



Written by on March 3, 2009

U.S. to Send \$900 Million to Gaza and PNA

The PNA, which lost an election in Gaza in 2005 to the Hamas terrorist faction and subsequently was driven from Gaza, governs Palestinians from the West Bank.

State Department spokesman Gordon Duguid announced on the day of the conference that the aid money would be distributed through USAID, in coordination with United Nations agencies and other international organizations. FOXNews.com reported that it is likely that among the distribution agencies would be the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA), "which has been accused of allowing terrorist propaganda in classrooms it funds and has suffered several high-profile examples of terrorist leaders who were on the agency's payroll."



UNRWA recently came under heavy criticism for giving Sen. John Kerry a letter addressed to President Obama, without mentioning that the letter was from Hamas. When UNRWA afterwards revealed the true source of the letter, U.S. officials expressed outrage.

Among the most vocal critics of the proposed aid package in Congress is Rep. Mark Kirk (R-Ill.), who told FOXNews.com: "This aid relief package would be unique in its complete lack of transparency. If assistance is provided through reputable foreign aid mechanisms that allow outside audits, support on the Hill would build. But if it goes through UNRWA, which has not had an outside audit, then there's going to be grave concern."

Actually, there should be "grave concern" even if UNRWA were not involved. The PNA, though considered more "moderate" than Hamas, is headed by Mahmoud Abbas, who succeeded Yasser Arafat as chairman of the terrorist Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) in 2005. And Hamas itself is well entrenched in Gaza.

Mark Regev, a spokesman for Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, expressed concerns about where the aid money would wind up, saying: "We definitely don't want to see the goodwill of the international community exploited by Hamas and serve Hamas's extremist purposes."

At the conference, Secretary of State Clinton insisted that none of the money would go to Hamas, stating: "We have worked with the Palestinian Authority to install safeguards that will ensure our funding is only used where and for whom it is intended and does not end up in the wrong hands."

In an article published several days before the conference, the *New York Times* quoted an administration official, who spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to talk about the aid before Clinton announced it, who gave his assurance: "None of the money will go to Hamas, it will be funneled through NGOs and U.N. groups."



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AP reported that State Department spokesman Robert A. Wood said the day before the conference that of the \$600 million proposed for the PNA, the Obama administration intends to provide about \$200 million to help the Palestinian Authority shore up a budget shortfall and another \$400 million to assist Palestinian institutional reforms and economic development. Wood said some of the \$400 million might wind up aiding Gaza, but he said that would depend on the Palestinian Authority.

Of course, the expenditure of any money for foreign aid must be approved by Congress, which presumably might be deterred by pressure from outraged constituents. But with Congress having recently appropriated \$787 billion for a so-called economic stimulus bill, it is likely that both members of Congress and voters alike will have become desensitized to big numbers. After all, what's a measly \$900 million?

However, as the late Sen. Everett Dirksen was once reportedly said: "A billion here and a billion there, and pretty soon you're talking real money."

Another question that might be raised: why should the United States pay \$300 million dollars to rebuild Gaza and another \$600 million to bail out the PNA, whose sole claim to being the "moderate" and "legitimate" government for the Palestinian people is that its rival, Hamas, is even *worse*?

Finally, there is the constitutional aspect of *all* foreign aid sent abroad by the U.S. government. To put it succinctly, *no where* in the Constitution can authorization for Congress to appropriate a single cent for foreign aid be found.

For those who may reverse the order of the Constitution and ask where in the Constitution is foreign aid *prohibited*, that is not how our Constitution works. Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution lists all of the powers delegated to Congress, including the power to make laws for "carrying into execution the foregoing powers, and all other powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States."

And if a power is not on the list? (And foreign aid is not.) We then turn to the 10th Amendment, where we find: "The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people."

Are you a person? Then you have the power to send as much "foreign aid," *out of your own pocket*, to those people you think need help. Many worthwhile private charitable organizations will gladly take your donations and help the poor around the world. However, asking our federal government to use the taxpayers' money to do what it is not authorized to do violates both the Constitution and the rights of private property.

— Photo: AP Images

For more information about Mahmoud Abbas' PLO/Fatah and the folly of supporting "moderate" terrorists as opposed to worse terrorists, see The New American article "[A Bad Investment](#)."



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