
OUTPOST



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ISRAEL'S CHOICE: UTOPIANISM OR REALISM

Herbert Zweibon

Israel today stands at a crossroads. Two paths beckon: the path of utopianism, false hope, and unrealistic expectations about its enemies; and the path of realism, strength, and survival.

Clearly, the Rabin government has opted for the path of utopianism. As crafted by Yossi Beilin and articulated in the pages of Shimon Peres's book, *The New Middle East*, Labor Party-style utopianism perceives Israel as possessing the ability to usher in a revolutionary era of Middle Eastern peace and international approval. According to this theory, the only thing that stands in the way is Israel's hesitancy to make sufficient concessions to the Arabs.

The flaws in the Beilin-Peres theory, of course, are numerous and painfully obvious. It ignores the fact that the world is moving in the direction of increased ethnic conflict, and the Middle East is surely one of the most conflict-ridden, contentious, and frankly dangerous regions on the face of the earth. The utopians look at the attempts to create democratic institutions in the former Soviet empire and assume that similar developments are imminent in the Mideast as well. They look at America's generous help to Russia and other ailing countries and assume that America will be ready to give Israel more assistance if an agreement with the Arabs is attained. They look at America's defense cutbacks and assume that the Arabs, too, will soon recognize the wisdom of spending on butter instead of guns.

Above all, the utopians pin their hopes on the expected economic benefits of peace treaties with Syria and the PLO. Again and again, Peres and company wax euphoric over what they believe is the impending rush of Western investors to pour their capital into the Mideast. As economic progress ensues, they argue, coexistence between Arabs and Jews will be strengthened, since surely the Arabs will realize that material improvement in their lives is more important than murdering Israelis.

Fortunately, the path of the utopians is not Israel's only choice. Israel could choose, instead, the path of realism. It could recognize that what happens in Europe is not necessarily what will happen in the Arab

world. Islamic fundamentalism, not Western-style democracy, is growing apace. And instead of spending their funds on domestic needs, Arab dictators insist on buying the latest offensive weapons. While negotiating with Israel, the Arabs are simultaneously stockpiling their arsenals and continuing to rear their young on hatred of Jews and Israel.

The economic benefits of a peace agreement--whatever those benefits might be--will ultimately change nothing about Arab attitudes toward Israel. Labor Zionism has always argued that improvements in the Arab standard of living would result in Arab gratitude and peaceful coexistence. That theory has proven consistently false for nearly a century, and it remains just as false today. BMWs and VCRs cannot take the place of Arab nationalist fervor. Thus the only part of the new Europe that Peres's "new Middle East" will resemble is Yugoslavia.

What the realists propose is a return to the status quo prior to last September 13. Not because the status quo was ideal; certainly it had its shortcomings. But the status quo was a realistic scenario for Israeli survival, whereas everything that has been done by those who hated the status quo has served only to jeopardize Israel's survival.

A militarily strong Israel, with every unconventional weapon at its disposal and borders that are truly defensible, is the best guarantee of peace in the Middle East. An Israel whose army sits on the road to Damascus and crushes *intifada* terrorists without hesitation is an Israel whom the Arabs would hesitate to attack. And in today's world, that's not a bad scenario at all.◊

Herbert Zweibon is chairman of Americans For a Safe Israel.

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ORTHODOX JEWRY AND THE ISRAEL-PLO ACCORD

The one segment of the American Jewish community that has been most forceful and principled in its criticism of the Israel-PLO accord is the Orthodox. The leading Orthodox rabbis in the United States, such as the distinguished scholar Rabbi Aharon Soloveitchik, have denounced PLO self-rule as a danger to the security of Israel and have reaffirmed the Jewish right to the entire Land of Israel. Sentiment among grassroots Orthodox Jews has been overwhelmingly opposed to PLO control of Judea and Samaria, as is obvious from reading the Orthodox press and speaking with attendees at Orthodox gatherings and in synagogues.

How disappointing, then, that the leading Orthodox Jewish group has failed to reflect the views of the Orthodox masses. At the West Coast convention of the Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations, in January, its vice-president, Martin Nachimson, said that "It's not for U.S. Jewry to involve itself in domestic Israeli affairs." Since when is the fate of the Land of Israel a "domestic Israeli affair"? Doesn't Judaism define the Land of Israel as the property of all Jews? Even worse was Betty Ehrenberg, executive director of the O-U's Institute for Public Affairs. According to press reports, she "spoke of how Syria's \$15-billion debt crisis has reversed its interest in cold war-style arms escalation." Syria's massive arms buildup puts the lie to Ehrenberg's assertion. When Ehrenberg acts like an apologist for Syria, is she representing the O-U's official position? She certainly does not reflect the views of most of the O-U's own constituents.◇

BIRDS OF A FEATHER

A large advertisement in the *New York Times* and *Washington Post* on February 8 announced that ten individuals--five Arabs, five Jews--were being honored with \$5,000 prizes for their contributions to Middle East peace. The names are well-known, but not for their promotion of peace. The Arabs were PLO officials Nabeel Shaath, Mahmoud Abbas, Hanan Ashrawi, Sari Nusseibeh, and Faisal Hussein, all of whom still defend PLO terrorism and remain loyal to the PLO Covenant, which calls for Israel's destruction. The five Jews who are being honored are well-known for their slavish support for the Arab line. Mattiyahu Peled has campaigned for the U.S. to cut off all aid to Israel; Mordechai Bar-On, a leader of the New Israel Fund, has defended Arab firebomb attacks on Israeli soldiers; Gail Pressberg, who rationalized the Arab terrorist massacre of Jews in Turkey in 1986; Dedi Zucker, whose group, B'Tselem, provides journalists with information to smear Israel's image; and Yehoshafat Harkabi, a former

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critic of the PLO who now embraces Arafat's killers.

Who would honor such people, except perhaps the PLO? Try the next best thing to the PLO--the Foundation for Middle East Peace, an extreme pro-Arab group in Washington that even the Anti-Defamation League has called "anti-Israel." The Foundation has in the past contributed money to, among other things, a group called "American Jewish Alternatives to Zionism, Inc." In short, the ad in the *Times* and the *Post* is just another case of the Israel-bashers honoring each other. Unfortunately, not many readers of the *Times* and the *Post* will know enough about the Foundation to realize that the selection of its honorees is just another Arabist sham.◇

THE PROBLEM WITH THE REFERENDUM PROPOSAL

The consensus among journalists, pundits, and the various "informed sources" who try to manufacture public opinion is that Yitzhak Rabin's proposal to hold a referendum on surrender of the Golan Heights has somehow pulled the rug out from under those who oppose abandoning the Golan. Actually, he has accomplished nothing of the sort.

Most critics of Rabin's policies long ago recognized that a referendum is neither the most democratic way of determining Israel's future nor a reliable means of safeguarding the integrity and security of the country. The wording of a referendum can be manipulated to suit the government's purposes; the timing can likewise be exploited to influence the results. A new national election, by contrast, offers a truly democratic method of determining which party's policies the public prefers, and is most likely to reflect what all polls have shown--that most Israelis oppose surrendering the Golan.

The referendum proposal is a cynical attempt by the Rabin government to give the appearance that it is interested in the public's opinion when in fact it continues to do whatever it pleases. It should be rejected.◇

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ISLAM AGAINST THE CHURCH

Yossef Bodansky

Vaughn S. Forrest

Since early December 1993, and especially in the aftermath of Vatican City's movement toward recognition of Israel, Islamist leadership and terrorist organizations have launched an increasing barrage of denunciations and attacks on the Church. As a result, the Islamists' self-proclaimed "Holy War" against the West now encompasses an increasing attack on Christianity, attacks that go well beyond the historic repression of Christian minorities living in Muslim countries.

The origins of contemporary Islamist opposition to Christianity, particularly from Tehran and Khartoum, are the product of a backlash against the Church's humanitarian efforts throughout the Third World. These Christian humanitarian efforts, usually associated with missionary activities and religious organizations, often involve providing a Western-style education to local populations, as well as obtaining scholarships for students to study in the West. Increasingly, the Islamists perceive these efforts as an attempt to develop a Western educated leadership class in the Third World that would be hostile to Islam.

Furthermore, Hassan al-Turabi, Sudan's spiritual leader, has a personal grudge against Pope John-Paul II because of the Pope's involvement with the Christian minority in southern Sudan, a population to which the Islamists are strongly opposed. Indeed, the tension between the two was clearly visible during the Pope's visit to Khartoum, which Turabi anticipated would be a recognition of his own posture as a world leader of Islam, but which instead included a passionate call from the Pope for respecting the rights of Christian minorities in the Muslim world. (...)

Needless to say, the Islamist's struggle against the Church has been far more than just words. Answering the call from Tehran and Khartoum, there have been terrorist strikes against Christians in many places all over the world.

The first, and most symbolically significant, strike took place in Bethlehem in early December 1993...Two Hamas terrorists shot at a Jewish couple shopping in the Manjar Street in Bethlehem, killing one and wounding the other. The significance of this attack was that Hamas was allowed to operate in predominantly Christian Bethlehem. Prior to the attack, even at the height of the *intifada*, the local elite had succeeded in preventing Islamist terrorist attacks in Bethlehem in order to avoid offending Christian

supporters of the Palestinian cause, primarily those surrounding Archbishop Hilarion Cappucci. Subsequently, Hamas escalated the strikes against the Church on the eve of the Christmas season. For example, a small bomb was discovered and defused by the Israeli security offices in the square in front of the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem. Several Islamist groups announced their responsibility for the bombing attempt, justifying the act as an effort to prevent the spread of Christian influence in what they call a Muslim land.

Similarly, in mid-December, Islamist leaders throughout Somalia intensified their agitation campaign against [local] Christian charities, accusing them of missionary intentions under the guise of humanitarian assistance. They further warned that any celebration of Christmas would constitute a threat to the well being of the Muslim community in Somalia.

Indeed, on December 25, a grenade was thrown into a house belonging to the Catholic charities in Baidoa, causing some damage. At the same time, in Mogadishu, mobs threw stones and garbage at vehicles carrying relief workers to church. Armed pickup trucks provided cover for the mob. One incident even escalated to the point that U.S. peacekeepers had to fire at one of the Somali pickup trucks, killing at least one Somali militiaman and wounding a few others.

A similar attack took place in the Philippines. On December 25, an Islamist terrorist detachment attacked the San Pedro Cathedral in Davao city (Mindanao) during Mass. They threw grenades into the packed church, killing 7 and wounding 130 worshippers. The attack was carried out by the Abu Sayyaf, a Muslim fundamentalist group based in the southern islands and known for its close relations with Iran, Sudan, and Libya.

There were similar attacks in Bosnia-Herzegovina. On December 25, Muslim forces attacked and shelled several Croat churches in central Bosnia-Herzegovina, mainly in areas contested by the ongoing

Bosnian Muslim offensive on Vitez. On Christmas and on the next day, the Bosnian Muslim forces advanced and seized a few Croat villages. In the village of Krizancevo, in the central square, troops from the Seventh Muslim Brigade in the Government Army's Third Corps crucified (on doors and walls) and hanged several Croat prisoners who had been captured at the local church. These atrocities, and many others, were committed along with verbal threats that the practice of Christianity would not be

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IN MEMORIAM: REUBEN MATTUS

The passing of Reuben Mattus has deprived the Jewish world of an devoted and generous philanthropist who was committed not merely to a specific institution or two, but who cared deeply about Jewish survival in every corner of the globe--because he was one of the few who realized that Jews are targets in every corner of the globe. He supported Jewish defense needs, even when that meant championing causes or groups that were not always fashionable. If a Jewish child was murdered by Arab terrorists in Antwerp, if Jewish teachers were being bullied in Oceanhill-Brownsville, if Jews living in the Land of Israel were in danger, Reuben Mattus was there to help them. His generous support for countless pro-Israel organizations was well known, including, we gratefully acknowledge, Americans For a Safe Israel. Those who knew him remember him as a man who rejected elitism, who treated all Jews equally and expected no special treatment for himself. He once travelled with several companions to

visit the Jewish community of Elon Moreh and the yeshiva at the sacred Tomb of Joseph, in adjacent Nablus (Shechem), one of the many vital projects he assisted. On the way back from the visit, the car in which they were riding broke down in front of an Arab refugee camp, one of the more notorious hotbeds of anti-Israel violence. Reuben did not hesitate to get out and start pushing the car down the road.

Many of Reuben's acts of charity were well known, but many were not; privately, quietly, without fanfare or plaques or ceremonies, regardless of whether his donation would be tax-deductible, Reuben Mattus made sure that Jews who were in need were taken care of. He is truly irreplaceable.

We extend our deepest condolences to his family and to his wife and lifetime companion, his beloved Rose who shared his enthusiasm and his rags to riches life, his life full of adventure, good friends and good deeds.◇

Point of View

IS THIS THE DAWN --OR THE TWILIGHT?

Mitchell Finkel

If you listen to all the rhetoric, if you follow all the twists and turns of the Rabin government, it becomes quite clear that sooner or later just about every Jewish community beyond the Green Line is fated to be served up to Yasser Arafat like some burnt offering.

Some Israelis will, of course, argue that the settlements are an impediment, that they must be sacrificed for the greater good. But other Israelis will counter that they haven't returned to Zion only to be exiled by their own government. No matter how it is finessed, the logic of the peace process will in the end doom all the

settlements.

The desolation, the grief that will be visited upon the settlers will be beyond measure. The rancor, the recrimination that will ensue will be searing. That bond, that fraternity that has sustained us will have been shattered. The impact of this trauma on the ethos and on Israel's nation psyche is incalculable. Even for the innocents among us, it must be quite bewildering to contemplate the abandonment of so many Israelis to the tender mercies of the PLO. And even the most vociferous supporters of the 'peace process' must know, at least subliminally, that this process is a compact that can only be held together by bromides and barbed wire.

Some say that this is the dawn of a new era, but there are others who say that this is the twilight of a civilization--our civilization.◇

Mitchell Finkel is a Maryland-based author and activist.

A PARABLE FOR ISRAEL

Louis Rene Beres

Many people prowl round Mount Sinai. Their speech is blurred, either they are garrulous or they shout or they are taciturn. But none of them comes straight down a broad, newly made, smooth road that does its own part in making one's strides long and swifter.

--Frank Kafka, *Mount Sinai*

Gershom Scholem, our highest scholarly authority on the Kabbalah, associated Franz Kafka with what he called the "light of the canonical," a quality of special texts that *compels* exegesis. Focusing this light in very brief parables --a genre in which he deploys image and motif with strictest possible economy of language--Kafka positively forces the reader to unravel and examine in order to *understand*. A "heretical kabbalist," as Scholem called him, Kafka gives us a secular representation of the sacred world, a mystic fiction that bears messages of great consequence.

An example, indeed a splendid example, is *Mount Sinai*. Embedded in this text are many particular lessons and many particular myths. But it is up to the reader, obstructed by *difficulty*, to make the necessary effort. And the effort must be preceded by a theme, a motif wherein exegesis may be undertaken.

Let us make the effort! What is more, let us determine that the effort be directed toward the question of Israeli security, a question that would assuredly have pleased Kafka himself. A keen student of Jewish texts who saw destruction of the first and second Temples as a cosmic catastrophe, Kafka--laboring in Prague over his crafted prose--would have been grateful for an opportunity to help preserve the Third Temple.

The people who "prowl around Mount Sinai," the emancipated Children of Israel, seem afflicted by their wanderings. Although a "newly made, smooth road" might be followed to the top of the holy mountain, to a much-higher level of emancipation, these people--*all* of these people--avoid the direct road. Instead, they remain at the base of the mountain, at the periphery of solemnity, unclear, talkative or shrill or silent. Gripped by confusion and beset by an entire range of communications and miscommunications, this people, we should not be surprised, will have difficulty making correct choices.

So it is today with the People of Israel, living still in roughly the same bad neighborhood, with a now-reconstituted State to protect. Overwhelmed by gibberish, some of

it from governments, some of it from academic sources, these citizens of a beleaguered State prowl aimlessly round the margins of suffering and survival. Confusing rough roads for safe paths, they mumble, scream, shout and become mute, daily, alternatively, all in the search for direction that must surely be guided elsewhere.

How shall they climb to the top of the mountain? Give the Palestinians their own State, say some with blurred speech. Commit fully to the "peace process," say both the garrulous and those that shout. Climb slowly, with "confidence building measures," say the taciturn (for they are scholars, and not inclined to loud noises or other sounds that point to lack of breeding). Yet, none of these roads is the smooth one; none is capable of making one's strides "long and swifter."

Where shall we find *this* road, the shorter and surer path to the summit? It exists, to be sure, but it is far, far from the road favored by the blurred, garrulous, shouting and taciturn people. Constructed by those who remember the meaning of "civilization," it is discoverable not by the many, but only by the few, specifically by that tiny minority of thinking persons who understand paradox and are willing to act accordingly. Aware that smooth roads can be awfully rocky and that seemingly easy roads are often the most treacherous, this small number holds the secret injunction of Sinai: Look beyond the crowd, beyond "experts," beyond geography. Look in hidden places, where no one else is looking, where looking is distinctly frowned upon and unfashionable. Look to roads "newly made" and to roads not yet constructed. Look not for ease or painlessness, but for *access*. Seek not for the most obvious, but for the least.

Understood as a condition of security for the present State of Israel, Sinai's summit is accessible only to those who will heed this injunction. Detached from government policies that are rooted in error and from scholarship determined by public or paymasters, these few climbers can consider roadways that are harder to identify or that might still be built. Although there are no guarantees that freer minds will always see clearly, it is certain that unfree minds will never navigate successfully.

Sinai's summit is blocked by enemy armies and enemy weapons that will not bow to reason and negotiation. To reach the summit, those who prowl round the base of the mountain will have to contend, intermittently, with these formidable obstructions, preparing if needed, for protracted conflict that appears "uncivilized" and is enormously unpopular. Because these enemy armies and weapons could, left alone, reach a level that would forever prevent ascent upon the Mountain, Israel will, from time to time, have to strike enemy positions first. Most perplexing of all, perhaps, and most difficult to accept, will be the discovery that the summit can never be fully accessible, that all roads are temporary, even

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APPEASEMENT: PRESCRIPTION FOR DISASTER

Irving Kett

Since the Six Day War, the mountain range that extends from Jenin in the north to Hebron in the south, comprising a continuous ridge approximately 55 kilometers long, 20 kilometers wide, and reaching heights of about 1,100 meters, has become, along with the Golan Heights, Israel's indispensable primary defense line against all types of ground and air attack.

Defensible borders, from a military viewpoint, are not impregnable ones. Rather they are of such a configuration that they would afford Israel some warning time of an impending attack and provide some modicum of tactical depth. Missiles, artillery, and aircraft can cause devastation. However, only a coordinated force of armor and infantry can overrun and occupy a country. Fortunately those are still vulnerable to natural barriers. Because of Israel's configuration and postage stamp size, the boundaries and terrain that she requires for minimal defense against enemy attack by missiles and manned aircraft, are identical to what is needed to successfully repel a massive armored/infantry assault, or to thwart terrorist actions aimed at civilian infrastructure. As weapons of war and mass destruction become more sophisticated, the need for the retention of critical terrain, defensible borders based upon natural boundaries, and strategic depth assumes an ever increasing importance.

When nonpolitical U.S. military experts studied the challenge posed to Israeli security, they examined it from the viewpoint of deterrence, defense, and terrorism. An aggressor will only attack if confident of victory. Therefore, the key question that must be asked, "Under what conditions will the Arabs be more likely to attack Israel"? Obviously the more vulnerable, the greater likelihood there will be war. In three major U.S. military studies, in one of which--for the U.S. Army War College--I was an active participant, boundaries, terrain, and maneuvering area, were evaluated as the determining factors in Israel's defensive and deterrent capabilities. That the conclusions of all these investigations seem in contradiction to official U.S. government policy since 1967, should not surprise any astute observer. The United States has legitimate and far more important foreign policy interests in the world and in the Middle East than the security or even the survival of Israel. Despite its present apparent military strength, there is a shocking fragility to Israel's existence which must never be lost sight of or underestimated. It defies logic and elementary prudence to expect that Israel could repeat the miraculous military feat of the Six Day War from those indefensible boundaries, or any

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approximation thereof, that existed before June 1967.

The unfolding political process, called land for peace, is a dangerous euphemism for appeasement. Unfortunately, segments of the Israeli public and current political leaders have become infected with the potentially catastrophic malaise of defeatism, a development the Arabs obviously recognize. How realistically this Jewish internal threat is met, is probably one of the most crucial elements in determining the very survival of the State of Israel. Even after a lengthy and tortuous process of arriving at the most detailed, contractual arrangements, Israel will still be in the Middle East with its problems of national and ethnic hatreds, and rising, fanatic fundamentalism.

The classic example of appeasement took place in October 1938, when the British and French governments succumbed to the blandishments of Hitler and surrendered the Sudetenland. A joyful British Prime Minister, Sir Neville Chamberlain, proudly referred to his accomplishment as, "peace in our time." In effect it destroyed the defensive capabilities of the entire Czechoslovak Republic. When World War II broke out, a mere ten months later, Germany was infinitely stronger as a result of the Munich Pact that also seemed to trade land for peace. Aggressors depend upon the fact that historical memories tend to be tragically short lived.

The present negotiations with the Arabs, as they relate to the security requirements of Israel, appear to be based on the assumptions of the permanent stationing of the IDF within the Arab controlled boundaries, together with the positioning of electronic installations, demilitarization of the remainder, free lines of communication through all the autonomous Arab zones, prohibition of Arab immigration, and unlimited air rights over the entire 6,000 plus square kilometers of the new Arab entity. Yet even these involuted, convoluted schemes, that the Rabin government probably has in mind, will prove neither feasible to Israel's minimal defense needs nor will they remotely satisfy Arab demands.

In all of its various packages and guises, history has shown that demilitarization cannot be considered a realistic panacea. People will simply not accept long term restrictions upon their national sovereignty. The Jewish people of Israel cannot afford the luxury of deluding themselves in making the survival of their country dependent upon the nonexistent friendly disposition and benevolence of the Arabs.◊

Irving Kett is a retired U.S. Army Colonel.

CONGRESSMEN CHALLENGE CLINTON'S SYRIA POLICY

The President
The White House
Washington, D.C.
Dear Mr. President:

January 6, 1994

We commend you for your personal and sustained interest in the Middle East peace process and for your efforts to reinvigorate the bilateral negotiations. However, we must express concerns related to Syria as you prepare for your upcoming meeting in Geneva with President Hafez Assad.

Although we are reassured by press reports that you have no intention of removing Syria from the State Department's list of countries that export terrorism, it is important to recall the reasons why Syria is on the list and should remain on this list until more significant changes take place.

You have spoken eloquently in placing U.S. opposition to terrorism as a cornerstone of our foreign policy. It is a commitment shared as well by past presidents of both parties and which Congress has codified in laws restricting U.S. assistance to and trade relations with countries supporting international terrorism.

Syria has been on the State Department's list of countries supporting terrorism since 1979. It has remained there because Syria provides support and a home base for some of the most deadly terrorist groups in the world. These include Ahmed Jibril's Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command; Islamic Jihad; Hizbollah; and Abu Nidal. According to the 1993 State Department report on terrorism: "Several radical groups maintain training camps or other facilities on Syrian territory. In addition, areas of Lebanon's Bekaa Valley under Syrian control provide sanctuary for a wide variety of groups engaged in terrorism." The *New York Times* notes that Syria "currently provides support and safe haven to more than a dozen Palestinian, Turkish, Kurdish, and Japanese terrorist groups."

In addition, we are very concerned about Syria's ongoing military buildup, particularly its acquisition of weapons systems that are destabilizing to the region. Syria received a \$2-billion grant from the Gulf States for its participation in the Gulf War. Much of this was spent not on economic or social development, but on weapons, including tanks, self-propelled artillery, and a new type of advanced surface-to-air missile. In recent months, Syria has taken delivery, by way of Iran, of as many as 150 extended-range North Korean Scud-C missiles and is reportedly building new launching sites for these weapons. This has more than doubled the size of Syria's ballistic missile arsenal and has given it the capability to hit any point in Israel.

Moreover, we are disappointed with Syria's lack of full involvement in the Middle East peace process. It continues publicly to condemn Israel and to question its commitment to peace while simultaneously threatening Amman with unspecified reprisals should Jordan sign its own accord with Israel. Syria continues to boycott the multilateral talks and has prevented Lebanon from accepting any Israeli proposal to establish joint military consultations on southern Lebanon. In December, Syria joined Lebanon and Iran as the only nations to oppose a United Nations resolution supporting recent progress toward Middle East peace. Finally, Syria insists on the continuation of the Arab boycott and may have used its influence to prevent other Arab states from ending the secondary and tertiary boycott.

Clearly, Syria has not taken the necessary steps for the United States to consider removing it from the terrorist list or normalizing relations with it. We were troubled, therefore, with your decision last month to relax sanctions against Syria and allow the transfer of three American-made commercial aircraft to Syria from Kuwait. We would be very interested in knowing whether you have any intentions to permit further transfers of this, or a similar, nature.

We urge you to press President Assad to expel all terrorist organizations from Syria, to terminate Syrian support for the terrorist activities in Lebanon, to end its boycott of the multilateral negotiations, to allow the unqualified emigration of Syrian Jews, and to move forward in the bilateral talks. Syrian compliance with these conditions would indicate a genuine desire, on the part of Syria, to pursue peace and reconciliation with Israel and open up a new chapter in its relations with the United States and the West. Anything less would be a clear signal that Syria seeks not peace but the rewards and benefits it believes it would be afforded by tactically joining the peace process.

Sincerely,

Howard L. Berman, Member of Congress
Henry J. Hyde, Member of Congress

Nita M. Lowey, Member of Congress
Bill Paxon, Member of Congress

...and 82 of their colleagues, from both parties

ISLAM AGAINST THE CHURCH

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tolerated on "liberated Muslim lands."

Virtually all over the Arab world, especially in Jordan, Egypt, Algeria, and Pakistan, Islamist mobs attacked local churches. Most of these attacks were spontaneous and amateurish. However, taken together, they clearly reflect the widespread acceptance of the new anti-Christianity propaganda and agitation coming from Khartoum and Tehran. Even in Lebanon, where the Christians hold a special position in the nation's political establishment, the Islamists took on the Church. For example, in Beirut, the Hezbollah and the Islamic Unification Front formally warned the Lebanese Christian communities not to celebrate Christmas and the New Year. "These celebrations are not an Arab Muslim tradition," read the warning communique. (...)

The recent Islamist attacks on Christianity and Judaism should not come as a surprise. They constitute the first overt adoption by the senior political leaders of the Islamist world of principles long studied and advocated by Islamist scholars, especially those preaching to the emigre communities in the West.

This is significant because, traditionally, Islam had defined both Jews and Christians as *Ahl al-Kitab* (People of Scripture or People of the Book), and most Muslims use this definition of the common monotheistic character of the three main religions to justify coexistence and friendly cohabitation. However, since the late 1980s, there has been a growing trend in Islamist thought that seeks to transform this relationship into hostility and confrontation.

Indeed, it is noteworthy that many of the scholarly publications on this subject have been published in English and French so as to more easily reach the assimilated emigre communities in the West. A milestone example of this is the 1989 book, *Islam versus Ahl al-Kitab*, by Maryam Jameelah, an American woman who converted to Islam and now lives in Pakistan. The book is extremely popular among the Islamist communities in Western Europe.

In her book, Jameelah explains why the prevailing conditions in the modern world make it impossible for Muslims and the *Ahl al-Kitab* to co-exist:

Jews and Christians share with Muslims a common religious and cultural heritage ... Tragically, however, our common legacy has never been able to prevent the development of the most hostile feelings of enmity and strife. Although

what divides us may be narrow, the gulf that separates us is so deep that as circumstances now stand, I fear it is unbridgeable. Our differences appear to be irreconcilable.

The primary reason for this sudden crisis, according to Jameelah, between the Muslims and the *Ahl al-Kitab* is the growing spread of Western, that is Judeo-Christian, values into the Muslim world. This onslaught is so pervasive that "every other Muslim country is being increasingly contaminated by the most noxious dirt from Europe and America."

However, Islam remains the sole force capable of containing and reversing the spread of Western influence. "Even today when Muslims have sunk into the most abysmal depth of degradation and decay, Islam still remains the most formidable potential rival to the modern West, boldly challenging all its hedonistic culture stands for... On what foundations can a lasting reconciliation between Muslims, Jews, and Christians be based? We must realize that under the existing circumstances, no friendship is possible. Jewry and Christendom have joined hands to destroy us and all we cherish. [They] have combined to annihilate us religiously, culturally and even physically." Thus, according to Jameelah, the only viable option is a bold surge of Islam against its foes. "Peaceful relations and mutual respect among us can only be achieved through strength. We must cease indulging in apologetics and present the Islamic message to the world honestly and forthrightly... We must establish a full-blooded Islamic state where we will witness our precepts translated into action. Finally, we must crush the conspiracies of Zionism, free-masonry, Orientalism, and foreign missions both with the pen and with the sword. We cannot afford peace and reconciliation with the *Ahl al-Kitab* until we can humble them and gain the upper hand."

The thesis of Maryam Jameelah is significant because she defines and gives intellectual gravitas to the idea of a growing threat to Islam from Western cultural and religious influences. In the practical world, a perspective is being used by the leaders of Iran, Sudan and numerous Islamist terrorist organizations to justify their own actions and give weight to their cause. This means that, far from being a mere intellectual exercise, the new anti-Christian doctrine of radical Islam has a popular appeal and will therefore set the stage for a new wave of terrorism. ◊

Yossef Bodansky is author of Target America: Terrorism in the U.S. Today (S.P.I. Books, 1993) and director of the Task Force on Terrorism & Unconventional Warfare of the House Republican Research Committee. Vaughn Forrest is chief of staff of the Task Force. This essay is excerpted from a recent report by the Task Force.

SPOTLIGHT ON THE EXTREMISTS

...**Ezra Goldstein** is a veteran activist in the radical-left New Jewish Agenda who occasionally poses as an objective journalist and for some time was on the staff of the *Long Island Jewish World* in that guise. More recently, Goldstein was sent by the *Village Voice* to cover a conference sponsored by **Michael Lerner** and *Tikkun*. Goldstein admired much of what Lerner said and did, but he made the fatal mistake of asking a probing question or two, and soon tasted Lerner's wrath: "When I approached Lerner toward the end of the conference to ask how he thought things had gone, he said, 'Fine, except for one reporter from the *Village Voice* who was intent on seeking out every negative thing he could find.' And he walked away"...

...**Shulamit Aloni**, leader of the leftwing Meretz Party and Minister of Communications in the Rabin government, spent part of her recent visit to the U.S. blaming Rabin for the absence of peace between Israel and Syria. "I'm sorry our prime minister did not give a speech to the public saying it's a great thing we heard [from Hafez Assad], and we might get in a short time peace on our northern border," Aloni declared. In an interview with the Jewish Telegraphic Agency, Aloni said that American Jews who have doubts about the Israel-PLO accord "love war"...

...On the eve of the Assad-Clinton press conference, a delegation from Americans for Peace Now visited Damascus and heaped praise on the Assad regime. Upon their return, **Gary Rubin**, the group's executive director, authored an op-ed piece for Jewish newspapers in which he called on the Israeli government to make more concessions to Syria. Rubin and other Peace Now leaders recently complained that some critics of the Jewish left have asked questions such as "Whose side are they on?" But when Rubin and his colleagues literally flew to Damascus to take Syria's side, how do they expect their critics to respond?...

...**Robert O. Freedman**, leader of the Baltimore chapter of Americans for Peace Now and professor at Baltimore Hebrew University, has some kind words for the Mufti of Jerusalem. In a letter to the *Washington Jewish Week*, Freedman blasted columnist Arne Steinberg for having criticized Philip Mattar, author of a glowing biography of the Mufti. According to Freedman, "While Steinberg correctly notes that the Mufti dealt with the Nazis during World War II, he fails to mention, in a clear attempt to smear Mattar, that so did Anwar Sadat who later became a hero to many Jews for making peace

peace with Israel. Professor Freedman is evidently ignorant of the fact that the Mufti, unlike Sadat, lived in Berlin during the Holocaust, made Nazi propaganda speeches in Arabic that were beamed to the Middle East, recruited Yugoslavian Moslems to join a special Moslem unit of the Nazis S.S., and was guilty of war crimes, such as blocking the attempt to ransom 5,000 Polish Jewish orphans from the Nazis in 1943...

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One Minute to Midnight
Dr. Irving Moskowitz

TIME FOR UNITY IN THE NATIONALIST CAMP

At this critical juncture in Israeli history, when the very fate of the Jewish State may hang in the balance, Israeli nationalists should be linking arms in common struggle. Instead, we are witness to the painful spectacle of Tzomet, the Israeli nationalist political party led by former Chief of Staff Rafael Eitan, being torn in two amid personality differences, petty rivalries, and assorted allegations of impropriety.

Tzomet was one of the major surprises of the 1992 Knesset elections, increasing its number of seats from two to eight, making it the fourth largest political party in Israel. In the heady aftermath of his political triumph, Eitan even declared that he would be a candidate for prime minister next time around, when the new Israeli election system will have a separate race for the position of prime minister. Eitan's aspiration for the top office was naturally a source of frustration in the nationalist camp, because it raised the danger that he would split nationalist votes away from Likud leader Benjamin Netanyahu in 1996, thereby ensuring victory for the Labor candidate. Unfortunately, this is not the first time Eitan has been less than sensitive to the unity issue--it was he who broke off from Tehiya in 1988, thereby helping to doom that party.

But now Eitan himself will have to deal with the negative effects of factionalism, as three of his Tzomet MKs have broken off to form their own party, called Yi'ud.

The last thing Israel needs now is more tiny nationalist parties. The splintering of the nationalist vote is what gave Labor its victory in the 1992 elections, and the disastrous results are obvious. To save Israel from catastrophe, the various leaders of the nationalist camp must put aside personal rivalries and start planning for the 1996 elections, unified behind a leader who has a realistic chance of victory.◊

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

A PARABLE FOR ISRAEL

(Continued from page 5)

the best among them, and that the "smooth road" (which is sometimes rocky) is both indispensable and only partially navigable.◊

Louis Rene Beres is professor of political science at Purdue University.

LETTERS THEY REFUSED TO PRINT

January 24, 1994

The Jewish News
Southfield, MI
To the Editor:

It was with total disbelief that I read the announcement by Mr. Henry Siegman, executive director of the American Jewish Congress, that the AJCongress is "launching a comprehensive study of the inequities between Jewish and Arab citizens of Israel." For what purpose? Can this "study" do anything but gather more ammunition for the Jew-haters and Israel-bashers of the world? Is there any doubt as to the outcome of this grand work? Would it not be more appropriate for the American Jewish Congress to launch studies relative to the poverty and discrimination against Jews of this country or any number of other nations around the world?

This is the same Mr. Siegman who recently wrote
Outpost

a long published letter in the *New York Times* declaring the 130,000 Israelis and the communities that they had fought so hard to establish in Judea and Samaria, as "obstacles to peace" and has demanded their destruction!

His other activities and those of other members of the AJCongress include junkets around the world, at community expense, visiting his good friends in Jordan, Saudi Arabia, and now Syria. None of these diplomatic forays have been with the approval of the Israeli government.

Now, for the final irony. Believe it or not, our own Allied Jewish Campaign of Metropolitan Detroit has allocated approximately \$250,000 to the AJCongress over the last 5 years! The 1993 allocation was \$48,000. Isn't it time for the community at large to ask that these funds be allocated to the great social needs of our own community and Jews everywhere rather than for political forays of any kind, let alone to organizations of questionable merit and motivation...?

Jerome S. Kaufman, D.O.
Bloomfield Hills, MI

ISRAEL, ACCORDING TO SHIMON PERES

Joel Sorkin

When historians of the future puzzle over the mystery of how some Jews in the final years of the 20th century came to adopt the views of their worst enemies, they might begin with Shimon Peres and his shocking new book.

As a serving foreign minister still engaged in talking to (and even holding hands with) Yasir Arafat, he of course reveals nothing of the secret talks preceding the Handshake on the White House Lawn last September. There is nothing here that wasn't in the newspapers then, so readers looking for "inside" stuff are advised to look elsewhere.

The same goes for anyone expecting an insightful, Kissingeresque *tour d'horizon* of the post-Cold War Middle East. On the contrary, the title is as misleading as the Labor Party's 1992 election platform: Israeli voters did not vote for a Meretz foreign policy, but that is what they're getting. This book is less about the new Middle East than Peres's fantasies of what a new Middle East should look like. The political equivalent of science fiction, it does, however, reveal Shimon Peres as not what he seems to be.

For years admirers touted him the best-read of Western politicians, indeed an intellectual, though one would never guess that here. If Peres is an intellectual, than so was Norman Vincent Peale. The bulk of this lighter-than-air puff piece is Shimon's daydreams for a prosperous Middle East, with open borders and happy tourists and businessmen tooling around on joint water conservation projects. It is all so embarrassingly middle-brow, and it turns out that unlike real politician-authors, like Churchill, Nixon, or Conor Cruise O'Brien, Peres didn't even write this book; it was done "with Arye Naor," former Likudnik turned fashionable dove.

But dutifully we wade through 164 pages of mental cotton candy, through chapters actually entitled "The Dawn of Peace," "The Living Waters," and the Disneyesque "World of Tomorrow," till finally Peres/Naor get down to the rationale behind the Handshake and recognition of the PLO, and that's when the book turns scary. Incredibly, here is Israel's foreign minister actually flacking for the PLO, distorting history as the PLO does, calling the PLO a "victim" because, cut off by the oil-producing countries for supporting Saddam in 1991, it can no longer support the Arab "victims" of the *intifada*. By this he seems to mean families now short one breadwinner because the IDF soldiers killed him for flinging flaming gasoline bottles at them and/or other Jewish men, women and children. In this, in calling the Arabs "victims," he takes the meaning of assimilation to new heights, or rather new depths.

March 1994

He distorts history, as the PLO does. He says the same number of Arabs as Jews became refugees in 1948, when surely he knows Jews outnumbered Arabs 2-1 (800,000 vs. 400,000). He claims the imposition of the military administration created hatred for Israel, when surely he knows it was the hatred for Israel which started the '67 war that resulted in military rule.

Perhaps Peres has turned into a PLO press agent because he has long been Israel's foremost proponent of Zionism-as-normalization. In an interview on PBS's Charlie Rose program a year ago, the first words out of his mouth were that Zionism was meant to normalize the Jewish people--and what could be more normal or politically correct than taking the Arab side against Israel. The most insufferable Francophile in Israel, Peres now seems indistinguishable from the savants on the Left Bank who long ago decided that however the creation of Israel may have gladdened Jewish hearts, the Jews should be ashamed for what they did to the ancient Palestinian people.

So profoundly has Shimon Peres learned to think like the enemies of Israel, he has talked himself into believing his country can do militarily without Judea and Samaria--what he prefers calling by its deJudaized name, the "West Bank." He claims the Gulf War cast territorial assets into the dustbin of military history, when in fact 1) it was precisely the flat terrain which allowed the Iraqi blitzkrieg in the first place, 2) the defensive depth of Saudi Arabia which allowed coalition forces space and time to organize, and 3) it was the ground war which ended the war, as the insertion of infantry have always ended wars.

These three factors were far more important than all the fancy hardware falling from the skies, yet Peres, parroting the PLO, thinks Israel does not need the mountains of Judea and Samaria, which tower like ramparts over the Jordan River rift valley, the lowest point below sea level on the face of the earth.

And if turning the hills of Judea and Samaria over to the PLO means turning the Jewish towns and villages (a.k.a. the settlements) into enclosed Jewish enclaves forbidden to expand, of turning them into islands of Jews in a sea of hostile non-Jews, whose residents lose their freedom of movement, who must be convoyed in and out, then so be it.

Shimon Peres wants to be normal, and what could be more normal--building ghettos for Jews--than that? ◇

Joel Sorkin is an author and researcher specializing in Middle East affairs.

BALDERDASH

"The bombing of the World Trade Center shook up Americans because America has been accustomed to terrorizing other people--the people of Panama, Grenada, Libya, Iraq, and Vietnam...In America, there is the perpetual need for a foreign villain, a Noriega, Ortega, Khomeini, Qaddafi, or Saddam...The FBI (and CIA) was hunting Communists for 40 years. Now they were threatened with unemployment because there was no one to hunt. So 'Islam Fundamentalism' becomes the quarry, the thing to fear and hunt down..."

--Mohammed Mehdi, leader of the Arab-American Institute, in the January 19, 1994 edition of *The Final Call*

"Washington has reverted to its usual policy of using the peace table to help Israel divide and conquer the Arabs through separate agreements..."

--Laura Drake of the Council for the National Interest, in the January 1994 issue of the *Washington Report on Middle East Affairs*

"Syria's role in Lebanon was ratified by the Arab League-brokered Taef Agreement in 1989. Although controversial, this agreement is the legal predicate of Lebanon's system and policies. It ratifies Syria's transitional role...While there are reasonable objections to Syria's unilateral role, there must be an acknowledgement of its pivotal role."

--Clovis Maksoud of the Arab League, in the *Christian Science Monitor*, January 14, 1994

"For some, the idea of a new millennium without the old maximalist control of Jerusalem is painful even to contemplate. Infinitely more unbearable, however, is the thought of the blood that will be spilled if Israel turns a deaf ear to the Palestinians' yearnings and continues to insist upon 'full' sovereignty."

--Letty Cottin Pogrebin, leader of Americans for Peace Now, in the September/October 1993 issue of *Tikkun*

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