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# OUTPOST

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DECEMBER 1993

PUBLISHED BY AMERICANS FOR A SAFE ISRAEL

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## **RABIN'S "TRANSFER" PLAN**

*Herbert Zweibon*

How ironic that the concept of population transfer, so angrily deplored by the Israeli left in recent years, is today in the process of being implemented by a leftwing Israeli government--against the Jewish residents of Judea, Samaria and Gaza. While the text of the Israel-PLO accord makes no provision for the forced relocation of those Jews, the policies of the Rabin government make it clear that driving Jews out of the territories is indeed the Prime Minister's goal.

Ever since Yitzhak Rabin's ascent to power in July 1992, the Jews of Judea, Samaria and Gaza have found themselves the victims of a step-by-step strategy to "dry up" their communities, as Rabin's aides put it, so that they will vacate the territories desired by the PLO. The first phase was a cut-off of government funding to most of the Jewish communities in those areas. That was followed by a series of less-publicized but equally draconian measures, most notably the government's refusal to sell ready-for-occupancy apartments and houses in those Israeli communities, and its decision to renege on commitments that had been made to encourage business ventures in the Jewish towns.

What is most important is that Rabin has deliberately forsaken the government's responsibility for the physical protection of those Jewish communities. The Israel-PLO accord provides for an Israeli military withdrawal from most of Judea-Samaria and Gaza by the middle of 1994. Although Article VIII of the accord asserts that Israel "will continue to carry the responsibility for overall security of Israelis [in the territories] for the purpose of safeguarding their internal security and public order," there is no explanation as to how the government can do that once Israeli troops are removed from the region. The Jewish residents have therefore concluded, with justification, that the promise of "safeguarding their internal security" is mere lip service--an attempt to lull them into complacency so that they will not interfere with the implementation of the agreement.

The Jews of Judea-Samaria find themselves under attack from their own government. Rabin has called them "crybabies" and compared them to Hamas. Shimon Peres has told them that "they can live under Arab rule, just as Arabs are citizens of Israel." This is a

lie, for while Arabs can indeed live under Israel's rule of law, it is a hideous absurdity to claim that Jews could live under a regime controlled by PLO terrorists. Even more important, the Jews of Judea and Samaria did not reclaim their heritage to make of it an Arab country.

As the Jews of Judea and Samaria suffer daily stabbings, axeings, and murders, how does Rabin respond? With advice. He tells the Jewish communities "to do what we always have done during a hundred years of Zionist settlement in this country: bury our dead, bite our lips and carry on." But since when did "burying our dead" constitute Zionism? True, in the past Jews buried their dead and carried on, but it was because they had a goal: in the moving words of Hatikvah, "to be a free people in our homeland." Rabin offers the Jews no hope for Zionist fulfillment. He offers them no prospect for tomorrow but to bury more dead. And for those not prepared to simply bury some more dead, he offers threats--he will act "firmly and aggressively" against them.

For the Arabs a license to kill, for Jews a license to bury their dead.

Rabin insists that Israel "has passed the point of no return" in the negotiating process. If he should turn out to be wrong, it will be thanks to the men and women who settled Judea and Samaria. Israel's chief hope for survival is that it will turn out that their pioneering effort constituted the true point of no return, which will in the end make it impossible for a witless government to throw away the heritage of the Jewish people.◊

*Herbert Zweibon is chairman of Americans For a Safe Israel.*

### IN THIS ISSUE:

*Gaza Reconsidered* ...3

*"Peace": A Word, An Illusion* ...4

*The Peace of Chelm* ...5

*The Handshake* ...8

*Thank You, Yossi Beilin* ...10

FROM THE EDITOR

## **THE FORGOTTEN JEWISH REFUGEES**

Clyde Haberman, the Jerusalem bureau chief for the *New York Times* recently (October 27) described in sympathetic detail the "plight" of Arabs who left Israel during the 1948 war. He claimed that some of them "were forced to leave their homes" (only a handful were forced, and even then only because of dire military necessity), and suggested that they should be repatriated. One possible sticking point to such a return, Haberman complained, was that if the Arabs press their refugee issue, "Israel might seek compensation of its own for property left behind by hundreds of thousands of Jews who emigrated to the young state in the late 1940s and early 50s from North Africa and elsewhere in the Middle East."

Haberman's wording is, of course, grotesquely biased. In Haberman's world, Arab refugees are down-trodden and "were forced to leave their homes"; Jewish refugees, however, merely "left behind some property" when they "emigrated"--as if they did so voluntarily and accidentally forgot a few of their belongings. No mention of the fact that there were pogroms, that they were brutally expelled en masse, and that their property was seized by the Arab governments.

Perhaps even more troubling, however, is the implication that the Rabin government is going to bring up the issue of the Jewish refugees only if the Arabs bring up their refugee complaint, and has no plans to bring it up otherwise. Although the Rabin government has not explicitly declared this to be its position, the fact is that it has so far failed to raise the question of the Jewish refugees from Arab countries. A few years ago, when Labor controlled the Foreign Ministry during one of the Likud-Labor national unity governments, there were reports in the Israeli press that the Ministry was deliberately downplaying the Jewish refugee issue so as not to "complicate" the possibility of Arab-Israeli peace talks.

More than 800,000 Jews were persecuted and then expelled by the Arab regimes. Unlike the Arab "refugees," who emigrated voluntarily, the Jewish refugees have every right to full compensation for what was stolen from them--and that right dare not be sacrificed on the altar of the "peace process."◇

## **...AND A FORGOTTEN JEWISH WOMAN**

Crown Prince Hassan of Jordan was the surprise guest speaker at October's "Lion of Judah" Conference, the largest gathering of women in the history of the United Jewish Appeal. More than 1,100 American Jewish women

were in attendance, and they were evidently thrilled that an Arab official was willing to grace their gathering with his presence. "To me, it was like an out-of-body experience," gushed Susan Stern, who chaired the conference. In all the excitement, neither she nor any of the other 1,100 women present remembered to ask their Jordanian guest about his government's desecration of the gravestone of the most famous woman in American Jewish history, Henrietta Szold. The legendary Miss Szold, founder of Hadassah, is buried in the Mount of Olives cemetery in eastern Jerusalem, and hers was one of the gravestones taken by the Jordanians during the mid-1960s for use in the building of Jordanian Army latrines. Yet American Jewish leaders--men and women, Hadassah officials and those of other organizations--have been unanimously silent with regard to this outrage. No doubt they are afraid that such embarrassing questions might "irritate" the Jordanians. They are probably also concerned that by reminding the Jewish world about Jordan's behavior, they will be raising politically inconvenient questions about whether or not Jordan is really so "moderate" after all.◇

## **A MATTER OF LOYALTY**

Critics of the Israel-PLO accord have pointed to Rabin's failure to muster a "Jewish majority" in the Knesset in favor of the agreement. That phrase has aroused the ire of Jewish liberals, who say that it is "anti-democratic" to question the legitimacy of a government that relies on the votes of Arab parties. The fact is that those Arab parties were elected on platforms that endorsed the demands of Israel's Arab enemies. They seek to shape Israel's policies to the advantage of Israel's foes. The many Israelis who have complained about this are not anti-democratic or anti-Arab; they are expressing a legitimate concern about a simple matter of national loyalty--a concern shared in the many countries that require loyalty pledges for various occupations, including the holding of political office.◇

*Outpost*

*is published by*  
Americans For a Safe Israel  
147 East 76 St.  
New York, NY 10021  
(212) 628-9400

**Editor:** Ruth King

**Editorial Board:** Erich Isaac, Rael Jean Isaac, Herbert Zweibon. *Outpost* is distributed free of charge to members of Americans For a Safe Israel. Annual membership: \$50.

# GAZA RECONSIDERED

*Erich Isaac*

In mid-December, the first phase of the Rabin-Arafat agreement is to be implemented, with the control of Jericho and Gaza passing to Yassir Arafat. The retreat from Gaza has wide appeal in Israel, even among those who recognize other elements in the agreement as calamitous for Israel. The prevalent view of Gaza could be summed up as (a) "Who wants to bother with all those Arabs?" and (b) "What possible value--to anyone--is Gaza and its 'Strip'?" And so, for most Israelis, there is an actual feeling of relief about the pending retreat from Gaza.

Unfortunately, such easy dismissal of the Gaza Strip reveals an abysmal ignorance of the Strip's vital role on the part of the public and wilful denial by Israel's political elite, which knows better.

The Gaza Strip has had uncanny persistence as an invasion corridor. From prehistoric times to the present, it has served as a critical segment of the route linking Asia and Africa. This route, roughly paralleling the Mediterranean shore, leads from Egypt through northern Sinai to the narrow Rafiah gateway between the sea and the sand dunes of Halutza. From Rafiah the route continues north through the Gaza Strip into Israel's heartland. Known to the Egyptians as the "Ways of Horus," or the Pharaonic road, to the Israelis as *derech erez plishtim*, or the way of Philistia, and to the Romans as *via maris*, the way of the sea, this route passes between the coastal dunes to the west, and the hilly fringes and badlands of the western Negev inland to the east. There are no natural obstacles on its way to the Sharon and farther beyond, i.e. through modern Israel's core area.

The route has the singular advantage of ample water sources, based in part on natural storage in the 1 to 5 mile wide coastal dune belt. Hence, to this day it remains the only route with adequate water available to supply large regular formations on the march. It is noteworthy that the watering and reorganization areas of the invading armies of Pharaoh Sethos I, which he depicted on reliefs in the Temple of Karnak in the 13th century B.C.E., are the very same sites that supplied Napoleon's army in 1799, the British army under Allenby in 1917, King Farouk's Egyptian army in 1948 and Israel's army, albeit moving in the opposite direction, in 1956 and 1967.

The many hundreds of armies that have marched over this route, representing every historical stage of military technology and strategy, cannot be listed here. Suffice it to say that Israelis who fought in the south in the War of Independence well remember the rapid Egyptian advance through Gaza, with probes reaching to the dunes of Yavneh, a mere fifteen miles from Tel Aviv. So also do the villagers, like those of Be'erot Yitzhak, Nirim and

Negba, who fought the Egyptian onslaught, and those who survived the Egyptian capture of Kfar Darom, Yad Mordechai and Nitzanim, whose destroyed villages remained under Egyptian rule in what became known as "the Gaza Strip."

There is no better testimony to the strategic importance of Gaza than its place in the Allon Plan. A commander of the Palmach, Yigal Allon was a general in the War of Independence and a minister (including Foreign Minister and Deputy Prime Minister) in a series of Labor governments. The Allon Plan, which was adopted as policy by the Labor government, sought to integrate into Israel the minimum amount of territory vital for security after the 1967 war, at the same time ensuring that Israel did not rule over hostile Arabs. Thus the plan called for Israeli retention of the uninhabited Jordan Valley, which would be settled by Jews, while the populated Arab areas of Judea and Samaria would be returned to Arab rule.

It would seem obvious that under a plan to relieve Israel of rule over hostile Arabs, the Gaza Strip would be first in line to be turned over to Arab control. Not so. In Allon's view, the Gaza Strip was so vital to Israel's security that his plan called for removing much of the Arab population from the Strip, resettling it in western Judea and Samaria, and making much of the Strip part of Israel. Today, this aspect of the Allon Plan is rarely cited. Nonetheless, it is a powerful reminder that even Allon, from the far left of the Zionist movement, saw Israeli sovereignty over Gaza as a sine qua non for Israel's defense. Allon remembered what Israel's leaders now ignore: that prior to 1967 the Strip was the base for an endless stream of attacks by terrorists (they were known as *fedayeen* then) on Israeli settlements in the south. Giving up Gaza, Allon recognized, would not only add 33 miles of hostile borders to Israel but provide Israel's enemies with a port into which arms could easily be brought by sea.

What of Gaza's role in Jewish history? To be sure, it lacks the significance of Jericho or Shiloh or Hebron. The Gaza strip was part of southwestern Canaan, that portion of the Promised Land which reaches

*(Continued on page 11)*

# "PEACE": A WORD, AN ILLUSION

*Midge Decter*

I want to talk very briefly on the subject of the word "peace"--the word we have been hearing so much about in recent years, and especially in recent weeks. Peace, indeed, is a word that for nearly half a century has been more than comfortably at home on the lips--as well, of course, as the printing presses--of the citizens of the world's democracies. We have heard it invoked in words of prayer, and shouted from the podiums of demonstrations. We have seen it waving on banners and painted on posters. We have hefted great tomes devoted to it. We have tipped our hats to committees organized to promote it. In Washington, a government institute is named for it, and in New York, where I live, there stands on the shores of the East River a great expensive mausoleum once intended to be its international home (now perhaps promising to be its final resting-place).

Each time some phenomenon is set before us bearing the name of peace, sealed with the imprimatur of those who designate themselves peace-makers, we celebrate; we celebrate both the peace that is promised and those who do the promising. Often this celebration of the peace-makers takes the form of awarding them great prizes. And calling them heroes--making peace is in our eyes an act that always requires great courage.

But I want, on this occasion, to say something else about the word peace--and not just in connection with Israel and the Palestinians. What I want to say is something that virtually the whole history of the 20th century teaches us and yet something we refuse to learn. And that is, when applied to the affairs of nations, peace is an evil word. Yes, I said evil. And the idea of peace as we know it is an evil idea.

From the peace of Versailles to "peace in our time"--do you remember that one?--to "give peace a chance"--you surely remember *that* one; and did Yitzhak Rabin, when he repeated this particular mantra word for word, know who had intoned these words before him and under what circumstances and with what results? Each of these declarations of peace or expressions of longing for peace (and these are, as you know, only a few of many such declarations and longings) ended in slaughter. Not necessarily immediately and not necessarily directly, but slaughter all the same. Camp David, you will say, has not done so--and I pray with my heart and soul that you are right, for Rabin's handshake with Arafat was itself one of the fruits of Camp David.

What? Am I saying that it was decent people's belief in peace that has in some way brought about the bloodshed to which I am referring? My answer, I am afraid, is yes. Peace is the name not of a reality but of an

ideal. The people who continue to demand it in this charnel-house of a world are people seeking the all-inclusive solution, the ultimate settlement, from which will grow all justice and harmony. That is why, no matter how many Woodrow Wilsons and Neville Chamberlains were to punish the world with their delusions, it is not likely that true peace-lovers and peace-seekers would ever learn from the experiences vouchsafed for them. They are, God help us--and them--idealists.

The idealists of peace, like many other kinds of idealists, are inclined to praise themselves for never giving up their ideals, or as some people call them, "dreams." And that is precisely how they get themselves entangled in political--and perhaps just generally human--immorality.

For there is no such thing as making peace. Nations who are friendly do not need to do so, and nations or peoples who are hostiles cannot to do. They can, to be sure, live without open warfare but only on the basis of rational calculation: there is too much to lose otherwise. Of course, nations who are former hostiles could become friends, but history offers almost no examples of that (the case of Britain and the United States being an exception). Or they could become too worn out with centuries of warfare not to give up the ghost of their enmity (Britain and France are examples here, *and there are undoubtedly many others*).

*But peace--peace is that dream of the happy stasis when the world has been made "safe for democracy," say, or when all nuclear weapons have been "abolished."* It is an unholy, unreal, greedy, impatient demand for something that life, especially the life of nations, does not yield up.

It is enough to ask for the absence of warfare--we may not dare to ask for more than the absence of warfare--between ourselves and our enemies. And to achieve that is not to dream but to engage in slogging, wearying, dirty, and perhaps endless work. It involves deterrence, a very tiresome, unsexy, and hence often unpopular activity. And sometimes it involves the need to fight. Nor, as the United States and Israel both know very well, do the idealists of the world offer you any kudos for engaging in deterrence. Thankless and grimy and unideal as it may

*(Continued on p.11)*

# **THE PEACE OF CHELM**

*Rael Jean Isaac*

The stories of the foolish Jews of Chelm are among the most popular in Jewish folklore. In a number of these tales, the humor lies in the contrast between the fixed idea to which the citizen of Chelm becomes attached and a totally divergent reality.

There is the story, for example, of the impoverished Reb Selig of Chelm who longed to see Warsaw. Holding his shoes in his hand (so as not to wear them out) he leaves wife and children to set out barefoot for Warsaw. When he goes to sleep by a fork in the road he sets his shoes pointing toward Warsaw so he will know the direction in which to continue when he awakens. A passerby reverses the shoes and Reb Selig returns to Chelm, convinced that he has come to Warsaw. Nothing that he sees with his own eyes changes his fixed conviction that he is in Warsaw, not the familiar houses, the streets, the synagogue, the people, not even his own wife and children. In fact, at the conclusion of the story, now living in the circle of his little family, as he thinks, in Warsaw, Reb Selig is homesick for Chelm.

The humor in these stories is good-natured, but when the logic of Chelm runs a state, its people are in desperate trouble. And this is precisely what has happened to the Jews of Israel. Their leaders, having attached themselves to the fixed idea that "peace is at hand" ignore the evidence for a wholly different reality. Israel's Labor leaders lack the innocence of Reb Selig who knows he must be in Warsaw regardless of the evidence of his senses. For they know the reality which, to the peril of the public that trusts them, they recklessly ignore.

Indeed, by far the most trenchant criticism of the Israel-PLO agreement comes from the very same Israel Foreign Ministry that concocted the agreement.

In May 1990, the Israeli Foreign Ministry published a 40-page report entitled "The PLO: Has It Complied With Its Commitments?" Its purpose was to show that the PLO had systematically violated the commitments Arafat had made in his 1988 press conference in Geneva--to recognize Israel and renounce terror--and the U.S. should therefore end its dialogue with the PLO, which was predicated upon those commitments.

The 1990 Israeli Foreign Ministry report documents in painstaking detail that in violation of Arafat's promise in Geneva,

1) Virtually every faction of the PLO, from Fatah to the Palestine Liberation Front to the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine to the Popular Struggle Front, had engaged in terrorism since Arafat supposedly "renounced" it.

2) PLO terrorists had not been penalized or so much as criticized by the PLO--on the contrary, the PLO refused to condemn the Palestine Liberation Front's May

30, 1990 attack on Tel Aviv beaches although Abu al-Abbas, the raid's organizer, was a member of the PLO Executive Committee. When the U.S. denounced the raid (Abu al-Abbas had been the mastermind of the attack on the *Achille Lauro* in which wheelchair-bound Leon Klinghoffer was brutally murdered), the response of the PLO Executive Committee was to denounce Washington for "protecting Israel and its crimes." Arafat's Fatah colleague, and head of PLO foreign affairs, Farouk Kaddoumi (who told a United Nations luncheon audience that included the U.N. Secretary General that Klinghoffer was killed by his wife for the insurance money) made PLO policy clear: "The PLO is not prepared to condemn operations which any Palestinian organization or faction undertakes."

3) The PLO had made no attempt to repeal its guiding document, the Palestine National Covenant, or to change any of its (many) provisions advocating the elimination of Israel.

4) The PLO's "phased plan," adopted in 1974, remained the PLO strategy for implementing the Covenant. Only four days after Arafat's 1988 press conference, his deputy Salah Khalaf, declared that the PLO

aims to establish "at first a small state, and with Allah's will, it will be made large, and expand to the east, west, north, and south. I am interested in the liberation of Palestine, step by step." A year later, Farouk Kaddoumi promised: "The recovery of but a part of our soil will not cause us to forsake our Palestinian land...We shall pitch our tent in those places which our bullets can reach...This tent shall then form the base from which we shall later pursue the next phase." The PLO explained how it differed with Hamas: "[Hamas says] all of Palestine is

*(Continued on page 6)*

# THE PEACE OF CHELM

(Continued from p. 5)

ours and we want to liberate it from the river to the sea at one go. But Fatah, which leads the PLO, feels that a phased plan must be pursued. Both sides agree on the final objective. The difference between them is the way there."

5) The PLO not only refrained from encouraging Arab states to recognize Israel, but tried to intensify the confrontation of Arab states with Israel.

6) The PLO called for escalating the violence of the *intifada*, urging the Arabs of Judea and Samaria not to be confused by statements such as those Arafat had made at Geneva. In a 1989 leaflet distributed in Ramallah, Fatah declared "the struggle in which our people is engaged is not a struggle for the purpose of reaching a settlement or a political solution and initiatives...[the PLO's] investing in the diplomatic course and in political events from time to time is a political cover and temporary tactic."

All the above comes from the 1990 Israeli Foreign Ministry report.

It is striking that in 1993, just as in 1988, Arafat's "word" provides the sole basis for belief in the PLO's

transformation. All that has changed is the format, in 1988 a press conference, in 1993 a letter (dated September 9) from Arafat to Rabin. What Arafat promised in Geneva in 1988 and what he promises in his 1993 letter to Rabin is basically the same: to renounce terror (assuming responsibility over all PLO elements to assure compliance) and to recognize Israel's right to exist.

It is worth emphasizing that this brief letter constitutes the entire basis upon which Israel relies for a "new" PLO. The text of the lengthy "Declaration of Principles" consists only of *Israeli* commitments to satisfy PLO demands: there is no mention of the PLO eliminating the Covenant, or the "phased plan" for Israel's destruction or even renouncing or condemning terror against Israel. (Indeed, the Declaration of Principles could be construed as Israel's endorsement of the PLO Covenant--in it Israel

agrees that elections in the West Bank and Gaza Strip will "constitute a significant interim preparatory step toward the realization of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people and their just requirements"--the PLO code term for Israel's disappearance.)

What evidence did Israeli leaders have that the PLO had changed between 1988 and 1993? None at all. Israel's Foreign Ministry report makes that abundantly clear. All that had changed was the Israeli leadership: Rabin and Peres had adopted the fixed idea that they were "in Warsaw." Taking refuge in a utopian dream world (one can see the bumper sticker in their minds saying "Imagine Peace"), they had blotted out previous and present experience.

Thus, it can scarcely come as any surprise that although the ink is barely dry on Arafat's letter to Rabin, the PLO has already managed to violate almost all the undertakings contained in it. *On the very same day* that he signed the "Declaration of Principles" in Washington, Arafat told Jordanian TV that he was implementing the "phased plan." Arafat refused to condemn a series of terrorist murders of Israelis after the signing of the agreement, and Rabin backed him up, declaring that Arafat is only required to condemn attacks carried out by his own people. After the Fatah murderers of Haim Mizrachi were captured, under pressure from the United States, Arafat finally, via the PLO news agency, declared he had not ordered the attack and wanted a halt to violence. With all this, Arafat has not hesitated to condemn Israel for continuing to arrest terrorists, including those of Hamas. The PLO urges continuation of the Arab boycott. It even urges continuation of the *intifada* in all areas not yet turned over to the PLO.

The follies of the villagers of Chelm were laugh-provoking because they were without serious consequence: if Chelmites could not tell billygoats from nannygoats or Warsaw from Chelm, if their logic made no sense (like the sage of Chelm who almost drowned and vowed never to go into the water again until he had learned to swim), no one was the worse for it.

But it is no laughing matter when the men of Chelm determine the future of the Jewish people.◇

*Rael Jean Isaac is author of Israel Divided and Parties and Politics of Israel.*

## **MIDDLE EAST UPDATE**

...More than 800,000 Palestinian Arabs will soon "return" to Judea, Samaria and Gaza, according to Nabil Sha'ath, senior adviser to PLO chairman Yasser Arafat. Sha'ath told the newspaper *Al Hayat* that those Arabs who left the territories during the 1967 war will be returning during the "transitional period" of PLO self-rule, that is, during the next five years, "and those who left in 1948 will come back after the declaration of the Palestinian independent state." The same edition of *Al Hayat* also reported a statement by Abu Hussein Faraoun, security chief for Arafat's Fatah group in Lebanon, asserting that despite the Israel-PLO agreement, all PLO terrorists in Lebanon "will keep their weapons"...

...Brigadier-General Uri Saguy, the head of Israeli Army Intelligence, has expressed concern about the continuing Syrian arms buildup. Saguy told reporters in Tel Aviv that despite the peace process, Syria is strengthening both its "conventional and non-conventional" arsenals. "The Syrians have purchased many advanced T-72 tanks, Scud-C missiles, SA-10 anti-aircraft missiles, and advanced fighter jets," Saguy warned. "The Syrians have also made efforts in obtaining non-conventional capabilities"...

...The persecution of Christians and dissident Moslems in Saudi Arabia "has increased dramatically since the Gulf crisis in 1990," according to a new report from Amnesty International. "Shi'a Moslems have long been victimized, and scores continue to face long periods of detention, torture and even death. There has been a marked increase in arrests of Christians over the past three years--hundreds of Christian men, women, and children have been arrested and ill-treated by religious police, most without charge or trial, often leading to

deportation. Shi'a Moslems and Christians are forced to worship in secret, in terror of religious police, who are given free rein to raid private homes and arrest those caught praying or in possession of rosaries, the *turba* (Shi'a prayer stone), pictures of Jesus, or Shi'a or Christian religious literature"...

...Jordan Television, the Hashemite Kingdom's official television broadcasting station, has been airing the American series "Reasonable Doubts." But it refused to broadcast three recent episodes that dealt with Jewish-related themes. In one, a character was shown lighting a Hanukkah menorah; the other two dealt with neo-Nazi terrorists in the U.S. and the Holocaust. If Jordan is so "moderate," why should it object to Hanukkah or the Holocaust?...

...Palestinian Arab "policemen" in the Gaza Strip are having trouble making the transition from law-breakers to law-enforcers. Motorist Sami Abed, of the Gaza city of Khan Yunis, was confronted in mid-October by three Arab "traffic officers," members of Yasser Arafat's Fatah Hawks gang, who demanded that he move his car. When Abed hesitated, they shot him in each of his legs. "If these people are going to be the core of the police, all I can say is that we are in deep trouble," complained Arab journalist Ghazi Abu Ghayab...

....The Israeli civil liberties group Tzedek Tzedek has asked the High Court of Justice to order the re-arrest of Abir Abu-Rabak Elrub, who was one of the 616 Arab terrorists released by the Rabin government in October. At the time of the mass release, government spokesmen said that "those who have blood on their hands" would not qualify to be set free. Elrub had been serving a prison term for stabbing an Israeli policeman, and therefore should not have been released, according to the Tzedek Tzedek petition...

*The Annual Conference of Americans For a Safe Israel  
will be held on Sunday, December 12, 1993,  
at the Sheraton New York Hotel, in New York City*

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# THE HANDSHAKE

David Isaac

"Now join your hands, and with your hands, your hearts." With this line, Shakespeare reveals the potency of a handshake. It is a symbol of friendship, of common cause, of shared fate. Or in the case of Israel, a sealed fate. For by shaking hands with Arafat on a world stage, Rabin transformed Arafat from pariah to partner, and symbolically transferred to him the age-old rights of the Jewish people to the Land of Israel.

Until that White House ceremony and that handshake, polls in Israel showed a majority opposed to the agreement with Arafat. How could they fail to do so? He was the arch-fiend, confined by circumstance to random murder of innocents, but dedicated to the death of the state and its Jewish inhabitants.

But with the handshake, as the world watched, Arafat, like the snake shedding his skin, gave the illusion he had cast off his evil essence. The visual power of the handshake deceptively transformed him, and in so doing, disarmed the Jews' ability to withstand him. Opposition in Israel melted away. American Jewish leaders, baffled

by the sudden acceptance of Arafat, whom they had so long excoriated, were swept along. Wearied of worry, they embraced disgrace. A mass murderer was found "not guilty." In this hall of mirrors, the world was the court. The jury, the Jews, had acquitted him.

Eliahu Zaana-Snir relates a story his grandfather told him. After the slaughter in the disturbances of 1929, the Jewish community leaders in Jerusalem were invited to receive condolences by the Mandate Government Secretary, Sir Harry Luke. Rabbi Avraham Yitzhak Kook, who led the delegation, knew of the involvement of British authorities who stood aside while Arabs killed blameless, defenseless Jews in cold blood. Secretary Luke extended his hand to Rabbi Kook. Rabbi Kook refused the handshake, saying "I will not shake a hand

besmirched with Jewish blood." Rabbi Kook understood the power of a handshake.

But Rabin's handshake did more than obfuscate Arafat's corruption. His foul figure became equal in stature with the Prime Minister of Israel and the President of the United States. Standing with two world leaders, Arafat became their partner and was even referred to as "a partner in peace." And in the process, Rabin became an accomplice in the pillaging of Jewish rights.

For the handshake symbolized the transfer of Jewish rights to the Land of Israel to the man dedicated to the extinction of all Jewish national rights. Throughout two thousand years of persecution, Jews were comforted by the knowledge that the Land of Israel was theirs. For two thousand years, they guarded their rights. For two thousand years, they waited to return. Now, in an evanescent instant, their rights were gone. Rabin had literally handed them to the enemy.

But the handshake was something more. It was a culmination of a campaign of lies. After the Six Day War of 1967, when the Arabs recognized that the prolonged pan-Arab assault won Israel world sympathy, they redefined the conflict. No longer was it between Israel and Arab states, but between Israel and "the Palestinians." The PLO, crowned as "the sole legitimate representative" of this freshly fabricated people, now claimed that it was not the Jews but the Arabs who had been persecuted and oppressed, not the Jews but the Arabs who were without a homeland.

While their minions murdered, the PLO covered their tracks with moral make-overs and pious preaching for an end to Israeli occupation. Out of myth and mist they created the Palestinian whose identity was strikingly similar to that of the Jew. And what of the Jew? He became the Nazi. The propaganda succeeded, not least by weakening the will to resist of many Jews both in Israel and the Diaspora.

And so, with the handshake, Rabin proclaimed his willingness to abandon Jewish identity, Jewish national rights, Jewish *raison d'etre* to the Palestinians, a paper people.

Despite all the lies, ordinary people everywhere knew Israel as a courageous country that strove for decency even as it fought for survival. If the handshake holds, if the deadly process it signifies is not cut short, the world will know Israel as yet another failed, squalid appeaser of terror and evil.◇

*David Isaac is a freelance journalist.*

# SPOTLIGHT ON THE EXTREMISTS

...**Faisal Hussein**, leader of the PLO negotiating team, still refuses to explicitly condemn Arab terrorism. Asked if he condemned the brutal murder of an Israeli civilian in Ramallah on October 30, Hussein would say only that "every killing of a Palestinian or Israeli is sad." According to Hussein, there is no difference between Arabs murdering Israeli civilians and Israeli soldiers killing Arab terrorists who attack them...

...The *Boston Globe* recently published an article by correspondent **Ethan Bronner** accusing Israelis of brutal human rights violations against Arabs in Gaza. The story angered the local Jewish community--with the notable exception of New Jewish Agenda activist **Hilda Silverman**, who wrote to the *Globe* to praise it for publishing the article. "May you have the wisdom and strength to continue providing your readers with such important information," Silverman declared...

...One of the biggest losers in the Jerusalem mayoral election was veteran leftwing extremist **Meron Benvenisti**, the number four candidate on Teddy Kolk's ticket. It was widely assumed that if re-elected, Kolk would soon resign and appoint one of his colleagues as mayor; according to some Israeli media reports, Benvenisti was the most likely to be chosen. Since Kolk was defeated, Benvenisti's dream of becoming mayor-by-appointment has been shattered. Benvenisti will serve as a city councilman, but without any real political clout. Political observers think he may return to the far-left Citizens Rights Movement (the largest faction of the Meretz Party), for whom he was the number two candidate in the 1981 Knesset elections..

...After addressing a Jewish audience in Philadelphia in October, Meretz MK **Dedi Zucker** was asked for his reaction to the speech Yasser Arafat gave on Jordan Television shortly after the Israel-PLO signing ceremony, in which he described the agreement with Israel as merely one phase in his "strategy of phases" for destroying the Jewish State. Zucker replied that "Arafat never said such a thing; how can you think he would have signed such an agreement, and then said such things?" Zucker expressed no interest in viewing a videotape of Arafat's speech...

...**Robert O. Freedman**, leader of the Baltimore chapter of Americans for Peace Now, believes that the Israel-PLO agreement will put an end to the "name-calling" that he and other Jewish critics of Israel have endured in recent years. Writing in the *Chronicle of*

*Higher Education*, Freedman claimed that he and his leftwing colleagues have been the target of "villification" because of their views. Freedman himself knows a thing or two about name-calling and villification; three years ago, he wrote a letter to the *Baltimore Sun* comparing Israeli policies to those of Adolf Hitler...

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## **A WORD OF THANKS TO YOSSI BEILIN**

A few months ago, Israel's far-left Deputy Foreign Minister, Yossi Beilin, made the absurd charge that most American Jewish organizations were "right-wing." It is certainly true that most grassroots American Jews are what Beilin would call "right-wing" --in his dictionary, "right-wing" describes anybody who opposes returning to the pre-1967 'Auschwitz lines'-- but that scarcely applies to the leaders of the Jewish organizations. One only needs a passing familiarity with the Jewish organizational world to know that it is completely dominated by the left. Hasn't Beilin ever heard of Henry Siegman, Arthur Hertzberg or Alexander Schindler?

Of course he has, which is why Beilin's remark was probably just a ploy. By alleging that Jewish leaders are "right-wing," he put pressure on them to be more leftwing. But now it seems that Beilin has painted himself into a corner. An interviewer from the *Jerusalem Post* (October 22) pointed out to Beilin that while he had

called Jewish groups "right-wing," most of those groups had endorsed the Israel-PLO agreement that he had drafted. "Doesn't this prove your assessment wrong?" the interviewer asked. Beilin offered a fascinating reply. It deserves to be quoted in full:

*I have criticized the organizations for blindly following whatever the Israeli government says, without having a real dialogue. I just talked to an American Jewish group yesterday that published communiques supporting the agreement with the PLO. I told them: "I am not totally enthusiastic about your support. I don't want you to support it just because we are the Israeli government. Because if this is the case, you would support another government that would call for abolishing the agreement. If you don't like it and think it is too dangerous, I want to know."*

Beilin's comment may be a ploy; or it may be a desperate attempt to save face. But whatever his motive, his invitation to American Jews sends a powerful message to those who mistrust Arafat but are afraid to say so. Don't be afraid any longer: Yossi Beilin himself has urged you to speak out. And for that, we owe him thanks.◇

*Dr. Irving Moskowitz is a member of the Board of Governors of Americans For a Safe Israel.*

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## **Book Review** **THE HOLLOW PEACE, THEN AND NOW**

*Shmuel Katz, The Hollow Peace. Jerusalem Post Books, 1979; available for \$16.95 from Americans For a Safe Israel, 212-628-9400.*

Not many books that were written about the Arab-Israeli conflict during the 1970s are still relevant in the 1990s. Shmuel Katz's *The Hollow Peace* is one of those rare works.

As a senior aide to Prime Minister Menachem Begin during the initial months of Begin's first term, Katz had a first-hand view of the follies that paved the way to the Israeli surrender at Camp David. The weakness of Israeli leaders in the face of foreign pressure, the willingness of some political figures to put their own narrow interests ahead of the interests of the government and the nation, and the irrational desperation for a peace treaty with Egypt, in defiance of military and diplomatic logic--all of these emerge with frightening clarity as Katz deftly charts the tragic advance of the "peace process" of 1977-1979. Surely the most frightening aspect was the agreement of the Israelis to treaty terms that essentially gave the Egyptians carte blanche to violate the treaty whenever

*Outpost*

they please, since there are no mechanisms for enforcing compliance. The frozen, and hollow, peace that ensued is all too apparent today when one notes Egypt's refusal to conduct normal trade, cultural and diplomatic relations with Israel; Egypt's continued circulation of vicious anti-Israel propaganda; and Egypt's toleration of Arab terrorist training camps in the northern Sinai.

*The Hollow Peace* makes vital reading today because it is a painful reminder of all the mistakes made in the earlier negotiations--and a powerful example of how giving land to dictators, and relying on their signatures to guarantee the peace, is foolhardy in the extreme.

Already in the first weeks following the signing of the Israel-PLO agreement, it became clear that the present Israeli government has learned nothing from the Egyptian example. Once again, an Arab dictator has been left free to violate an agreement --in this case, Arafat's continued open dedication to the "phased plan" and his refusal to punish PLO factions that engage in terrorism-- and Israel can only stand by haplessly, mumbling excuses for that dictator's behavior.

Every friend of Israel should purchase *The Hollow Peace* now, and become familiar with the terrible mistakes of the past, in the hope that there may yet be some way of preventing Israel's leaders from repeating those tragic errors.◇

# GAZA RECONSIDERED

(Continued from p. 3)

"from the river of Egypt..." (*Genesis* 15:18), or the Shihor (its Egyptian name in honor of Horus, cf. e.g. *Isaiah* 23:3), i.e. the ancient, easternmost Pelusian, branch of the Nile Delta (now obliterated by alluvial fill), "...to the borders of Ekron northward..." This area included the lands of "the five Lords of the Philistines" that "remained to be occupied" at the end of the tribal conquest (*Joshua* 13:1-3).

The prolonged struggle against Philistia is at the center of the accounts of the Judges and early kingdom periods. First conquered by Judah (*Judges* 1:18), it was lost to the Philistines. As the primary Philistine city, Gaza dominates the Samson narrative. After the Philistine era, Gaza passed back and forth from Judean to foreign control. Albeit often hostile, its function as an invasion route made it share many calamities that befell the Jewish Kingdoms. It was destroyed by the Assyrians in 734 BCE and by the Babylonians in 605 BCE. Under the Seleucids it became the largest Polis in Judea whose largely Greek and Macedonian population was consistently hostile to its Jews.

In 96 BCE, the great Hasmonean King Yanai (Janaeus Alexander) captured and wreaked terrible vengeance on Gaza. Rebuilt under the Roman procurators, this Greco-Roman Gaza was again destroyed by its Jewish inhabitants in the Great Jewish War.

In the long centuries following the last revolts against Rome, a Jewish community persisted, despite oppression, expulsions, Bedouin raids and wars. Medieval Christian travellers testify to the Jews' economic role (e.g. Giorgio Gucci of Florence in 1384 speaks of the fine wine they produced), their far flung connections (e.g. Bertandon de la Brocquiere, 1432), as well as to their oppression (e.g. Felix Fabri, 1483), and their remarkable resilience in spite of it (George Sandys, 1611).

The Jews of Gaza contributed significantly to Halachic development. Gaza was the largest Jewish center in the Land at the time of the Arab conquest, and even afterwards, the declining community long remained a center of learning. Its religious vitality is reflected in numerous rabbinic responsa, and in Jewish travel accounts (e.g. of Benjamin of Tudela, or Meshullam of Voltera, 1481). Even negative developments, such as the Sabbatian ferment of 1665 (fostered by Nathan of Gaza) testify to the community's vitality.

In 1799, the Jews of Gaza fled before Napoleon's army. The community revived only to be destroyed by expulsion and flight in the six month-long British bombardment of Gaza in 1917. The bloody Arab disturbances of 1929 put an end to the stubborn efforts of a few Jews to revive a Jewish presence in the midst of a town that had become the snake pit of the Arab national movement. Not until the 1970s did Jews return to the Gaza region. Many of them had been forced out of their homes in the Sinai

when it was given up to Egypt. They reestablished the settlements destroyed in the War of Independence and planted new ones in the empty dunes of the Strip. Among them are the settlements of the Katif bloc north of Khan Yunis and settlements south of it that lie across the arterial north/south axis of the Strip.

Twice in Jewish history, gates were removed from Gaza, once triumphantly when Samson tore them out of the city's wall and carried them off "to the top of a mountain near Hebron" (*Judges* 16:3), the second time as Jews fled the city in 1799, taking the gates of their synagogue's ark with them to Hebron. When Jewish residents soon will be uprooted from their homes in Gush Katif, Hebron too is likely to be lost, as those dedicated to the destruction of the Jewish State are installed as rulers in the Jewish people's historic heartland.◊

*Erich Isaac is professor emeritus of geography at the City University of New York.*

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## "PEACE": A WORD, AN ILLUSION

(Continued from p.4)

seem to be, however, this is what is actually on offer in this vale of tears. Anything else is self-delusion.

That is what should make us long, after nearly fifty years, to have done with this dangerous and life-denying --and sinful--ambition. For ourselves, for others, and above all, for Israel--more in need than ever of holding on to reality, literally for dear life.

To cry peace, peace, when there is no peace, the prophet taught us long ago, is not the expression of a hope, not even superstition, but a reckless toying with the minds and hearts of people whose very future depends on their capacity to rise every day to the harsh morning light of the truth.◊

*Midge Decter is an author, and founder of the Committee for the Free World. This is the text of the lecture she delivered at the American Leadership Conference on Israel, in Arlington, VA on October 10.*

# BALDERDASH

*"Americans are overly sympathetic to Israel because of the mistaken impression that Jews were the only ones who died in World War II. We have been severely and blatantly brainwashed to that idea, while nothing is said of the others sent to concentration camps such as the Masons, Communists, gypsies, Seventh Day Adventists, Catholics, homosexuals, prisoners-of-war, etc.*

*"Everybody suffered in that war--the Russians lost some 22 million people, the Germans lost some 2 million civilians...Yet sympathy is focused on only one group and because of that misplaced sympathy the Israelis have been allowed to run a most blatantly ruthless military occupation of a nation that had nothing whatever to do with World War II, just because the Israelis want their land."*

--Louise F. Leonard, Middle East Cataloger at the University of Florida (Gainesville), in a July 27, 1993, letter to Nancy R. John of the American Library Association

*"The fact that only the PLO, and not the Israeli government, was obliged to renounce violence before the two sides could agree to mutual recognition symbolizes the lopsidedness of the bargain."*

--New Jewish Agenda activist Rachelle Marshall, in the November/December 1993 issue of the *Washington Report on Middle East Affairs*

*"[A]fter Auschwitz, most Jews feel they have earned a license to kill if necessary. In their eyes, the magnitude of the Final Solution abrogated every external measure of morality."*

--Carmela Ingwer, a Jewish school teacher in Chicago, writing in the Autumn 1993 issue of *Israel Horizons*, published by Americans for Progressive Israel/Hashomer Hatzair

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