Schadenfreude and the UNRWA scandal

July 30, 2019

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JNS.org

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Revelations of rampant wrongdoing in the corridors of the United Nations Relief Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA) couldn’t have shamed a more worthy organization. Though normally it’s not nice to gloat over the misfortunes of others, the schadenfreude elicited by the news of inappropriate behavior going on behind the walls of this particularly vile organization was warranted.

Oddly, the [damning internal UNRWA report](https://www.jns.org/unrwa-leaders-accused-of-sexual-misconduct-ethics-violations/) dealing with the corrupt and abusive behavior of senior staff was exposed on Monday by Al Jazeera and AFP—media outlets that bemoaned the Trump administration’s cut in funding to the body whose mandate is to “provide relief, human development and protection services” to the Palestinians in Judea, Samaria and Gaza. You know, those Arabs who were displaced in 1948 as a result of the Arab assault on the Jewish state, otherwise known as Israel’s War of Independence.

Of course, only members of the far-left continue to harbor and spread the illusion that UNRWA is anything but what U.S. President Donald Trump called an “irredeemably flawed operation,” whose sole purpose has been to perpetuate a manufactured “Palestinian refugee crisis.”

As a side gig, the U.N. body that placed Palestinians in a [fraudulent category](https://www.gatestoneinstitute.org/12259/unrwa-palestinian-refugees-fraud) all their own—one that enables them to remain “refugees” for generations, rather than helping them resettle quickly—also abets terrorists. It does this does technically, by allowing Fatah, Hamas and Islamic Jihad to stockpile weapons in and under its schools, and ideologically, through [revisionist textbooks](https://www.jns.org/un-funded-social-studies-book-says-zionist-occupation-started-in-1856/) and other methods that teach Palestinian children to hate and aspire to kill Jews.

Naturally, UNRWA always denies that it its entire existence is based on a false premise. It is equally indignant about being accused of ties to terrorism. So, every time an UNRWA schoolteacher is caught posting violent anti-Semitic comments and cartoons on his or her Facebook page—a frequent occurrence over the years—the agency claims that the phenomenon is an aberration and vows to root it out by reprimanding or firing the perpetrators.

Yes, if there’s one thing that can be learned from UNRWA educators, it’s how to get away with murder from a high-horse perch.

Which brings us to the activities that have been taking place not in the squalor of UNRWA refugee camps, but rather in air-conditioned offices and hotels abroad.

According to Al Jazeera and AFP, the explosive report, which was sent in December to U.N. Secretary-General António Guterres, accuses UNRWA Commissioner-General Pierre Krähenbühl and other agency officials of engaging in “sexual misconduct, nepotism, retaliation, discrimination and other abuses of authority, for personal gain, to suppress legitimate dissent, and to otherwise achieve their personal objectives.”

These allegations are under investigation by the United Nations.

True to two-faced form, UNRWA says that it can’t respond to any questions about its conduct as long as the probe is underway. Luckily for Krähenbühl and his cronies, the United Nations—itself a money-guzzling, anti-Israel hornet’s nest—has been taking its sweet time to complete the task. Undoubtedly, the end result will be a few rolling heads and a return to business as usual. Well, almost. Thanks to Trump, UNRWA is strapped for cash, after all.

Which is one of the reasons that Krähenbühl got caught at his game.

Arranging a private fundraising campaign outside of U.N. purview, the UNRWA chief apparently went around crying poor and collecting money for business-class trips with his mistress, whom he fast-tracked into a role he invented for her in 2015—that of his “senior adviser”—so that she could accompany him around the world in style. And all behind his wife’s back.

This makes his “Open Letter to Palestine Refugees and UNRWA,” published in September 2018—a mere three months before Guterres received the report on UNRWA’s ethical violations—especially jaw-dropping.

In the letter, Krähenbühl [wrote, in part](https://reliefweb.int/report/occupied-palestinian-territory/open-letter-unrwa-commissioner-general-palestine-refugees-and): “ … The responsibility for the protracted nature of the Palestine refugee-hood, the growing number of refugees and the growth in needs, lies squarely with the parties and in the international community’s lack of will or utter inability to bring about a negotiated and peaceful resolution of the conflict between Israel and Palestine. The attempt to make UNRWA somehow responsible for perpetuating the crisis is disingenuous at best. … Our commitment to accountability, strict and sound financial discipline, to setting priorities and acting decisively when the Agency’s neutrality is challenged, are matters of public record. In 2018, UNRWA introduced stringent management measures as its own necessary contribution to overcoming the financial crisis.”

Nothing short of shutting down UNRWA will be satisfactory since its very existence is a criminal scam. But the likelihood of its closure in the near future is slim to zero.

In the meantime, let us take some comfort in the agency’s well-earned public humiliation.