

## **FROM JEWISH PEACE NEWS:**

Rela Mzali writes:

"Agencies of authority," Jimmy Johnson writes in the article below, "from occupying armies to border patrols to police forces to private military/security firms all exercise control over certain territories, often including the airspace." Accordingly, Unmanned Aerial Vehicles, known as UAVs, are already here, he says, the world over, as key tools of surveillance. Israeli UAVs are in high demand, as the "technology is 'battle-tested,' giving it an operational history by which ... reliability and effectiveness ... can be judged. Every military operation ... acts as an advertisement for ... weapons and techniques."

Though emblematic, Johnson explains in this detailed survey, Israel's extensive sales of UAVs are just one instance of "how the occupation of Palestine, through tools and techniques developed over the past 41 years, is exported ... to other institutions of hegemony and power that seek to keep systems of inequality" in place.

As Naomi Klein pointed out in Chapter 21 of her recent book, *The Shock Doctrine*, "global instability ... generates huge profits for the high-tech security sector ... Years before U.S. and European companies grasped the potential of the global security boom, Israeli technology firms were busily pioneering the homeland security industry, and they continue to dominate the sector today." In 2006, she wrote, Israel was "the fourth largest arms dealer in the world, larger than the U.K."

Tracing central aspects of the structural logic behind the current accelerated introduction of militarized technologies and concepts into civilian life the world over, Johnson writes, "The 19th century ethnocentric nationalism that drove the creation of Israel and the ethnocentric narrative of Jew vs. Arab ... that helps drives the occupation of Palestine often obscures the fact that the dispossession of Palestinians has included a massive upward transfer of wealth from colonized to colonizer and from occupied to occupier."

Both Johnson and Klein point out that Israel has effectively turned itself into a large gated community, sealing the dangerous poor behind barriers and walls, while successfully exporting the technologies and techniques perfected in the process. Johnson describes these exports as "a young and growing industry serving a market of inequality management."

Rela Mazali

# Human Rights: Unmanned Aerial Vehicles and the Warfare of Inequality Management

By Jimmy Johnson, The Electronic Intifada, <http://electronicintifada.net/v2/article10312.shtml>

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Aeronautics Defense Systems, based in the Israeli city of Yavne, was recently awarded a contract by the Dutch Ministry of Defense "to supply unmanned air vehicle capacity to Dutch troops serving with the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan." [1] The Netherlands is not the only nation to employ Israeli unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) in foreign occupation. They are also utilized by Canadian, US, UK and Australian forces in Afghanistan and Iraq. Their foreign sale has developed largely because of significant use in the wars against and occupations of Lebanon and Palestine. A variety of Israeli firms are developing new unmanned aerial, terrestrial and nautical vehicles. As these are proven in combat, here it can be expected that they too will be exported to foreign forces.

Israel was the first country to widely adopt and integrate UAVs into its armed forces beyond their use as gunnery targets for anti-aircraft training. The US made somewhat sporadic use of the machines for intelligence gathering in south China and Vietnam during the Vietnam war but it wasn't until Israel led the way that Washington started to recognize and exploit their potential value. "The Israeli Air Force pioneered several UAVs in the late 1970s and 1980s that were eventually integrated into the United States' UAV inventory.

US observers noticed Israel's successful use of UAVs during operations in Lebanon in 1982, encouraging then-Navy Secretary John Lehman to acquire a UAV capability for the Navy." Military esteem of Israeli UAVs further grew after the first Gulf War when Israel Aircraft Industries' Pioneer "emerged as a useful source of intelligence at the tactical level during Desert Storm. Pioneer was used by Navy battleships to locate Iraqi targets for its 16-inch guns." [2]

Earlier restrictions on UAV operational capacity have fallen away with the dramatic increases in computer processing power and sensor technologies that allow for higher resolution photo and video transmissions and improved communications. The speed of technological advance in the field has led to constant reassessment of unmanned vehicles' battlefield potential and the dedication of increasing resources to development and procurement by armed forces worldwide. The US's National Defense Authorization Fiscal Year 2001 legislation declared "It shall be a goal of the Armed Forces to achieve the fielding of unmanned, remotely controlled technology such that ... by 2010, one-third of the aircraft in the operational deep strike force aircraft fleet are unmanned." [3] Just five years later, the Pentagon's Quadrennial Defense Review increased that to 45 percent. [4]

The US's UAV program predates Israel's, though it has been slower to adopt and integrate the technology. Annually investing hundreds of millions of dollars in developing and advancing UAV technology for its own use and export, the US program is projected to be \$10 billion from 2003 to 2010. [5]

It has become the world's leader for many types of UAVs, especially those with attack capability. Israel and the UK are the only significant competitors for the US, even though Israel has only a fraction of America's resources.

Two main elements give Israel the ability to compete despite its relatively small military-industrial complex:

1. Israel's early entry into the field. This has helped keep it on the advanced arc of the technology curve.
2. Israeli technology is "battle-tested," giving it an operational history by which the reliability and effectiveness of the machines can be judged. Every military operation, not by intent per se, acts as an advertisement for the weapons and techniques used.

The latter was noted by The Jerusalem Post in a December 2008 article about the procurement of the Heron UAV by Canada:

"It plays a vital role in [Israeli army] operations in the Gaza Strip and in southern Lebanon, and in February the Heron Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) will make its debut in Afghanistan as the main surveillance drone for the Canadian Armed Forces." [6]

The Israeli military also advertises the use and success of its UAVs in its most recent assault on Gaza, as evidenced by this report on its website:

"The success of the [Israeli army] thus far in Operation Cast Lead is largely due to the cooperation between different parts of the army – such as various brigades and units. Thanks to the use of UAVs ... the [army] has been attaining footage captured from the air, above the Gaza Strip, and collecting data for the ground forces in Gaza." [7]

Popular Mechanics noted, in offering military analysis about the attack on Gaza, that "On the Israeli side, there is counter-rocket technology such as radar that quickly tracks rocket launches back to point of origin and signal-gathering missile-guidance sensors that are mounted on UAVs." [8] UAVs offer "continuous or 'persistent' surveillance of the battlespace, providing commanders with what is, in effect, a low hanging, near-stationary satellite." The unmanned aircraft also helps to alleviate "pressure on the military by political authorities and the general public to minimize casualties and capture of aircrews by the enemy" and complete missions "which, if manned, would tax or exceed the limits of human endurance." [9]

Current military use of UAVs is limited by the need for relatively unchallenged airspace or prohibitively expensive stealth technology as they have almost no defensive capability. Efforts to make air combat-capable UAVs are years away from equaling the capability of

piloted aircraft. Until that happens, they will be exceedingly vulnerable in challenged airspace. Thus, UAVs remain an effective tool only when used by more militarily dominant nations, corporations and other entities. Hizballah in Lebanon has at least twice penetrated Israeli airspace with an Iranian-built Mirsad-1 UAV. This was of immense public relations value to Hizballah but the flights had little military use because of their minimal freedom of movement in Israeli airspace. [10] However, UAVs as part of an integrated warring or control strategy guide the attacks of approaching ground forces and identify targets for air and artillery strikes. Their ability to map the changing physical landscape of the battleground makes them a key part, in many operations, of the nascent information technology-based theories of net-centric warfare.

Israel, with 41 years of experience in conducting operations inside densely populated urban environments (Lebanon, the West Bank and Gaza Strip), is the world leader in urban warfare in areas under occupation. Other governments seek out this experience for use in their own efforts of urban control. US Brigadier General Michael A. Vane wrote in 2003: "we recently traveled to Israel to glean lessons learned from their counterterrorist operations in urban areas," and The New York Times reported that "Ahead of the war, Israeli defense experts briefed American commanders on their experience in guerrilla and urban warfare." [11] Indeed, the US Marine Corps have begun training in Baladia City at the National Urban Training Center in the Negev. Baladia City is a fake Arab town designed specifically for training in urban warfare in the Middle East. The training area features "a city center, complete with shops, a grand mosque, hospital and an old casbah quarter built with five-foot-thick walls. It even has a cemetery that doubles as a soccer field, depending on operational scenario." [12]

The integration of Israeli training into the US armed forces is a reason why the urban warfare carried out in Fallujah was often noted as resembling Israel's devastation of Palestinian urban areas, especially in the Gaza Strip, during the first four years of the second Palestinian intifada (2000 to 2004). Currently the US occupation army is not using a high proportion of Israeli UAVs, although the aforementioned Pioneer was used extensively in Fallujah, as American arms manufacturers have domestic production lines. [13] But Israel's exportation of its occupation doesn't just include the technology, it's also the techniques and battle lessons learned. The theory being that what has worked in the ever-present efforts to stifle Palestinian resistance will also provide tools, such as the UAV sales mentioned above, for the US, Australian, Canadian, British, Dutch and other troops to solidify their occupations of Iraq, Afghanistan and wherever else is deemed necessary in the future. The trade in such techniques and technologies is what my colleague, Jeff Halper, and I are calling the "Global Pacification Industry," a young and growing industry serving a market of inequality management.

Agencies of authority, from occupying armies to border patrols to police forces to private military/security firms all exercise control over certain territories, often including the airspace. UAVs are thus useful and used in monitoring situations beyond those of direct conflict and military occupation. Israel continues to fly UAVs over the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip for surveillance and intelligence gathering while the same machines are being exported all over the world. French police deployed for "hostile protest

monitoring" Israel Aircraft Industries' Hunter during the G8 summit in 2003. Elbit Systems' Hermes is deployed by the US Department of Homeland Security on border patrol missions. [14] ADS's Aerostar is too, as well as being used off Nigeria's coast to monitor oil platforms, always a favorite protest target of Niger Delta social justice activists. [15] The Aerostar is also guarding Chevron's oil fields in Angola [16] and the Russian Federal Security Authority used ADS's Aerostat Skystar 300 for surveillance at St. Petersburg's 2006 G8 conference. [17] The entire UAV market is expected to rise to \$13.6 billion dollars in the next five years. [18]

In Planet of Slums, Mike Davis notes that more than a billion people worldwide live in urban ghettos. [19] Impoverished urban areas have generally been hotbeds of resistance activities. The concentration of dispossession produces attacks on concentrations of wealth by nature and necessity. The various uses of UAVs demonstrate how the occupation of Palestine, through tools and techniques developed over the past 41 years, is exported to protect G8 meetings and US- and European-owned "African" oil reserves from protestors. This export also helps shield the US from a labor market attempting to sneak across a border that capital doesn't even notice, which is to say, the occupation is exported to fight the redistribution of wealth. It should be no surprise that the occupation of Palestine is pertinent to this task. The 19th century ethnocentric nationalism that drove the creation of Israel and the ethnocentric narrative of Jew vs. Arab, a narrative devoid of actual political content, that helps drive the occupation of Palestine often obscures the fact that the dispossession of Palestinians has included a massive upward transfer of wealth from colonized to colonizer and from occupied to occupier.

Economic concerns in Israel during the 1980s were a key factor that helped spark the political revolt that was the first Palestinian intifada. The expulsion of Palestinian laborers from Israel that came with the mass immigration of Jews from the former Soviet Union played a major role in adding further militancy to the Palestinian movement for self-determination. The ensuing imposition of policies of closure is why Gaza is now called the world's largest open-air prison. The mechanisms of control Israel uses to try and make this situation permanent are valuable to other institutions of hegemony and power that seek to keep systems of inequality more or less sustainable. Planet of Slums provides another useful way of looking at it: Gaza, and to a large degree the West Bank as well, is one of the world's 10 largest ghettos and has a system of walls, checkpoints and other barriers that prevent Palestinians from accessing Israel, a gated community.

The export of UAVs, techniques of urban warfare and other tools of Israel's pacification industry is the occupation's contribution to the sustenance of the global power structures. For Iraq it means walls, checkpoints and surveillance mechanisms in an attempt to keep another of the world's 10 largest ghettos, Sadr City, sustainably "pacified." Israel's training of special forces in India, Congo, Colombia and other nations of deep inequality does not bode well for the residents of ghettos there. The world, economically speaking, is diverging between rich and poor -- both between wealthy and poor nations and the wealthy and poor inside individual countries. [20] The continuing urbanization of the globe, combined with economic divergence, has led to the "urbanization of insurgency" and "neither US doctrine, nor training, nor equipment is designed for urban

counterinsurgency." [21] With military "doctrine being reshaped accordingly" against "criminalized segments of the urban poor," the pacification laboratory in Gaza, Nablus and the rest of the occupied Palestinian territory will continue to be of use for the forces occupying Kabul and Baghdad today, and those who might aim for Karachi, Lagos, Caracas and other centers of "desperation and anger" tomorrow. [22]

#### Endnotes

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