

HAMAS'S BLOODY HANDS

(By Richard Cohen)

Some residents of Gaza were taken from their homes and shot in the legs or feet. Some were brutally beaten, and some were simply murdered, sometimes after hideous torture. If you are expecting—based on everything that has happened—tha the awful Israelis did this, guess again. It was Hamas, the authentic and genuine government of Gaza. Well, no one's perfect.

The information about the shootings is taken from a report issued yesterday by Human Rights Watch and available on its Web site. It says that "Hamas security forces or masked gunmen believed to be with Hamas" executed 18 people, most of whom were accused of collaborating with Israel, sparing the expense and bother of a trial. Others were shot, maimed or beaten, not for allegedly collaborating with the enemy—or, as is often the case, having a house or woman that a snitch covets—but for belonging to the opposition political party, Fatah.

Many of these murders and assaults took place during Israel's recent pummeling of Gaza. Yet, as Human Rights Watch goes to some pains to document, at no time did Hamas's security forces lose control of Gaza, so the murders and maimings were not a consequence of chaos but of government policy. Whatever the case, the murders, shootings and beatings continued even after the hostilities ended. Since then, at least 14 more people have been executed extrajudicially, which is to say murdered. Some were also tortured.

You can only imagine what would happen if Israel dealt with its internal political enemies or dissenters in such a fashion. Last month, for instance, Israel got a heap of criticism and abuse when it was reported in the Israeli media that some Gaza civilian had been unjustifiably shot by Israeli soldiers. The report was widely cited, not just for its shocking allegations but also because it was supposedly indicative of the sort of place Israel has become. The government said the allegations were based on hearsay. We shall see.

No doubt the Human Rights Watch report will be ignored or dismissed in the greater cause of demonizing Israel. This has been the trend of late. No doubt, too, some will excuse Hamas's criminality as the inevitable result of Israeli actions—the Officer Krupke School of Behavior made famous by the singing gang members of "West Side Story." But as much as some would like to criticize Israel—and I have done so myself—they still have a minimal obligation to acknowledge the difference in core values between Israel and its enemies.

This does not mean that Israel is above criticism. After all, it has made life unbearable for some Palestinians, supported illegal settlements in the West Bank, been too harsh in squeezing Gaza, and, maybe most important, it ought to get out of the West Bank—for reasons of justice and for its own sake. Still, it remains unimaginable that Israel would murder its domestic critics or silence dissent with the occasional kneecapping. These are the tactics of thugs.

Read the Hamas charter. It is not some uplifting cry of a downtrodden people seeking its freedom but a repellent anti-Semitic screed. It sees the Jews behind every major world event since the storming of the Bastille: "They were behind the French revolution, the communist revolution and most of the revolutions we heard and hear about, here and there. With their money they formed secret societies, such as Freemasons, Rotary Clubs, the Lions . . . for the purpose of sabotaging societies and achieving Zionist interests." The Rotary? The Lions? Why not Welcome Wagon?

When Israelis talk of the practical difficulties of pulling out of the West Bank, they mean the likelihood that Hamas will oust Fatah and launch rockets into Israel. They are both concerned and appalled by a Hamas charter that, in part, reads like it could have been written by Hitler. Withdrawal is necessary and right, but it cannot be done naively and without the participation of the United States. It's going to take American peace-keepers. It is that simple. No Israeli can trust Hamas to keep the peace.

Human Rights Watch is to be commended. It does not have one standard for Israel and another for Hamas, Hezbollah or the other despotic regimes of the Arab world. That is more than can be said, though, for critics who vilify Israel, romanticize Hamas and clearly have never had the inexpressible pleasure of living in a place where a chance remark can get your legs riddled with lead. Say what you will, but that place could never be Israel.

 IN RECOGNIZING OF THE ANNI-
VERSARY OF THE ASSASSINA-
TION OF MALCOLM X

HON. DANNY K. DAVIS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 27, 2009

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Speaker, I wish to take a moment to recognize that February 21, 2009, as the 44th anniversary of the assassination of EL-Hajj Malik El-Shabazz, better known as Malcolm X. I find it only fitting that we take this time to reflect and celebrate the life of this courageous advocate for the civil rights of African Americans.

Born Malcolm Little in Omaha, Nebraska, on May 19, 1925, the early portion of young Malcolm's life was filled turmoil and change. By the age of 13, his father had passed away and his mother had been committed to a mental hospital. He spent a great portion of his formative years in foster homes. He then became involved in the criminal underworld in both Boston and New York. Little was arrested and sentenced to eight to ten years in prison. It was during his incarceration that Little become a member of the Nation of Islam, changing his name to Malcolm X. Following his parole, he quickly became the Nation's chief spokesman and served as its public face for almost 12 years. After his departure from the Nation of Islam, Malcolm X went on to found Muslim Mosque, Inc. and continued championing the cause of Black America. Tragically, the life of Malcolm X was cut short by gunfire on February 21, 1965 in Manhattan's Audubon Ballroom. The most poignant description of Malcolm was during his eulogy by Actor Ossie Davis who called him, "our shining black prince".

Malcolm X once said, "The future belongs to those who prepare for it today". We must heed these words and be evermore dutiful in our commitment to ensure that our children and their children are able to enjoy those three noble principals of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. Malcolm X remains an inspiration to millions of people around the world, inspiring others to build on his vision of a nation that recognizes the strengths of all peoples.

HONORING A.M.E. PRESIDING
ELDER JOSEPH D. PATTERSON
ON HIS RETIREMENT

HON. CHAKA FATTAH

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 27, 2009

Mr. FATTAH. Madam Speaker, one of Philadelphia's most distinguished and influential clergymen, Presiding Elder Joseph D. Patterson, Sr. of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, will be honored and feted on May 2, 2009, as he moves from decades of service to his God, his church and the people of Philadelphia into well-deserved retirement.

Presiding Elder Patterson has served the A.M.E. in its "itinerant ministry" for 45 years, pastoring and overseeing churches in Philadelphia, the western Main Line, southern New Jersey and Atlantic City.

Presiding Elder Patterson is perhaps best known for his 22 years as Pastor of Hickman Temple A.M.E. Church, where he directed an era of significant growth at Hickman as both a spiritual home and community resource for Southwest Philadelphia. His impact on the community is still felt to this day. He facilitated the building of the Samuel J. Patterson Mercy Wellness Center at 50th Street and Baltimore Avenue, which bears his father's name. He was founder and president of the Baltimore Avenue Redevelopment Corporation and past chairman of the \$41 million West Philadelphia Empowerment Zone. He was a member of the Council of Trustees at Cheyney University, serving the school he had attended as both an undergraduate and graduate student.

Presiding Elder Patterson has demonstrated strong leadership both within his own A.M.E. denomination and in the broader community of faith. He served as President of the Black Clergy of Philadelphia and Vicinity from 1995–1997, and in numerous other capacities. He is past president of the A.M.E. Preachers Meeting. Since his appointment as Presiding Elder in 2001, he has served two years as Elder of the Philadelphia District and almost six years as Elder of the West/Mainline District—the post from which he is retiring.

And all along he has been blessed by the love and support of his wife Joyce, mother Ida, and children Joseph D. Jr., Jewell D. and Jocelyn D. Patterson.

Presiding Elder Joseph D. Patterson Sr. will be honored with a special Retirement Service, May 2, 2009, at Mount Pisgah A.M.E. Church, 428 N. 41st Street, Philadelphia, with A.M.E. Presiding Bishop Richard F. Norris of the First District as Guest Preacher. I invite my colleagues in the House of Representatives to join me in saluting the career of this great man of God and preacher of the Gospel, and to wish him Godspeed upon his retirement.

 RECOGNIZING THE AMERICAN
CANCER SOCIETY'S RELAY FOR
LIFE

HON. HARRY E. MITCHELL

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 27, 2009

Mr. MITCHELL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to commend the American Cancer Society's Relay for Life that will occur on Saturday,