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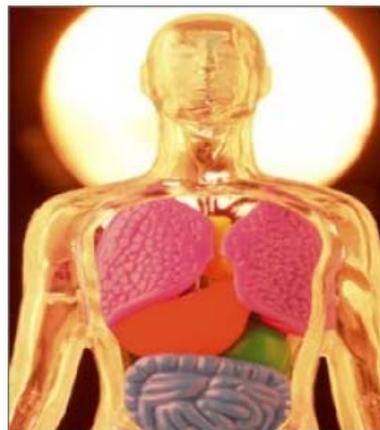
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## Focus on Israel: Harvesting Haitian Organs - by Stephen Lendman



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US, February 1, 2010 (Pal Telegraph)- On January 15, Haaretz reported that: "The Israel Defense Forces' aid mission to Haiti left Israel overnight (January 14) with equipment for setting up an emergency field hospital. Around 220 soldiers and officers (were) in the delegation, including 120 medical staff (to) operate the hospital in the Haitian capital, Port-au-Prince."

According to Israel's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, it includes "40 doctors, 25 nurses, paramedics, a pharmacy, a children's ward, a radiology department, an intensive care unit, an internal department and a maternity ward (able to) treat approximately 500 patients each day," including in two surgery rooms.

On January 20, Lebanon's Al-Manar TV reported on the mission, citing a damning YouTube video posted by an American named T. West from a group called AfriSynergy Productions. "The video presents something to think about while exploiting the horrible tragedy that has befallen Haiti where Israeli occupation soldiers are engaged in organ trafficking."

Israel faced these charges before. In November 2009, Alison Weir's article in the Washington Report on Middle East Affairs headlined, "Israeli Organ Trafficking and Theft: From Moldova to Palestine." She cited an August Donald Bostrom article in Sweden's Aftonbladet suggesting that Israel illicitly removes body parts, including from Palestinians.

She stated:

"...Israeli organ harvesting - sometimes with Israeli governmental funding and the participation of high Israeli officials, prominent Israeli physicians, and Israeli ministries - have been documented for many years. Among the victims have been Palestinians."

Nancy Scheper-Hughes is a UC Berkeley Professor of Medical Anthropology, founder of Organ Watch, author of scholarly books and articles on the subject, and "unflinchingly honest in (citing) the Israeli connection."

"Israel is at the top," she states. "It has tentacles reaching out worldwide. (It has) a pyramid system at work that's awesome....they have brokers everywhere, bank accounts everywhere: they've got recruiters, they've got translators, they've got travel agents who set up the visas."

They pay "the poor and the hungry to slowly dismantle their bodies" or simply take what they want from fresh corpses. Body parts are commodities, to be harvested and sold to the rich, even though organ sales are prohibited in most countries, but not in international law.

Relevant International Law

The UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime calls organ extraction for profit human exploitation. In 2008, Israel banned the practice, but it persists.

On October 13, 2009 at a UN press conference on the subject, Marja Ruotanen, Director of Cooperation of the Council of Europe, stated:

"We have legislation and definitions covering the trafficking in human beings for the purpose of organ removal, but the study points out that there is a legal vacuum for the traffic in organs, tissues and cells (OTC)."

Human trafficking for any purpose is a crime. Global instruments cover OTC trafficking, but missing are "internationally agreed-upon definitions within an international convention." One is needed that clearly defines the practice, protects donors, but prosecutes brokers, medical staff, and others engaging in it.

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Chair of the Department of Medical Ethics of the University of Pennsylvania, Arthur Caplan, and Austria's Public Prosecutor, Carmen Prior, say many nations are taking steps to address the issue, emphasizing that OTC material should only be gotten by "voluntary altruism." In other words, donated, not sold for profit.

Caplan explained that "money for parts" violates "basic human dignity and medical ethics." It also exploits the poor, and they stay poor after the sale. Also, their organ quality is usually low, and procedures used to extract them often harm buyers and sellers.

UN Secretary-General Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, Rachael Mayanja, didn't predict when the world body will begin work on a convention, but she hoped it would be soon. Discussions to this point are "just the beginning," she said, "and it gives us an impetus to go forward."

Kawther Salam - "The Body Snatchers of Israel"

Salam is a West Bank-based Palestinian journalist, active in reporting on human rights abuses by the Israeli military (IDF). In 2003, she was one of 28 writers in 13 countries to receive a Hellman/Hammett Grant from Human Rights Watch "in recognition of (her) courage in the face of political persecution."

On August 24, 2009, her above titled article presented what she "witnessed, saw, observed and heard during (her) 22 years of journalistic work under the Israeli military occupation in the West Bank and Gaza."

She states that from the early 1970s, the IDF kept bodies of Palestinians they killed, then later buried them in secret, numbered graves. In other cases, Israel's civil administration and military commanders returned corpses to families on condition they be buried immediately, late at night, for "security reasons."

They followed funeral processions in "armored grey cars," monitoring them through burial. Why so, asked Salam? "If the burial is normal, and the organs of the victims were not stolen, then why should they be buried in the dark of the night? The families of the victims all knew that they were receiving empty bodies, filled with cotton, to be buried in the middle of the night."

Salam said she "personally...witness(ed) Israeli soldiers and military vehicles kidnapping the bodies of dead Palestinians from (hospital) emergency rooms. In other cases, (she) saw the soldiers following the Palestinians to the cemetery, to steal the body from the family before burial. This practice became so widespread that many people started carrying the bodies of the murdered to be buried at home, in the garden, under the house or under trees, instead of waiting for the ambulance to take them to the hospital."

She said "everybody in Palestine" knows that Israel steals bodies for their organs. It was common IDF practice to "kidnap" Palestinians from emergency rooms in Hebron, Nablus, Ramallah, Jenin, and most everywhere throughout Occupied Palestine, then transfer them to an Israeli hospital.

Her article lists names of IDF commanders and civil administration officials involved in the practice. "Everybody knew" they were doing it, yet their families were told sincere efforts were made "to release the bodies of their relatives from the military headquarters," calling it a favor, when, in fact, their organs were stolen.

Perhaps "thousands of bodies and even people known to have been alive were transferred to the Abu Kabir" Forensic Institute near Tel Aviv, Israel's only autopsy facility involved in organ trafficking, a matter that became a scandal inside the country. Its director, Dr. Yehuda Hiss, admitted doing it, never was held accountable, and until recently remained the institute's chief pathologist.

In 2002 and 2005, he was investigated over the large scale theft of body parts, the practice Yediot Aharonot journalists broke, saying he had "price listings" for organs sold to universities and medical schools.

On January 4, 2002, Israel National News.com headlined, "Abu Kabir Operating Organ Warehouse," saying Hiss was:

"accused of a long list of charges from inappropriate behavior as a medical professional to criminal acts such as the illegal sale of and dealings in organs and body parts, removing organs from deceased persons without consent, and misrepresenting organs in returned bodies."

Other allegations were that:

"in some cases (organs he took without consent were stuffed with) toilet paper rolls and metallic rods in their place to fill the voids and hide the theft of the organs. A court-ordered search of the institute revealed large supplies of stored organs illegally taken from bodies," thousands taken without permission.

During the first Intifada and other times, Salam said she "personally witnessed how the Israeli military were kidnapping Palestinian bodies and gravely injured people from the emergency room of Princess Alia hospital in Hebron (and dead bodies from) Al-Ahli hospital." The area was declared a military zone, the hospitals surrounded and invaded, and no one was allowed to move inside them.

Israeli organ harvesting is a longstanding practice, well known by "most if not all the Israeli medical

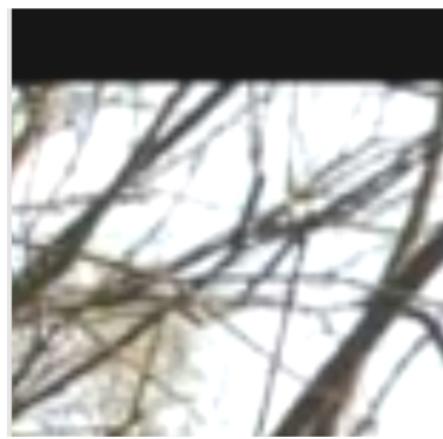


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establishment (who) keep silent because they either get money, or they are rewarded in other ways...."

Jerusalem Center for Democracy and Human Rights Director, Salim Khalleh, said JDCHR documented 270 cases of "reserved" Palestinian bodies, buried in numbered graves in secret cemeteries, or in numbered compartments of cooling facilities.

According to the Palestinian National Authority (PA) Director of the Department of Statistics, Abed Al-Naser Ferwana, many Palestinians were murdered in detention during the second Intifada, their bodies kept in secret Israeli cemeteries, some released weeks later. He calls this more proof that their organs were harvested illegally.

Israeli "Transplant Tourism"

Rich Israelis take advantage, availing themselves of what's called "transplant tourism," traveling wherever a needed organ can be found, sometimes from fresh corpses, usually from the desperately poor.

The Israeli government acts as facilitator, providing subsidies of up to \$80,000 for "transplant holidays." According to Scheper-Hughes, Israeli officials exhibit "amazing tolerance....toward outlawed 'transplant tourism.'"

She said the Israeli Ministry of Defense is involved in a practice by which "bodies are broken, dismembered, fragmented, transported, processed, and sold in the interests of a more socially advantaged population....," Israel engaging in more of this globally than any other nation.

Its medical teams apparently are doing it in Haiti, exploiting fresh corpses and the living. The Manar TV cited You Tube said "there are people operating in Haiti who do not have a conscience and are members of the search and rescue teams, including the Israeli occupation forces," far from home harvesting Haitian organs, and the pickings are plentiful.

Apparently, the publicity about providing humanitarian aid is cover for this illicit operation, another crime against humanity among Israel's growing list, matched and exceeded by its Washington benefactor with generations more practice.

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