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THREAD: 1956, 2023, and End-of-Empire Derangement Syndrome. I've been writing since Oct 17 that since Oct 7 Israel's political and military leaders have been acting in a seemingly deranged manner, as evidenced primarily by their use of extreme amounts of violence against #Gaza with no achievable political goal in mind. ("Eliminating Hamas" certainly doesn't fall into that category.)

> Indeed, their use of such devastating amounts of force has seemed to stem much more from a blind desire for revenge than from pursuit of any recognizable political goal. (As Tom Friedman also seems to acknowledge, tho that doesn't make it any less true.) >

> I have also, a number of times, noted the parallels between Israel's fierce current assault on Gaza and the 1956 Tripartite Aggression against Egypt in which it took part alongside the UK and France. Now I'm trying to put all these observations together into a broader category >

> that I would describe as End-of-Empire Derangement Syndrome (EEDS). So clearly, in 1956, the eagerness with which the UK's PM Anthony Eden and France's (socialist!) PM Guy Mollet conspired with Israeli PM Ben-Gurion in the aggression against Egypt was an example, for the UK and France of EEDS. >

> Eden's goal in 1956 was not just to seize control of Egypt's Suez Canal, which Pres. Nasser had recently nationalized, but to actually overthrow Nasser's whole "upstart" regime. As for Mollet & De Gaulle >

> They were deeply pissed about the support Nasser was giving to the FLN in Algeria. As for Ben-Gurion? He presumably leapt at the prospect of becoming one of the "big" colonial actors in the region. >

> So, the planned military action went more or less as planned, starting on I believe Oct 29 1956. The plot was for the Israelis to conquer the whole of the Sinai (& along the way of course #Gaza), and once they got close to the Suez Canal >

> The British & French would send troops to "intervene" along the Canal to bring an end to the Israeli-Egyptian fighting there. Of course, the British & French had preplanned to have their troops close by, in Cyprus & in the Med, poised to do that. >

> And along the way let us remember the massacres the Israeli troops committed in both #KhanYunis and #Rafah. (Look those up in Wikipedia, or better yet read Joe Sacco's excellent book "Footnotes in Gaza". >

> So the Tripartite Conspirators had badly misread the nationalist commitment of the #Egyptian masses, the technical capabilities of Egyptian pilots-- and the then-rapidly shifting global balance >

> On the first two of those points, suffice it to note that Eden's hopes that a battlefield defeat for #Egypt's army would lead to the overthrow of Pres. Nasser. It didn't. Instead, the ferocity & clearly colonialist nature of the attack on #Egypt led to an explosion of nationalist fervor. >

> On Point 2, Eden had hoped that, in the months since Nasser had nationalized the canal & sent all the French & British pilots packing, the ineptness of the Egyptian ship pilots (always needed on that tricky waterway) would lead to growing international support for the return of the more "competent" Europeans! But the Egyptian pilots performed just fine...

> On the international balance, Eden v. badly misread of the Eisenhower administratn in Washington, believing that it would support the whole Tripartite project. It did not, for a # of reasons, & that would prove fatal. >

> The main reasons Eisenhower did not support the tripartite Aggression were (1) that Washington was extremely focused on building international opposition to the recent Soviet invasion of Hungary & the UK-French-Israeli aggression against Egypt majorly undercut that US campaign and >

> (2) The US really wanted to *replace* British & French influence in West Asia with its own, as part of its global campaign to try to co-opt the decolonization waves then sweeping the Global South. Opposing the Tripartite Aggression certainly helped in that campaign. >

> So, within a few days after the Tripartite Aggression was launched, the Israelis had reached the Suez Canal and the British & French forces were just reaching its northern end at Port Said >

> Starting on the morning of 1 November, British carrier-borne aircraft began a series of daytime strikes on Egypt. By the night of 1 November the Egyptian Air Force had lost 200 planes. On 3 November French planes taking off from French aircraft carriers attacked the aerodrome at Cairo. One French Corsair was shot down by Egyptian anti-aircraft fire. >

> I was 4 at the time, lived near the main aerodrome for the British paratroopers. I remember the big loud roar of the planes taking off around the clock-- that after watching them for weeks practicing their landings by jumping down with their 'chutes from balloons over town. Fwiw. >

> From the beginning, there were big protests in the UK against the war. Public ones and ones in parliament. On November 1, the House of Commons "almost degenerated into fist-fights after several Labour MPs compared Eden to Hitler." Eden responded: "We [are not] at war with Egypt now... There has not been a declaration of war by us. We are in an armed conflict." (Whatever!) >

> Immediately after Israel's invasion of Sinai, Eisenhower declared his opposition to the aggression. As I recall (from my reading-- not actually recall!) he sent the issue speedily to the UN where he won a strong UNGA "Uniting for Peace" resolution calling for Israel, the French, & British to all withdraw from Egypt. >

> He could not get a UNSC resolution because of UK/French vetoes. But the UNGA/UNEP resolution was a strong one. It involved the despatch of a peacekeeping force from "neutral" or neutral-ish countries to go to monitor the aggressors' withdrawals (Canada, Scandinavian countries, etc.) >

> But most importantly, at a time when the £ sterling was in dire straits, he *threatened to withdraw the US\$ support that had kept it barely surviving for some time by then.* That was key. >

> Eden was forced to bow to American diplomatic and financial pressure, and protests at home, by calling a ceasefire when Anglo-French forces had captured only 23 of the 120 miles of the canal. That happened just after midnight on 7 November. That is, just *9 days* after the aggression had started! >

> Who knew that economic/financial/political pressure could be so effective, so speedily? (This is why I've been urging all the significant economic powers in the Global Majority to speedily identify & implement their options for using such pressures to end the horrendous Israeli-US Bipartite Aggression against Gaza.) >

> Anyway, if we're looking at End-of-Empire Derangement Syndrome (#EEDS) in the present context, in comparison with 1956, I guess a first task is to identify which parties are suffering from it? The Israeli leadership, or the US leadership? I think a case could be made for both. >

> I also want to note that back in 1956, Eden was evidently very sick at that time. He had a bad bile duct condition that had him fleeing to Jamaica for treatments away from prying British eyes, just a couple weeks after the #SuezCrisis happened-- and by all accounts had been suffering badly from it for quite a time before then, too. >

> His fellow Conservative Party leaders turned against him and he was ousted as party leader and PM in January 1957. But I think his case of #EEDS was not primarily related to his medical challenges. It was more a case of colonial nostalgia, colonial blindness, and sheer *pique* at the effrontery of Col. Nasser in firstly overthrowing the (strongly London-backed) King Farouq & secondly nationalizing the Canal. >

> Some version of each of those sentiments are also now driving Netanyahu's drive for the aggression against Gaza, I think. But also a great *fear* of the wrath of the Israeli electorate if he can't deliver *some outcome that they value* in Gaza, as well as his raw desire for vengeance against #Hammas. >

> And how about Biden? What explains the depth of his desire to back-- and to actively participate in-- this aggression against Gaza, come what may, and in the face of mounting evidence that it's been significantly denting US "soft power" all around the world?

> I've heard numerous explanations for the depth of his support for Israel's assault, including from people who worked quite closely with him in the Senate for years. >

> One of the ones that rings truest for me is that "this is just how and who Biden is." Not a very scientific or deeply psychological explanation, I know. But it does kind of capture the deeply un-analytical, lazily White supremacist/colonial, and slightly senescent "business as usual" aspects of his policymaking on this matter. >

> And all those aspects of Biden's approach also look like symptoms of #EEDS. So I don't know *exactly* what leaders of other countries around the world who are not afflicted by #EEDS can do to rein in the danger these two old guys pose to world peace (as well as to the survival of 2.3 million Palestinians in Gaza.) >

> But I do have some ideas, which I've been writing about at my blog . And also, just one other key point here about the ties between 1956 and 2023 >[Globalities.org](https://globalities.org)

> And that is this: In 1956, it was not only the British whom Eisenhower forced to withdraw from the areas they'd occupied in Egypt. It was also the French *and the Israelis.* On 7 November 1956, PM Ben-Gurion addressed the Knesset and declared a great victory, saying that the 1949 armistice agreement with Egypt was dead and the 1949 armistice lines could not be restored, implying that he might even annex the Sinai Peninsula. >

> But Eisenhower put a full-court press on the Israelis to withdraw back to their side of the 1949 Armistice Line, which they had completely done by the end of March 1957. The Zionists in the United States were really angry. >

> That was the point at which they vowed that they'd build their political strength in the U.S. to the point that no U.S. President could ever force Israel to do something like that ever again. That was when they founded AIPAC, which >

> speedily built up its power to that end. Over the decades that followed, AIPAC invested heavily in indoctrinating the US public and longtime pols like Joe Biden into accepting their arguments as the only form of truth in the world. So here we are, 63 years later... THE END

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