

*Method and Madness*  
*The hidden story of Israel's assaults on Gaza*

Norman G. Finkelstein

London and New York: O/R books, 2014, £11/\$17, p/b

**T**here is little I find more depressing than reading about Israel. Not just the slow-motion ethnic cleansing of the Palestinians (by a state founded for the victims of ethnic cleansing, FFS) but also the denial and hypocrisy that Israel's actions evoke in its supporters.

Israel needs an internal enemy. Without one its actions would be undeniably simple ethnic cleansing. With one, and with a huge propaganda effort by its supporters, they become 'self-defence'. Hamas, certainly in part the creation of the Israeli state,<sup>1</sup> is the perfect opponent. All Israel has to do is ensure that 'peace initiatives' fail (attacks by the Israeli military ensure that), manage the perceptions of the Israeli lobby in the US on whom continuing American financial support depends and keep Hamas busy rebuilding Gaza after military assaults wreck it.

All three aspects are dealt with in this latest of Finkelstein's books on recent events in that little patch of desert in the Middle East. Finkelstein describes in some detail the last three Israeli attacks on Gaza; the piratical assault on the *Mavi Marmara*, the ship carrying aid to it; and the various rationales (and rationalisations) offered for them by the Israeli government and its supporters elsewhere.

The centre piece is chapters on the Goldstone Report, the UN-commissioned study by Richard Goldstone on the Israeli assault in 2008/9. Goldstone, a South African Jew, initially looked reality in the face and reported what he found: Israeli war crimes. Cue enormous hostility to Goldstone; and cue, eventually, Goldstone's climb-down and disavowal of his own report on a pretext that was vanishingly thin. Goldstone, who had stood up to apartheid in South Africa, was unable to resist the pressure of the Israeli lobby.

Finkelstein lays it all out, keeps his cool; some little bit of him must still believe that in the end justice will triumph. I wish

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<sup>1</sup> See e.g. <<http://globalresearch.ca/articles/ZER403A.html>>.

I shared that view. But the actions he is describing are those of a state founded on atrocity, which has now been engaged in atrocity for so long, and got away with it for so long, that I cannot see it how will be able to come to a resolution that is anything but a bloodbath. And it has nukes.

*Robin Ramsay*

The book is *not* being sold through Amazon and is available at [http://www.orbooks.com/catalog/method-madness/?utm\\_source=telesur&utm\\_medium=review&utm\\_campaign=method\\_and\\_madness](http://www.orbooks.com/catalog/method-madness/?utm_source=telesur&utm_medium=review&utm_campaign=method_and_madness).