit issued a statement through its Arabic-language spokesperson, Col. Avichay Adraee, announcing that the return of Gazan residents on foot to the northern Strip via Salah al-Din Street will be permitted.

"As for the movement of vehicles to the north of the Strip, it will continue subject to inspection via the Salah al-Din axis. We note that the movement of terrorists or the transfer of combat equipment through these corridors to the northern Gaza Strip is strictly prohibited and will be considered a breach of the agreement. We call on you to refrain from cooperating with any terrorist group seeking to exploit you in order to transfer combat equipment or prohibited materials."

The IDF continues to maintain a presence in southern Gaza's Philadelphi Corridor on the border with Egypt, and surrounds the Rafah Crossing.

Commentary...

Hamas's Hostage Threats and Islamist Strategy Seek to Divide Israel By Fiamma Nirenstein

Hamas's recent decision to halt the planned release of more hostages on Feb. 15 serves as a stark reminder: Comply with our demands or face the consequences, evidenced by the suffering and deaths of those in captivity. The terrorist organization has effectively weaponized the lives of the hostages, subjecting them to torture and deprivation, leaving them resembling Holocaust survivors or worse, executing them, as it has allegedly done to many of those still held in captivity.

Hamas claims Israel's "violations" of the ceasefire prompted this move, citing delays in humanitarian aid deliveries, military actions near the border and imposing restrictions on movement in Gaza. However, these accusations are a smokescreen for a deeper strategy. The reality is that Israel has painstakingly adhered to the negotiated terms, releasing Palestinian prisoners and facilitating aid deliveries. Yet Hamas has systematically diverted these supplies for its own purposes, disregarding the suffering of Gaza's civilian population.

Its tactics aim to fracture Israeli society. By stoking public outrage, particularly among those protesting Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, the terrorists seek to turn internal divisions into political leverage. The strategy exploits Israel's deep emotional commitment to rescuing hostages while manipulating fears of a prolonged conflict.

Hamas, though, is not in a position to sustain a renewed war. One of its leaders, Mohammed Sinwar, likely understands this. His goal is not to abandon negotiations but to accelerate a second phase of the conflict—one where Hamas survives and all the remaining hostages are released. Israel, for its part, has yet to formally engage in these next-phase discussions, despite diplomatic efforts in Doha.

The terror group's goal remains unchanged: End hostilities on its terms so as to secure control over Gaza's borders, particularly the Philadelphi Corridor, a critical smuggling route for weapons. This would allow the group to regroup, rearm and renew its campaign against Israel.

Meanwhile, external powers are maneuvering right out in front. U.S. President Donald Trump has expressed direct interest in the crisis, hinting at a large real estate-driven reconstruction project in Gaza. His recent remarks made after witnessing the frail condition of freed hostages suggest that he sees Hamas as irredeemable—an entity that must be eradicated rather than negotiated with.

At the same time, Hamas leaders recently met with their Iranian backers in Tehran—a move that coincided with renewed threats against Israel and the United States. Iran's involvement in Hamas's affairs may be aimed at distracting people from its own regional vulnerabilities while positioning itself as the leader of the anti-Israel resistance. Palestinian Authority chief Mahmoud Abbas is also making moves, attempting to rehabilitate his image while signaling a willingness to participate in Gaza's governance, potentially as a counterweight to Hamas.

Hamas is playing a dangerous game, leveraging hostages as bargaining chips as it tests the limits of Israeli patience. Its strategy relies on public pressure forcing Netanyahu to make concessions. Yet the sheer brutality of its actions may backfire. Instead of turning against Netanyahu, Israelis might rally behind a more aggressive approach toward Hamas, rejecting further negotiations in favor of decisive military action.

With the Israeli military now on high alert and soldiers returning to duty, the situation is volatile. The issue, as Trump himself has pondered, is how long one can negotiate with the devil. The answer may lie in Hamas's next move—one misstep may trigger a backlash

In recent days, the IDF opened fire repeatedly throughout Gaza to warn suspects approaching Israeli forces or violating the restricted buffer zone, which runs deep into Gaza and runs along the entire Israel border.

On Sunday, Palestinian sources said three people were killed by IDF fire after entering the buffer zone near Kibbutz Nahal Oz.

IDF said that day the it operated to distance suspects who posed a threat to troops.

The military added that it is “prepared for any scenario and will continue to thwart any immediate threat.” (JNS Feb 12)

The Palestinian Cause will not End Saudi-Israeli Normalization

By Joseph Epstein

No matter how much they are disproven, some old notions refuse to die.

Take the notion that Israel will never be able to establish normal ties with Arab states before solving the Palestinian conflict. This idea had been enshrined in American foreign policy until the signing of the U.S.-brokered Abraham Accords in September 2020, when four Arab states agreed to normalize relations with Israel.

Until then, the prospect of warm Arab-Israeli relations as opposed to cold peace with Egypt and Jordan without a two-state solution was unthinkable for many. In 2016, then-Secretary of State John Kerry famously remarked there would be “no separate peace between Israel and the Arab world” without peace with the Palestinians. The Abraham Accords upended that notion.

Yet as a Saudi-Israeli normalization deal is closer than ever, despite the lack of a path toward Palestinian statehood, the same claims have emerged. As recently as last year, the Saudi Foreign Ministry stated that a two-state solution was a prerequisite to normalization. Yet, most Middle East observers understand that official statements are often not aligned with actual policy.

Before the Oct. 7 massacre, Senate Democrats had pushed the Biden administration to pressure Israel harder than the Saudis for concessions to Palestinian statehood. As Axios reported at the time, Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman claimed he needed a Palestinian component to get support for any deal at home and in the Arab world. What he sought were not real concessions to the Palestinians, but the appearance of real concessions.

The war in Gaza has not changed this equation. In September, bin Salman reportedly told then-Secretary of State Antony Blinken that he would need six months to a year of quiet in the Gaza Strip as part of a normalization deal. He also reportedly told Blinken that he personally “doesn’t care” about the Palestinian cause.

For moderate Arab autocracies, such as the Gulf states, the Palestinian issue is a headache. It has been the most effective radicalizing and mobilizing cause throughout the Arab world. It also has been at the center of left-wing nationalist and Islamist revolutionary movements in the region. Failed wars, the assassinations of heads of state, insurgencies in Jordan and Lebanon, and Houthi strikes on international shipping lanes have all been carried out in the name of the Palestinian cause.

To Riyadh, security guarantees and nuclear-program assistance are much more valuable than concessions for the Palestinians.

Since becoming the de facto ruler in 2017, MBS has pursued a “Saudi-first” agenda focusing on turning his country into a technological and investment hub. He aims to reduce dependence on oil sales and promote nationalism separate from religion in a program known as the Saudi Vision 2030 project. In Saudi politics, Vision 2030 is the priority and to accomplish it, the country needs stability.

Thus, the center of Saudi Arabia’s demands will be seeking help in deterring Iran, which, for decades, has directly threatened the kingdom through proxy attacks, drug trafficking and exploiting sectarian feuds within the Shia community in Saudi’s eastern province.

Traditionally, the U.S.-Saudi relationship has centered around a simple exchange—the Saudis provide oil and sell that oil in dollars, and Washington provides security guarantees. This understanding, however, changed after Barack Obama became president in 2008. Obama’s Middle East policy centered around extracting the United

States from the region, leaving Saudi Arabia and Iran to “learn how to share the neighborhood.”

President Joe Biden continued Obama’s foreign policy. He also angered the kingdom before becoming president by promising to “make a pariah” of MBS for the 2018 assassination of dissident Jamal Khashoggi, a Washington Post columnist. While President Donald Trump has a much better relationship with the Saudis, concerns that a successive administration may revert to Obama-era policies have continued.

In future talks, Riyadh will likely seek serious U.S. security guarantees. Past talks have centered around a defense pact with formal U.S. promises to defend the kingdom, as well as access to more advanced U.S. weaponry. The Saudis will need to be assured that successive American presidents won’t be able to cancel any defense agreement.

Saudi Arabia has insisted, in past negotiations, on U.S. support for a civilian nuclear program. While Riyadh alleges such a program would not be used for military purposes, MBS has said that if Iran acquires a nuclear weapon, Saudi Arabia would “follow suit as soon as possible.”

While MBS may not care about the Palestinian cause himself, he recognizes its ability to galvanize the masses. Thus, the appearance of true concessions on behalf of Palestinians is important. MBS is popular and does not want to lose the trust of citizens. The majority of the Saudi population is young—with a median age of 29—and many were introduced to the Palestinian cause through the current conflict and have sympathy for the suffering of civilians. To win them over, MBS needs to show that he has helped the Palestinian people.

However, he recognizes the Palestinian cause for what it is: a self-destructive, revolutionary ideology chasing the dream of destroying Israel. He has seen how much it has harmed the Palestinian people, keeping them destitute with a bleak future. Unlike the Palestinian leadership, when considering peace with Israel, the Saudi leader will place his people’s future above Arab nationalist fantasies. (JNS Feb 10)

‘We’re the Flood; We’re the Day After’ By Ruthie Blum

Anyone belittling U.S. President Donald Trump’s plan for post-war Gaza should observe the spectacle of Hamas monsters and their ardent supporters gathering in droves to terrorize each hostage before his or her release, while asserting “victory” over the “Zionist enemy.”

The latest example of this travesty—the least of what the kidnapped Israelis and foreign nationals have been subjected to during their captivity—was displayed on Saturday. Hate-filled Gazans of all ages, sporting Hamas’s signature green headbands, cheered while Eli Sharabi, Or Levy and Ohad Ben Ami were led to a podium and forced to put on a performance for jihadist propaganda purposes.

Hanging from the stage was a banner with the Hebrew phrase, “Total victory,” the vow-turned-slogan reiterated by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu as the goal of the war. On each side were posters of “martyred” Hamas commanders. The graphic setup wasn’t merely an expression of ridicule; it also conveyed that the West is no match for enemies who glorify death.

The backdrop for the horrific scene of the emaciated victims, alongside their rifle-wielding brutalizers who shoved microphones and cameras in their faces, was a massive banner. It contained a fist and Palestinian flag next to a sentence in Arabic, Hebrew and English—the latter poorly translated—reading: “We’re the flood; we’re the day after.”

The first part of the boast was a reference to the Oct. 7, 2023 massacre, dubbed by its barbaric perpetrators and all those who celebrated it as “Operation Al-Aqsa Flood.”

The second alluded to Trump’s announcement on Feb. 4, during a joint press conference at the White House with Netanyahu, that the United States would be taking over Gaza and transforming it into a flourishing international hub.

The very idea of America’s playing any role in the “day after,” let

alone assuming responsibility for the enclave run and inhabited by mass murderers, had never crossed anybody's mind—least of all Hamas's. But the organization must have taken seriously Trump's earlier threat that "all hell would break loose" if the hostages weren't released by the time of his Jan. 20 inauguration.

Though only three were freed a day before his swearing-in ceremony, it was the start of the "ceasefire" deal that Hamas had refused to accept until then. It's an arrangement that even those Israelis who realize the concrete perils inherent in its fruition have come to view as a necessary pill to swallow. Few disregard the impossible situation foisted on the Jewish state by Hitler-emulating Islamists.

As Hannah Arendt wrote in *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, "Who could solve the moral dilemma of the Greek mother, who was allowed by the Nazis to choose which of her three children should be killed?"

To get a sense of Israel's own moral dilemma, a description of three individuals in three different relevant categories is in order. Let's start with the men who emerged after a year and four months in Hamas terror tunnels looking like Holocaust survivors.

Sharabi, 52, was abducted from his home on Kibbutz Be'eri, along with his older brother, Yossi, during the Hamas massacre. Unbeknownst to him, his wife and two daughters, aged 13 and 16, were slaughtered that day, and Yossi was killed while in captivity. Returning to Israel dangerously thin, pale and obviously ill, he was confronted with the news of his annihilated loved ones.

Levy, a 34-year-old resident of Rishon Letzion, was abducted from the Nova Music Festival, where his wife, Eynav, was murdered inside a bomb shelter by a Hamas grenade—something he only discovered upon his return. The couple's then-2-year-old son, Almog, was cared for by both sets of grandparents.

Ben Ami, 57, was kidnapped from Kibbutz Be'eri. His wife, Raz, who was also abducted, was released as part of a week-long ceasefire in November 2023. Like Sharabi and Levy, whose depictions of their cruel treatment at the hands of Hamas are coming to light, Ben Ami appeared as though he'd been in a concentration camp.

Another three men deserving of note—and honor—are Israel Defense Forces reservists Maj. Netanel Hershkovitz, Master Sgt. Ori Moshe Borenstein and Master Sgt. Tzvi Matityahu Marantz. Members of the 5460th support unit of the IDF's 460th Brigade, they were killed on Oct. 10, 2024, in a Hamas ambush on their vehicle in Jabalia. Each had donned his uniform on that fateful Black Sabbath to fight for the country and search for the hostages.

Hershkovitz, 37, a resident of Jerusalem, was survived by his parents, six siblings, a wife and three children.

Borenstein, 32, from Moreshet in northern Israel, was survived by his parents, three siblings and a soon-to-be fiancée.

Marantz, 32, from Bnei Adam, was survived by his parents, two siblings, a wife and three children, the youngest of whom was born halfway through the war.

A third triplet crucial to highlight is that of Wael Qassem, 54, Wassam Abbasi, 48, and Mohammed Odeh, 52—all Hamasniks from eastern Jerusalem with blood on their hands. Key players in the Second Intifada, they were convicted in 2002 and sentenced to multiple life terms for orchestrating some of the deadliest attacks on Israeli civilians, including the bombing at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem in which nine people were killed.

As part of the ceasefire deal, they were released from prison on Jan. 25 and exiled to Egypt, where their families intend to join them. A nice, neat happy ending for savages who are bound to reoffend at the glimpse of an opportunity. For them, there is no "day after"—only an ongoing campaign to repeat the Oct. 7 atrocities "again and again."

On one hand, rescuing the remaining live hostages and retrieving the deceased ones for burial is a religious duty in Judaism. It's also viewed by Israelis as an imperative, particularly considering the way in which Hamas took the military and political echelons by surprise, enabling the events of that fateful Simchat Torah holiday to take place at all.

On the other hand, hundreds of IDF soldiers risked their lives, and paid with them, to defeat the demons in Gaza, in addition to many others who lost limbs or became otherwise disabled. Israel cannot allow their sacrifice to have been in vain.

Nor can the victims of the nearly 2,000 terrorists to be let out of jail by the end of the first six-week phase of the ceasefire, in exchange for 33 of the hostages, be discounted. The pain of their loss is just as relevant to the debate as anyone else's.

Which brings us to future targets of terrorist rape, arson, decapitation and abduction. Their faces aren't on placards and T-shirts because we don't yet know who they are. We can be certain, however, that it's just a matter of time before we're bemoaning their plight. Negotiating with Hamas, through Egypt and the terrorist state Qatar, guarantees it.

Despite having its capabilities severely weakened, Hamas still holds the cards that allow it to call critical shots. Hopefully, Trump's sudden shuffling of the deck that his predecessor had stacked against Israel will lead to a return of all remaining hostages and the eradication of Hamas power.

Any other scenario—such as going through with the next two phases of capitulation—will encourage Hamas to believe in its mantra of "We're the flood; we're the day after." (JNS Feb 10)

Why Hamas Should Heed Trump's Warnings

By Dan Diker and Yoni Ben Menachem

U.S. President Donald Trump's plan to relocate Gaza's two million residents and rehabilitate the Strip has moved from statements of intent to a clear warning. On Feb. 9, 2025, while aboard Air Force One, Trump shared his shock with reporters at witnessing the release on Saturday of Israeli hostages Eli Sharabi, Ohad Ben Ami and Or Levy.

Trump told reporters that the three men's emaciated condition had reminded him of images of Holocaust survivors. In a thinly veiled warning to Hamas, that he repeated three times, he said, "I don't know how long we can take that."

Those who heard Trump's initial warnings to Hamas at the White House press conference on Feb. 4 together with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu will remember that this is the second time in less than a week that Trump has publicly put Hamas on notice.

He said clearly on Dec. 2, before taking office: "[If] the hostages are not released prior to January 20, 2025, the date that I proudly assume Office as President of the United States, there will be ALL HELL TO PAY in the Middle East, and for those in charge who perpetrated these atrocities against Humanity."

In his Feb. 4 press conference, Trump added that "we'd like to get all of the hostages, and if we don't, it will just make us somewhat more violent."

The timing of Trump's Air Force One warning is no coincidence. It came two days ahead of the Israeli Security Cabinet meeting focusing on Israel's red lines regarding the second stage of the Israel-Hamas ceasefire. Those red lines, which were agreed upon with President Trump during Netanyahu's Washington visit, include the return of all the hostages, the complete demilitarization of the Gaza Strip and the deportation of the Hamas military leadership.

Hamas would be well advised to heed Trump's warnings. Trump has publicly endorsed Israel's right to continue its war to defeat Hamas and affiliated groups such as Islamic Jihad and other armed local clans.

Since the Trump-Netanyahu meeting, the two leaders have been subject to ridicule and cynicism from Arab and Western media. Those considering testing Trump's intentions should remember his record on fulfilling promises regarding the Palestinian issue: Trump was the first president to close the PLO offices in Washington, he withdrew U.S. funding from UNRWA, which was proven after Oct. 7, 2023, to have been collaborating with Hamas. He also closed the U.S. Consulate on Agron Street in western Jerusalem, which had for years served as a de facto consulate for the PLO-P.A. More importantly, Trump was the first president to fulfill the 1995 Jerusalem Embassy Act, and moved the American embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. He also enforced the Taylor Force Act, cutting U.S. aid to the P.A. over its payments to terrorists and their families.

According to Netanyahu's inner circle, the prime minister and

Trump are closely coordinated on the red lines for the second stage. It is more than reasonable to assess that this coordination will vindicate Netanyahu's public promise to resume the war against Hamas, fulfilling the government's original goals: removing Hamas from power, eliminating the terror threat from Gaza and returning all the hostages.

Despite Israel's painful concessions in phase one of the ceasefire, Jerusalem still maintains one major leverage point: its controlling presence in the Philadelphi Corridor, a 14-kilometer (9 mile) strip separating Egypt from Gaza. The Philadelphi route had become a highway of terror, through which weapons, supplies and ammunition are smuggled to Hamas. Israel's continued control of the Philadelphi Corridor constitutes an essential defense against the continued flow of weapons shipments.

For its part, Hamas has already rejected Israel's red lines out of hand. It is well understood in Jerusalem and Washington that Hamas's rejection will prevent the completion of stage two. Additionally, Washington's intentions to pressure Hamas via its intermediaries in Qatar and Egypt will most likely fail. This imminent collision has left a small window during which additional hostages may be exchanged for terrorists in order to delay the inevitable clash with Hamas.

In parallel to U.S.-Israel coordination and Trump's specific warnings, Israel's leadership has ordered the Israel Defense Forces to prepare new strategy and tactics against Hamas. Netanyahu's instructions to the IDF also build on U.S.-Israel understandings; Trump recently reversed Biden's embargo of D9 bulldozers and heavy munitions, the latter of which can be used both to destroy Hamas tunnels and Iranian underground nuclear and strategic sites.

The bottom line is this: Trump's declarations to Hamas are far more than mere rhetoric. These are concrete intentions backed by Israeli military readiness and U.S.-Israeli coordination. This time around, Hamas will not be able to look to its P.A. "counterparts" in Ramallah, who have supported Hamas's massacre, kidnapping and subsequent war against Israel.

Israel can also count on this president to veto any P.A. attempt to initiate condemnatory resolutions against Israel via third parties in the U.N. Security Council or other international organizations in its never-ending attempt to prevent Israel's right to defend itself, to release its hostages, and defeat the Iran-backed Hamas terror organizations. (Jerusalem Center for Security and Foreign Affairs Feb 11)

USAID Sent over \$18 Billion to Islamic Terror States

By Daniel Greenfield

"It is really, really a sad day in America," Rep. Ilhan Omar declared at a Democrat rally outside USAID headquarters protesting President Donald Trump's reconstruction of the aid agency.

It wasn't a sad day for America, but it was for Somalia.

Over the last two years, USAID had funneled \$2.3 billion in "humanitarian assistance" to Omar's native country. Last year it reported a request for \$1.6 billion in aid, and even with the Biden administration on the way out the door it sent an additional \$29 million in December 2024.

USAID support for Somalia had doubled under the Biden administration, and with \$3.3 billion from USAID allocated in the last five years, the end of the USAID gravy train for the Islamic terrorist state must have been a painful blow for Omar, who is very close to the Somali regime. Former Somali Prime Minister Hassan Khaire had reportedly celebrated that "the interest of Ilhan are not Ilhan's, it's not the interest of Minnesota, nor is it the interest of the American people, the interest of Ilhan is that of the Somalian people and Somalia."

It's unknown if any of Omar's Majerteen clan members benefited from the billions in American money, but considering the prominence of the clan in Somali politics, it's likely to be the case.

Somalia, along with other Islamic terrorist entities, including the Taliban in Afghanistan, the Houthis in Yemen and Hamas in Gaza, were among the top beneficiaries of USAID cash.

USAID boasted of having sent \$2.1 billion to Gaza and the West Bank since the Hamas attacks of Oct 7, 2023. In 2024 alone, \$917 million was programmed for the terrorist areas occupying Israel.

USAID provided over \$3.7 billion to Afghanistan since the Taliban took over, with \$832 million in the previous fiscal year alone. The money was so unaccountable that USAID refused to cooperate with the U.S. government's Afghan war watchdog tracking money going to terrorists.

Even while the United States was at war with the Houthis, the Iran-backed Islamic terrorist group firing on U.S. Navy vessels, USAID continued to direct billions of dollars to Yemen.

In 2024, USAID announced a \$2.7 billion aid request for Yemen and allocated \$753 million. In the last five years, USAID provided an estimated \$3.4 billion in aid to an enemy terror state.

Other Islamic terrorist states that have heavily drawn on USAID include Pakistan, which harbored Osama bin Laden but benefited from \$600 million in the last five years. While some American towns and cities lacked clean drinking water, USAID labored to build plants for Pakistan's majority Muslim population even while it engaged in the persecution of Christians.

USAID spent over \$700 million on Iraq during the last five years, even though the country has long since been governed by Iranian puppets whose militias have been firing on American soldiers.

\$3.4 billion was directed to Syria over the past five years by USAID even as it was caught in a civil war between Shi'ite Islamists aligned with Iran and Sunni Islamists aligned with Al Qaeda.

USAID allocated \$1.1 billion to Lebanon, even as the country was run by Hezbollah.

While USAID is unable to function in Iran, between Yemen, Lebanon, Syria and Iraq, over \$8 billion was sent to Iranian puppet regimes, even without counting the money spent on Gaza.

In total, USAID spent some \$18.5 billion on Islamic terror states over those five years.

This is not a full list of USAID spending in Muslim countries, but only in those countries whose governments are closely interlinked with terrorists, sponsor terrorist groups or serve as puppets of terror groups and states. Some of these countries are actively in a conflict with the United States. They include countries responsible for the murder of American soldiers and terror attacks in the United States.

USAID has sent \$9.3 billion to Islamic terror states collectively responsible for killing over 3,000 American soldiers. Not only did Islamic terrorist states and groups kill us, but in the ultimate obscenity, we have rewarded them with millions of dollars for each of our murdered soldiers.

The reconstruction of USAID under the full umbrella of the State Department rather than as a "super-NGO" advancing anti-American interests across the globe has been met with outrage by Rep. Ilhan Omar, Rep. Jim McGovern, Sen. Chris Murphy and other longtime shills for Islamic interests in America who worry that the money for Islamic terrorists won't be there anymore.

But we ought to ask if sending \$18 billion to Islamic terror states is helping our national security.

USAID has provided massive amounts of funding for the United Nations and NGO "nonprofits" which operate inside terrorist areas with little to no oversight. Special exemptions have been handed out to allow distributors of "humanitarian aid" to partner with and do business with terrorists.

Including some of the Islamic terrorist groups that America is still at war with.

USAID's partnerships with foreign governments, and with large, unaccountable organizations including the United Nations and the World Bank, have raised concerns of money laundering. The revolving door between USAID personnel and some of the nonprofit and for-profit groups who profit from it has also raised questions about the legitimacy of those arrangements. And USAID's active efforts to deny information about its activities to SIGAR, the U.S. government's Afghan war watchdog, as well as to the incoming Trump administration, makes it a rogue agency.

It may never be fully known how much of our foreign aid went into the pockets of Islamic terrorists, but the USAID freeze and consolidation under the State Department can help make sure that the aid pipeline stops being a way to fund the Islamic terrorists killing Americans. (JNS Feb 10)