
OUTPOST

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IS IT "PREMATURE" TO SAVE LIVES?

Herbert Zweibon

Those who favor stationing American troops on the Golan Heights have attempted to silence opposition by arguing that it is "premature" to have any public discussion of the issue. But is it "premature" when American lives are at stake?

The Israeli Embassy in Washington and several Jewish establishment organizations, including AIPAC, have been urging members of Congress and the American Jewish community to refrain from talking about the plan to station U.S. troops on the Golan. How do they justify this demand for suppressing free speech? Their argument is that the Syrian-Israeli negotiating process is at a "sensitive" stage, and a debate over Golan troops could interfere with reaching a deal with the Assad regime.

But the real reason they don't want any such discussion is because they know that if the risks of a Golan deployment are aired openly, opposition will spread. Public opinion polls have already shown that the majority of Americans are opposed to putting U.S. soldiers on the Golan. The more Americans hear about the dangers, the less they will want to expose their sons to them. Every week, soldiers from the Israeli Army or the South Lebanese Army are wounded or killed by Hezbollah terrorists. If U.S. soldiers are put on the Golan, just a few miles from Hezbollah's Lebanese terror bases, American names will start appearing on those weekly casualty lists.

That's why, despite the best efforts of Ambassador Rabinovich and AIPAC, numerous congressional leaders have called for holding congressional hearings on the Golan deployment issue. These congressmen understand that they have a responsibility to the American public to explore fully the risks of such a deployment before it is too late. AIPAC now hopes to delay the hearings until Israel and Syria have reached an agreement.

Such a delay would be a tragic mistake. Once an agreement is reached between Israel and Syria, there will be enormous pressure on Congress to rubberstamp the deal so that "peace" can proceed. Congressmen who have legitimate concerns about sending U.S. soldiers into

such a danger zone will be intimidated with warnings that opposition to a deployment will lead to a new Middle East war. That's why supporters of Golan troops are so passionately pushing the "premature" argument--they want to present the Congress with a fait accompli.

It won't work. Serious, carefully-reasoned questions have been raised about putting American soldiers on the Golan, and those questions can't be answered with superficial slogans about it being "premature" to discuss them. Now--*before* Congress is bullied into endorsing an unenforceable deal with Syria--is the time for a full public discussion, including congressional hearings, on questions such as these:

* What are the dangers that Hezbollah will repeat its 1983 attack on the U.S. Marines (killing 241), or that it will resume its habits of kidnapping and torture, this time with the Golan soldiers?

* Since a U.S. force on the Golan won't be large enough to protect Israel from a Syrian invasion, what real purpose can it serve?

* Will the presence of U.S. troops set the stage for yet another embarrassing U.S. withdrawal in the face of terrorism, thereby damaging America's reputation and honor?

These are life-and-death questions for Americans; there is nothing "premature" about trying to save American lives.◇

Herbert Zweibon is chairman of Americans For a Safe Israel.

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From the Editor
Ruth King

JEWISH DOVES FACE ARAB REALITY

An old joke describes a conservative as a liberal who was mugged. A new joke might describe a Jewish "hawk" as a Jewish dove whose relative was murdered by Arab terrorists. In recent weeks, Jewish hawks of this sort are emerging in places one would least expect.

The New York *Jewish Week*, a left-leaning Federation newspaper, recently published an editorial asserting that the Israel-PLO peace process is failing. The *Forward* published a similar editorial, and the *Long Island Jewish World*, while not going quite as far, did run an editorial arguing that Diaspora Jews have every right to demand that the PLO keep its commitments, as a precondition to further Israeli concessions.

The frequency and brutality of Arab terrorism is apparently shattering many illusions. Those who once enthusiastically cheered the Israel-PLO "peace" are finally waking up to reality.◇

FOR WHOM THE POLLS TOLL

A recent survey of Arab opinion in the territories found that 54% say they favor the continued use of terrorism against Israelis. It is reasonable to assume that the actual number is much higher, since a certain number of people who hold extreme opinions are reluctant --for various reasons--to tell a pollster what they really believe.

Meanwhile, Prime Minister Rabin has been quoted in recent media reports as having said in private conversation that only 30-35% of Israelis still support the Israel-PLO deal. Evidently Mr. Rabin's estimate is based on the Labor Party's private polling data. Other public opinion polls have likewise shown that Israeli public support for Rabin's "peace process" is dwindling fast.

What do these statistics mean?

First, that most Palestinian Arabs have not changed at all. They still cheer the murder of Israelis, and still long for the day that Israel will be annihilated. The idea that the handshake on the White House lawn would transform the Palestinian Arabs into lovers of peace was a cruel myth.

And second, that the Israeli public has gradually come to realize that the Arabs have not changed. Common sense is emerging at last--but will the people have an opportunity to assert their common sense in the voting booth, before most of the country has been given away? ◇

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A COURAGEOUS FEDERATION

Most of the Jewish establishment, following meekly in the footsteps of the Rabin government, has been boycotting the Jewish communities of Judea, Samaria, Gaza, Golan, and eastern Jerusalem. The Jewish National Fund won't transfer monies to plant trees in those areas; the United Jewish Appeal won't send funds for the humanitarian concerns of Jews living there.

A courageous exception to this immoral boycott is the Jewish Federation of Greater Middlesex County, in New Jersey, which recently voted to contribute \$22,000 to the American Friends of Israel Community Development Foundation, which undertakes humanitarian projects beyond the pre-1967 border. The allocation was approved by the Middlesex Federation's executive committee by a vote of 13 to 2, and by its board by 36 to 4.

After the Middlesex decision, Dov Furer, a member of the executive committee of the nearby United Jewish Federation of MetroWest, asked his Federation to make a similar donation. But the Federation's president, Stanley Strauss, recently rejected the request on the grounds that the Federation has always adhered to the standing policy of the United Israel Appeal, to boycott the territories.

Tradition is not a sufficient reason to make such a decision. Bad policies should be changed, whether or not they are longstanding. Boycotting fellow-Jews is bad policy--it is made worse by the fact that it is precisely those Jews in the territories who are the most in need of American Jewish assistance. At a time when the Israeli Army is gradually pulling out of the region and Arab terrorism is surging, the Zionist pioneers who reside in Judea, Samaria, Gaza, Golan and eastern Jerusalem need Diaspora support more than ever.

The Jewish Federation of Greater Middlesex County has shown the way, acting with courage and compassion. Other Federations should do likewise. ◇

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ARAFAT: "WE ARE ALL SUICIDE BOMBERS"

Edward Alexander

In a speech at the University of Pennsylvania in October 1994, Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres declared that one of the numerous advantages of a shrunken Israel (after full withdrawal from the disputed territories, Israel's width, at its narrowest point, will equal the length of California's Golden Gate Bridge, inclusive of on-ramps) will be the country's ability to boast that it has "more Ph.D.s per kilometer" than any country in the world. Peres failed to note that Israel will then also be able to boast more dunces per square kilometer than any place in the world. In view of the predictably obtuse reaction of the Israeli government to the carnage perpetrated on January 22 by yet another Arab suicide bomber (or bombers), the latter boast would seem more appropriate.

"We shall not play into the hands of the terrorists by stopping the peace process," announced Prime Minister Rabin, as he always does, with the regularity of a steam-engine. On this occasion, however, Rabin was outdone in obtuseness (and recklessness) by his Education Minister, Amnon Rubinstein (who passes as an intellectual by Israeli standards). Rubinstein was sent to Yad Vashem in Rabin's place to help commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of Auschwitz, the prime minister having been called away by the terrorists' unique mode of commemorating this anniversary--which is to say, by blowing up as many Jews as they could. He declared that "one thousand attacks and acts of sabotage" would not deter Israel from pursuing the sacred "peace process."

None of the Israeli officials who repeat this insult to the intelligence after each terrorist bombing--and who have had to do so with increasing frequency ever since the agreement with the PLO in 1993--has attempted to explain just why the terrorists should desire an end to the peace talks. Do Rabin and company really believe that the terrorists are opposed to Israeli withdrawal from the disputed territories of Judea and Samaria, the intended and inevitable result of the talks? The terrorists, like everybody else in the world who has heard Rabin and Peres's mindless reiteration of their determination to continue "the peace process" after each act of butchery, have been fully assured that this Israeli government, no matter how high the mountain of Jewish corpses, will continue the "process" and that the withdrawal will go on. The government has made it entirely clear that it is indifferent to PLO refusal to live up to any of the Declaration of Principles. And now Rabin's Education Minister tells the killers that they can create at least 1000 abattoirs before Israel will even consider suspending the talks with Arafat.

And what about Arafat himself? His most

notable statement on this week's installment of the serial bombings that have become a regular feature of Israeli life since the government completely shut down its intelligence network in the Gaza Strip (due to the breaking out of "peace") was made even before the bombing happened. On January 1, in a speech in Gaza, he told his followers (and those he hopes will become his followers): "We are all suicide bombers." This should put his heart-rending denunciation of the Beit Lid massacre (conveyed second-hand to Rabin) in proper perspective.

Arafat, of course, has been working hand in glove with the "Islamic radicals," as the Israeli government invariably labels the perpetrators of terrorist acts (until, as in last year's horrific Afula bombing, police investigation proves the PLO to be responsible). He has neither the

Israel will be able to boast more dunces per square kilometer than any place in the world.

ability nor the will to act either against Islamic groups or "radical" PLO factions, including his own Fatah Hawks, who have proclaimed their continuing adherence to the "armed struggle." Indeed, his speeches praise the killers and his newspapers list them as martyrs and heroes. It is safe to assume that in the scores of celebratory parties reported in the Gaza Strip in the wake of the latest bombing, a fair number of the ghoulish celebrants were dutiful followers of Arafat himself, who did after all pioneer the applied art of terrorist bombing and can still lay claim to the title of most prodigious Jew-killer since the demise of Hitler and Stalin.

But none of this really matters to the current Israeli government. The incomparable Peres, chief designer of the accord with the PLO, invariably reacts to Arafat's defiant calls for *jihad* (holy war) by saying that his friend and fellow Nobel Peace Prize-winner is thinking of "a peaceful *jihad*," something akin to a powerful desire to save the environment. In May 1994, Peres declared: "I don't think we should judge the process by the performance of Yasir Arafat. We're not negotiating with Arafat. We're negotiating with ourselves..."

How shall we best explain the fumbling incompetence of the Israeli government to protect its own citizens? A refusal to credit the full evil of the world? A collective surrender to the Stockholm syndrome? A reckless solipsism? Sheer lack of intelligence? Whatever its underlying cause, it expresses itself in a policy of endless appeasement, as if none of the Israeli leaders is capable of remembering Churchill's deadly sentence on the arch-appeaser of the century: "Mr. Chamberlain was faced with the choice between war and dishonorable appeasement; he chose dishonor, and he got the war."◊

Edward Alexander, professor of English at the University of Washington, taught for several years at Tel Aviv University and Hebrew University in Israel.

MYTHS OF THE OSLO PROCESS

Yisrael Medad

Ever since the handshake on the White House lawn, official Israeli government spokesmen have offered a litany of myths. As the killing continues, the Israeli government pursues a policy that began in Oslo, led to prize money at the scene of the crime 15 months later, and then exploded lethally, once again, at a bus stop at Beit Lid.

The message so pathetically repeated by Government ministers is that the process must go on. To reassure the populace, starved for normalcy, the minority government of Prime Minister Rabin feeds them, as well as the Jewish communities abroad, a number of myths:

Myth #1: Terror Stems from Poverty

Before the 1992 elections, Labor candidates told the electorate that Gaza would have to be removed from

Tel Aviv. In fact, the Oslo accords have brought Gaza into Tel Aviv. Moreover, every time there is a closure, the pressure builds to let in the Arab workers to ease the pressure.

Now Shimon Peres promotes the theory that terror stems from the poverty and unemployment that exists in Gaza, a theory, as every historian knows, so wrongheaded that it is a wonder that Peres's Nobel Peace Prize was not disallowed. All the major terror movements in the last two centuries, whether in Russia, Europe, South America or other areas, have sprung from the intellectual and middle-income classes. Poverty can only aid in the mobilizing of peripheral support.

Myth #2: Fundamentalist Terror is New

We are told this despite the fact that there were suicide bombers in Lebanon over 15 years ago (not to mention Kamikaze pilots). The fact is that ever since anti-Zionist violence broke out against Jews in the Land of Israel in 1920, it has been fomented and led by Islamic clerics, notably the Mufti himself. Az-Adin El-Kasim, the Hamas hero, was a preacher. The whipping up of populist anti-Jewish sentiment was done against the background of religious animosity in the case of the

Western Wall controversy of 1928-1929. Moreover, Yasser Arafat himself, through the use of Koranic sources, gives fundamentalist momentum to the PLO activity in the self-rule areas.

Myth #3: Terror Seeks to Derail the Peace Process

Not only do the terrorists not want to derail the process or slow it down, but they desire to speed it up. The more territory evacuated by Israel, the more territory becomes available for additional terrorist bases and the more Arabs can be recruited for violence against Jews.

Myth #4: Terror "Kills" the Peace

No, it doesn't. Terror kills Jews. As simple as that. Any other development is entirely incidental to the main aim: to kill Jews who are termed "pigs" and "monkeys" by the Arabs.

Myth #5: The PLO is Not a Terror Group

In direct contravention of the Oslo accords, the PLO National Covenant has not been invalidated. The support, verbally and instrumentally, for terror, continues. The Oslo accords have been consistently violated by the PLO. The televised appearances by Yasser Arafat clearly show that he encourages and instigates an atmosphere conducive to terror within the general Arab populace.

Myth #6: There is No Alternative

It is really the government that has no alternative. The government's "alternative" is triumphant Palestinianism. The government's alternative is a Hamas victory wresting primacy from the PLO by proving that the PLO stopped its terror campaign too soon. It will be Hamas that reaps the fruits of revolutionary victory. Moreover, as Minister Yossi Sarid has made clear, the minority Labor-radical left coalition government is making sure that there will not be a Zionist alternative as they move on the Yesha communities, suppress information, violently quash dissent and engage in an "enforcement" campaign, especially in the U.S., to force the establishment American Jewish organizations to toe the government line even though it has lost popular support.

Myth #7: Terror is Not a Strategic Threat to Israel's Existence.

Mr. Rabin himself debunked that myth when he spoke at the site of the January 21, 1995 Beit Lid massacre and said: "The terror attacks are turning into a strategic problem." In this, he is finally reversing the position that he took at the outset of the *intifada*, seven years ago. Then he was warned that the low-level terror campaign would lead to frustration and demoralization in the Army and the success of defeatist politicians. This last development is apparent, not only in the conduct of the Oslo negotiations and subsequent agreements at Davos

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NEW MIDDLE EAST OR NEW JEWISH GHETTO?

Rael Jean Isaac

Whither Israel? At the helm of Israel's government are two leaders with totally contradictory views. Foreign Minister Shimon Peres has proclaimed its future lies in integration into a "New Middle East," where, to quote a speech Peres made in October 1994 in Philadelphia, the "old enemies have disappeared or will disappear, since they don't have a future." But Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, following the last suicide bombing near Netanya which left 21 young Israeli soldiers dead, has called for "clear separation" between Jews and Palestinian Arabs, symbolized by a proposed \$230 million electric fence.

It is debatable which of these two Nobel Prize winners is more out of touch with reality. The new Middle East exists only in the overblown rhetoric of Shimon Peres, who in his book by that name describes a region characterized by "visions of happiness and beauty, life and peace...blooming deserts, restored wastelands, progress, growth, justice and freedom." Undaunted by Israel's experience to date with the peace agreement with the PLO, Peres, in that same speech in Philadelphia, announced "The change occurring is a total departure from whatever we have known in history. It is the end, shall I say, of the hunting season in history, the beginning of a creating season in our lifetime." The quote deserves a place in Ripley's *Believe It or Not*.

In fact, the old Middle East persists, and not merely in a minority of Hamas holdouts, as Peres would have it. An opinion survey conducted by Hilal Khashan of the American University of Beirut among 1,000 Syrians, Palestinians and Muslim Lebanese shortly after Israel's peace agreement with Arafat found that two thirds of the respondents favored immediate war on Israel and the third who supported peace agreements looked on them as an interim phase until the Arabs became strong enough to destroy Israel. Not a *single* person interviewed accepted the idea of Israel's long term survival.

The reaction to the suicide bombers of Netanya is equally instructive. Agence France Presse on January 26 reported the results of a poll which showed 57% of Palestinian Arabs supporting the massacre of young Israelis. (Less than a third were opposed, the rest undecided.) In Syria, which has been sluggish in accepting Israel's offer of the Golan Heights in return for even the word "peace," Radio Damascus declared: "Within the darkness which rules evil Israel was revealed the true and beautiful face of Arab Palestine when two of its

dearest sons--Anwar Sukkar and Salah Shaker--went like human missiles and penetrated the beast of the Israeli obscenity and abomination, in order to make clear to Israel what they have to understand." A new Middle East, indeed.

On first hearing, Rabin's notion of radically separating Israel from her Arab neighbors may sound more rational. But the notion of trying to turn Israel into a Middle Eastern ghetto, with the Jewish population seeking protection inside a "fence," is as impractical as it is demeaning. A fence was constructed around the Gaza Strip after the PLO took over in May--that has not stopped a series of attackers coming from Gaza, including the suicide bombers of Beit Lid.

A fence would entail a huge commitment of Israel's military resources. Terrorism expert Yigal Carmon observes that it would take half the Israeli army to police a fence across the hundreds of zigzagging miles of Israel's pre-1967 borders. Recognizing the impracticality of his own plan, Rabin has already backed away, saying the idea is only to fence "trouble spots." But what is to prevent terrorists from bypassing the Israeli-designated "trouble spots" to cross in to Israel elsewhere, creating new trouble spots?

In advocating that Israel relinquish the lands taken in the 1967 war, both Rabin and Peres keep referring to the unimportance of territory in an age of missiles. But what of fences in an age of missiles? There has already been an Arab missile attack against a Jewish home in Hebron, luckily without loss of life. Weapons are pouring into the "autonomy" area and the more that area is expanded the more weapons--and the more sophisticated weapons--will become available for use against Israel.

And what about the Arabs of Israel, now nearing 20% of the population? Does Rabin propose fencing the Galilee? Transferring out the Arab population? An irredentist movement among Arabs in the Galilee (where they form a majority) to link up with the Palestinian "autonomy" is only a matter of time, and a very short time, at that.

And what of the 141,000 Israelis who have settled outside the pre-1967 borders, most of whom will find themselves on the wrong side of the fence? Settlement leaders have already threatened to stop any fence with their bodies.

As if to underscore the confusion and desperation at Israel's helm, Shimon Peres has come out in favor of the fence! Does Peres expect Israel to merge into the new Middle East from behind an electrified wall, complete with dogs, outposts, and soldiers at the ready? Moreover, the core notion which Peres emphasizes over and over is that poverty is responsible for fundamentalism and that prosperity is the key to peace. What is to become of the many thousands of Arab workers who

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LEBANON: THREAT TO ISRAEL

Irving Kett

In September 1973, I entered the U.S. Army War College. The Yom Kippur War, which broke out the next month, turned out to be the most important field of intensive military study during my two year stay there. That mid-intensity conflict wrought significant changes in military thinking, weapons, and logistics, not alone in the Israel Defense Forces. It ushered me into nine years of almost total concentration upon the Middle East, including terrorism, and the security issues confronting Israel, until my retirement in 1982.

In the summer of 1974, I came to Israel to conduct an on-site examination into what could reasonably be perceived as the borders that Israel requires for minimal security. The result of that investigation is in the

archives of the War College and was on the recommended reading list for U.S. military officers going to the Middle East for many years.

Although surrounded on all sides by well-armed, hostile states, at that time and for a number of years prior, the Lebanese border was Israel's most perilous and intractable and remains so to this day. It is the purpose of this article to trace the development and consequences of hostilities against Israel from Lebanon and the recommendations of the U.S. War College study in dealing with this dangerous, continuing challenge to which the Israeli military establishment has yet to develop a satisfactory response.

The first military base, established by the PLO, from which to launch attacks against Israel was in Jordan. However, in September 1970 (Black September in the lexicon of the PLO), King Hussein realized that Yasser Arafat constituted an even greater danger to his regime.

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NEW JEWISH GHETTO

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depend on Israel for their livelihood? Will they be excluded? Peres is clearly worried, for even as he endorsed the fence, he added that poverty could turn the territories into a "mini-Iran."

But if Arab workers continue to be admitted, where is the separation? What use is a fence? Do Peres and Rabin really believe terrorists cannot come through as workers? If so, why is their first action after a terrorist outrage invariably to stop the flow of Arab workers into Israel?

While it is a safe bet that no fence will be constructed at this time, the intellectual disarray at the top

signifies that the government is at the end of its tether. Judging from the polls, and the growing disaffection within Labor itself, it is near the end of its tenure as well. Most of the public now recognizes that the deal with Arafat was a hideous mistake. Unable to acknowledge this, Peres and Rabin, the architects of Oslo, flounder with absurd boasts of having "solved" the Middle East conflict or safety through fences, or in the case of Peres, both.

If Israel is to survive, it will be through its power to deter Arab aggression. By its folly, this government has forfeited much of Israel's deterrent power, leaving the next government with the unenviable task of trying to rebuild what its predecessor wantonly threw away.◇

Rael Jean Isaac, the author of numerous articles and two books on Israeli politics, is a member of the executive committee of Americans For a Safe Israel.

SPOTLIGHT ON THE RABIN GOVERNMENT

..."There is no such thing as Jewish land, there are only Jewish people" --so said Rabin's ambassador to the United Nations, **Gad Yaacobi**, at New York's Harvard Club on January 31. In response to a suggestion that Israel fence off Gaza, and then remove all Jews from Judea and Samaria and fence off those areas as well, Yaacobi replied: "That is our approach"...

...In his capacity as Minister of Defense, Rabin has given permission to a group of Israeli Army veterans to provide military training to PLO 'security guards,' the Hebrew-language weekly *Israel Shelanu* reports.

The newspaper quotes Army sources as expressing concern that sharing information about Israeli military training techniques with the PLO could prove harmful to Israeli security...

...Speaking in the Knesset on January 24, Meretz MK **Benny Temkin** accused "the settlers and the settlements" of "inflaming passions and angering the Arabs, who therefore intensify their murderous actions." The solution, Temkin said, is the establishment of a PLO state...

...The Rabin government is quietly opposing any congressional attempt to move the U.S. Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, on the grounds that such a move "could spell the end to the delicate Israeli-Palestinian talks," the Jewish Telegraphic Agency reports...

LEBANON: THREAT

(Continued from p.6)

He, therefore, ordered the Jordanian Army to crush the PLO, which it proceeded to do with typical Arab brutality.

Since Lebanon was the weakest neighboring state, it was least able to resist or control the resultant massive PLO incursion from Jordan. Within a few years, backed by huge financial resources from the oil-rich Arab countries, Arafat succeeded in establishing a vast network of military, organizational, and logistical facilities, in some depth, along Lebanon's border with Israel. Southern Lebanon was gradually turned into a PLO state, with its own army and other trappings of sovereignty. Mr. Arafat became the de facto dictator of the area and its indigenous Arab population by virtue of intimidation and armed force. The then-president of Lebanon, Suleiman Franjeh, summed up the situation as follows: "They came to us as guests. We awarded them every possible hospitality but eventually they turned into savage wolves and sought to kill their hosts and become masters of Lebanon."

While the rest of the Arab world demurred at granting Yasser Arafat bases on their own territory, other Arab countries willingly used the PLO in Lebanon as a vehicle for terror against both Israel and the West. In place of the PLO, who have since shifted their base of operations to Israel proper, Israel now faces an army of about 12,000 Hezbollah, Iranian and Palestinian terrorists in southern Lebanon, financed, equipped, and trained by Iran and Syria.

For twelve years between 1970 and 1982, the farming communities and urban centers in northern Israel suffered hundreds of PLO terrorist attacks. The PLO generally refrained from targeting military objectives. Instead they concentrated on ambushing buses, seized schools, attacked apartment houses, planted land mines, and fired Katyusha rockets against population centers.

On the 11th of April, 1974, 18 women and children were massacred by PLO terrorists in the northern Galilee town of Kiryat Shemona. On the 15th of May, 1974, a PLO terrorist squad seized a school in Ma'alot and held 85 children hostage before they were overpowered by the IDF. The result was 20 children killed and 70 wounded. Between 1970 and the summer of 1974, when I arrived in Israel, 81 Israelis had already been killed and 175 wounded by Mr. Arafat's terrorists, infiltrating from Lebanon.

During my stay in Israel, I had entree to many of the top present and retired military leaders, including such generals as Israel Tal and Ariel Sharon, who gave me their in-depth analyses of Israel's security problems. A former head of Israel's Northern Command, Major General Yitzhak Hofi, was for a while Acting Chief of Staff. He was quite frank in pointing out the IDF's difficulties in preventing infiltration or rocket attacks upon northern Israel because of the harsh topographic conditions that exist along the Lebanese border. He also noted the short distances between the terrorist concentrations and the towns and villages of the area.

Israel's continuing security difficulties along her

northern border and the resultant shocking loss of life points up the urgent need for Israel to possess secure borders. These should be based upon natural terrain features, preferably water courses, since the latter are the most easily defended and the most difficult to violate. My own extensive reconnaissance observations along the Lebanese border plus classified documents at my disposal at the War College Library, absolutely confirmed General Hofi's conclusions.

The study, as approved by the U.S. Army War College, covered many aspects vital to Israeli security. Among its recommendations were that the Litani River become the permanent northern border of Israel. At the time of Israel's incursion into Lebanon in June of 1982, I thought that the seizure and retention of the Litani River line would be the final objective of the Israel Defense Forces for that operation. In retrospect, Israel wasted a superb opportunity to establish a reasonably secure northern border in an area which actually has deep roots in Jewish history. From the Litani River the IDF could suppress hostile actions north to the Awali River by artillery fire and armored reconnaissance teams. The Awali River, which like the Litani is a fairly large body of water, is approximately 25 kilometers north of and roughly parallel to the Litani River.

In my opinion, Israel should forcefully execute this step without delay and end the senseless bloodletting of so many young IDF and South Lebanese Army soldiers. The battle that is now taking place in southern Lebanon is being fought under conditions, times, and constraints dictated both by the enemy and by spurious political considerations. Such a defensive configuration would protect Israel's northern settlements from terrorist actions and serve as a strategic response to the powerful Syrian Army presence in Lebanon.

In addition to fundamental security considerations, that small strip of southern Lebanon of about 40 kilometers in depth is both geographically and historically

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an integral part of *Eretz Yisrael*. The present artificial boundary was only established in 1923 to demarcate rival British and French interests. The Litani River was the presumed northern border of the proposed area of Jewish settlement as understood in the Balfour Declaration and as discussed at the 1919 Versailles Peace Conference.

The War College Study also pointed to the potential exploitation of the waters of the Litani River, which at present all flow into the sea for the simple reason that Lebanon does not lack for water. The Litani could become a valuable asset to the parched nations of the region as Israel proposed back in 1953 under the Cotton

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THE WORLD ACCORDING TO B'TSELEM

Steven Plaut

The organization "B'Tselem" is well known both within Israel and outside the country. It has patiently and consistently attempted to represent itself as a civil rights organization, roughly analogous to the American Civil Liberties Union in the United States and similar groups elsewhere. B'Tselem claims to have no political agenda as such and no ideology other than the impartial preservation and protection of civil rights for all.

For anyone still nursing the delusion that this is the true nature of B'Tselem, a letter printed in several Hebrew-language Israeli newspapers recently by the director-general of the organization will come as a rude awakening. In this letter, Mr. Yizhar Be'er rebuked those who were depicting the 1988 murder of a schoolgirl, Tirzah Porat, as a crime perpetrated by Arabs. (The incident was recalled when another young girl, Ofra Felix, was murdered in the territories recently.)

Be'er argues that Arabs were neither morally nor legally responsible for the death of Porat, and that any attempt to represent them as such is an outrageous distortion. Porat was killed by a Jew, argues Be'er, and the cause of her death was the "provocation" of Arab villagers by Jewish settlers.

For those who do not recall the event, Porat was among a group of hiking schoolchildren who were peacefully walking near the village of Beita in Samaria in 1988, when they were suddenly attacked by the villagers in what can only be described as a pogrom. The villagers stoned them and assaulted them. The guard who was with the group fired a number of times at the attackers. At one

point, the attackers began pulling his gun away from him, and in the struggle a bullet from his weapon misfired and struck Porat, killing her.

Who was responsible for the murder of Porat? According to B'Tselem, the answer is clear: the Jews. The Jews caused her death by "provoking" the Arabs by walking near their village in the first place. A Jew was responsible for her death because the misfired bullet came from the gun of a Jew. The Arab pogromists of Beita are innocent, as clean as a hound's tooth.

The moral underpinnings of Be'er's letter are fascinating. When someone is killed under circumstances of warfare, belligerency or conflict, apparently B'Tselem believes that those responsible for the strife are not responsible for these deaths, while those whose weapon misfired, are. For example, recently it was alleged that an Israeli man thought to have been killed by one of Saddam's Scuds may have been killed by a Patriot missile. If we adopt B'Tselem's "logic," Iraq cannot be held morally responsible for the death. The Americans must be the murderers.

In Operation Desert Storm, American jets accidentally killed some Allied soldiers. Saddam, according to B'Tselem's reasoning, bears no responsibility for that, either. The Americans are to blame. Since in every military conflict some people are accidentally killed, B'Tselem would argue that the moral blame and responsibility for those deaths must rest with those who inadvertently caused them, rather than with those guilty of causing the war or conflict. Had Allied planes bombed Auschwitz during World War II, the pilots--according to B'Tselem--would have been murderers while the Nazi guards would be innocent bystanders. Indeed an original moral philosophy.

Things get even better when B'Tselem holds that the walking of the schoolchildren near an Arab village was itself a provocation that understandably excuses the Arab behavior. Would the organization have voiced a

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LEBANON: THREAT

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Plan.

Ever since Lebanon acquired independence in 1943, the various regimes that ruled in Damascus have never concealed their intentions to seize that country. Lebanon, along with Jordan and Israel, was always considered as part of Greater Syria. In all the intervening years, the various dictators in Damascus never recognized the sovereignty of Lebanon nor ever established diplomatic relations with her. In response to the civil war that was raging in Lebanon, Syria took the opportunity to send in her army and assert her hegemony over Lebanon. By virtue of the deployment of Russian SAM missile batteries in the Bekaa Valley, Syria even poses a threat to Israel's control of air space over the Galilee.

Israel may as well recognize and realistically take

into consideration the de facto incorporation of most of Lebanon into Greater Syria. More than ever, Israel's northern front needs to be secured by maintaining the current IDF positions on the Golan Heights in the east and the Litani River in the west.

Unfortunately, what some Israelis and their leaders are prepared to accept is a quick fix to the dangerous and formidable problems of their country's security regardless of consequences. There are times when there simply are no palatable solutions. Nowhere is this more apparent than along Israel's northern border both with Syria and with Lebanon.◇

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

SPOTLIGHT ON THE EXTREMISTS

...Veteran Israel-basher **Thomas L. Friedman** was recently awarded a twice-weekly foreign affairs column on the op-ed page of the *New York Times*. Unable to shake loose from his decades-long obsession with the Jewish State, Friedman devoted his first three columns to demanding that Israel agree to the establishment of a PLO state in the territories. Friedman made it appear as if he reached this conclusion on the basis of recent events in the Mideast, but those who are familiar with his background know that as far back as 1974, while still a student at Brandeis University, Friedman was one of the leaders of a campus organization called the "Middle East Peace Group," which championed PLO demands. In his best-selling autobiography, *From Beirut to Jerusalem*, Friedman claimed that it was Israel's behavior in Lebanon in 1982 that turned him into a critic of Israel; for some reason, he forget to mention his days as a pro-PLO activist at Brandeis...

...In a recent issue of the *Los Angeles Jewish Journal*, leftwing columnist **Yehuda Lev** claimed that the media reports of Palestinian Arabs cheering from the rooftops as Iraqi Scud missiles landed on Israel were all fictitious. Lev claimed that when **Amos Elon**, the leftwing Israeli author, investigated the story, he could not find a single person who had actually witnessed such Arab behavior. It seems that neither Lev nor Elon looked very hard. In a letter that was subsequently published in the *Journal*, Julian White, chairman of Americans For a Safe Israel in Southern California, quoted an article written by none other than **Yossi Sarid** in early 1991, in which he reported that "Most Palestinian Arabs are...climbing onto the rooftops and, as if moonstruck, calling out 'Allah is great' and applauding the missiles falling on our heads." Does Yehuda Lev believe that Sarid is part of some rightwing conspiracy to defame the Arabs?...

...Just a few months ago, **Michael Lerner**, editor of the radical-left magazine *Tikkun*, was the subject of feature stories in the *New York Times Sunday Magazine*, *People*, and elsewhere, portraying him as Hillary Clinton's "guru." Lerner basked in the attention, but it was short-lived. After *Esquire* ran a story about the First Lady's spiritual interests, Mrs. Clinton responded with a terse letter jabbing at those who briefly meet her and then "decide that it will benefit him or her to be seen as associated with us in the public's eye." The "prime example of that," she continued, in an obvious reference to Lerner, "is the magazine editor who paid a short courtesy call in my office and has promoted the perception that he is my 'guru.'" The *Washington Post* reported that when it read the First Lady's statements to Lerner, he "sputtered" something about how the Clinton administration had "never lived up" to the ideas he has been promoting...

...Not much is known about Leon Levy, the incoming chairman of the Conference of Presidents of

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Major American Jewish Organizations--except that one of his fans is veteran extremist **Jonathan Jacoby**. "It is an excellent choice," said Jacoby, who was active in the New Jewish Agenda, executive director of the New Israel Fund, and head of Americans For Peace Now before taking up his present job as director of the leftwing "Israel Policy Forum"...

...The recently-formed "Coalition to Rethink Aid to the Middle East" is calling on Congress to "phase out" all aid to Israel. The "Coalition" is new, but its members are the same old Israel-bashers: the Presbyterian Church USA, the Lutheran Church in America, and Churches for Middle East Peace, an umbrella for various leftwing and pacifist churches. One newcomer on the scene: CARE, the children's aid group...

THE PLO COVENANT AND THE JEWISH PEOPLE

Mordechai Nisan

Four days prior to the signing of the Declaration of Principles between the government of Israel and the PLO on September 13, 1993, Yasser Arafat wrote in a letter to Prime Minister Rabin that "the PLO undertakes to submit to the Palestinian National Council for formal approval the necessary changes in regard to the Palestinian Covenant." That document, formulated in 1964 and slightly altered in 1968, sets out the fundamental principles of PLO ideology, including "the elimination of Zionism in Palestine" (Article 15) and the "illegal" character of the state of Israel (Article 19).

Arafat's written commitment to Rabin constituted a rhetorical rejection of those articles in the Covenant "which are inconsistent" with the new PLO position toward Israel. Inasmuch as the PLO had now recognized the state of Israel and renounced terrorism, the operative validity of the Covenant was compromised. Yet Arafat still took it upon himself, no doubt at Israel's insistence, to bring about the necessary changes in the Covenant--thus recognizing its symbolic and substantive function in the PLO denial of Israel's right to exist.

Ever since, Yitzhak Rabin and the Israeli people

have waited in vain for those changes to become the "letter of the law" for the PLO. Moreover, in mid-November Prime Minister Rabin warned that Palestinian elections throughout Judea, Samaria and Gaza will not be permitted if, in fact, such changes are not officially adopted. It has occurred in the past, however, that Rabin's word is no guarantee of Israeli policy.

The significance of Rabin's statement is that the unchanged Palestinian Covenant demonstrates the PLO's rejection of Israel in principle. Of course, in practice, PLO acceptance has been notably unimpressive.

All the same, the problem of the Covenant does not lie alone with those clauses that directly deny Israel's right to existence. True, the call for "the liberation of Palestine" (Article 13) is irrevocably juxtaposed to the rejection of Israel's right to exist. In fact, the call for "liberating Palestine" appears in no less than *eighteen* of the Covenant's thirty-three articles. To convincingly amend this Covenant requires its virtual abandonment by the PLO, which adopted it thirty years ago.

The most central point to consider, however, is not even the glaring rejection of Israel, the inadmissibility of Zionism, and the imperative to liberate Palestine. It is the *national question* which is the essential one because it reflects the PLO's attitude toward the character of the parties to the conflict.

It is the purpose of Article 1 to declare what the historical record knows to be highly questionable--namely, the existence of a Palestinian people. Therefore, the Covenant can do no better than simply affirm the existence

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B'TSELEM

(Continued from p.8)

similar opinion if a group of hiking Arab schoolchildren had been stoned and assaulted by Jews for the "provocation" of walking near Jewish homes somewhere? How about black children in the American South walking near some white homes? What could possibly have led the "humanists" of B'Tselem to such a warped conclusion?

What indeed? The answer is that B'Tselem is not and never has been a neutral, impartial or benign civil rights organization. B'Tselem is a fanatical extremist group that regards any Jewish presence in the Land of Israel and indeed the Jewish state itself as a "provocation" that justifies Arab violence against Jews. B'Tselem is not the least interested in civil rights as such. (For example, it refused to oppose the suspension of *habeas corpus* and due process for the Kahanist settlers arrested after the Goldstein atrocity in Hebron, something the ACLU would doubtless have done if faced with a similar challenge.)

Apparently, B'Tselem has never met an Arab terrorist it does not wish to defend, has never heard an allegation by an Arab of Israeli misconduct that it does not accept at face value, has never seen an Arab atrocity it cannot rationalize, and cannot imagine a Jewish state

having any rights of self-preservation and self-defense. If the Beita pogrom was justifiable in the eyes of Be'er and his ilk, then what Arab atrocity is not?

Since much of B'Tselem's budget seems to be financed from naive well-wishers abroad, it is most important to get the word across that B'Tselem is *not* a benign defender of human rights, but rather a fanatical anti-Israel organization.◇

Steven Plaut teaches at the University of Haifa.

RESERVE THE DATE

*Americans For a Safe Israel
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THE PLO COVENANT

(Continued from p.10)

of the "Arab Palestinian people." This declaration is not without its own ambiguity when it is followed, this still in Article 1, by the statement that "the Palestinian people are an integral part of the Arab nation." The "Arab Palestinian people" is thereby transformed into the "Palestinian people," with the "Arab" dimension, initially inherent, thereafter becoming relational.

The existence of a Palestinian identity is, according to Article 4, "genuine" and "essential," but never truly explicated aside from being defined as "Arab" (Article 5). There is nothing to flesh out what is at best a very recent, partially contrived, oppositional identity.

Articles 5 and 6 together in effect redefine the Jews, by declaring that all Jews who lived in Palestine "prior to the Zionist invasion" (which the PLO dates to 1917) are "Palestinians." This reflects the tendency of Palestinian ideology to Arabize Jews who lived in Palestine--or elsewhere in the Arab Middle East. This argument provides the PLO Covenant with its first denial of Jewish peoplehood.

The second denial is more explicit and critical for the purpose of rejecting the idea and reality of Jewish statehood. Article 20 offers a definitive declaration that "Judaism, being a religion, is not an independent nationality." To say the Jews are just a religious community revokes any claim they otherwise might mount in the name of national self-determination. The same article continues by affirming that the Jews do not "constitute a single nation with an identity of its own." They are no more than citizens of the world, not a united national people.

The PLO, having affirmed the existence of a Palestinian people, requires its counterpoint in the nonexistence of the Jewish people. This is the Covenant's handling or mishandling of the "national question," in order to underscore the claim of Palestinian statehood and to nullify the right of the state of Israel. A non-people can hardly lay convincing claim to a state.

To bolster this point, the PLO juxtaposes the link between peoplehood and territoriality in the case of the Palestinians and the Jews. Article 7 states that the Palestinian community's "material, spiritual and historical connection with Palestine" is an indisputable fact. Article 30 says any claims of "historical or religious ties of Jews with Palestine are incompatible with the facts of history."

The inner political logic of the PLO Covenant traverses the denial of Jewish peoplehood, through the rejection of a Jewish link with *Eretz Yisrael*, on the way to the nullification of Jewish statehood.

It should now be clear why calling upon the PLO to drop from its Covenant the articles denying Israel's existence is unrealistic and certainly inadequate. The Jewish people, whose national saga reaches back four thousand years (and which is soon to celebrate the rule of King David and his Israelite kingdom in Jerusalem 3,000 years ago) hardly requires the historical sanction of the PLO. But the PLO's rewriting of history, beyond its absurdity, is also a major political obstacle to reconciliation

with the modern state of Israel.

Without transforming its attitude on the "national question," the PLO can have no more magnanimous intention than granting the Jews, "Zionist invaders" in their "racist" but transitory state (Article 22), the privilege of being an autonomous religious community in a future liberated Palestine. On this point the PLO and Hamas are in total agreement.

The reasons to be skeptical regarding PLO acceptance of Israel are numerous. Arafat and other PLO spokesmen have declared *jihad* in the battle for Jerusalem. Arafat has likewise repeated often that the PLO's program for eradicating Israel in stages, formally adopted in 1974, is still valid strategy in 1995. Recently, Arafat indiscreetly referred to Israel as "the Zionist enemy" to the Palestinian masses in the Gaza Strip.

The root problem turns on the "national question" which constitutes the core of the PLO's rejection of Israel. In the Declaration of Principles, the PLO, one party to the accord, is recognized as "representing the Palestinian people." The other party, "the Government of the state of Israel," in the eyes of the PLO Covenant represents mere "Zionist aggression" (Article 15), and expansionism, colonialism and fascism (Article 22).

As long as the PLO rejects Jewish peoplehood, there is no prospect of its accepting Jewish statehood.◊

Dr. Mordechai Nisan lectures on the Middle East at Hebrew University, in Jerusalem.

MYTHS OF OSLO

(Continued from p.4)

and Cairo but in the fact that General Barak, Rothschild and others are, after retirement, actively campaigning for the Oslo process.

Myth #8: Separation is the Solution.

This is a throwback to Rabbi Meir Kahane's philosophy (and it is interesting that the radical leftists have not been outspoken critics, as they were in Kahane's time). But apart from this, there are important questions that need to be asked. The first is, given that we already have left Gaza, separating from it so to speak, why is there still terror? Are the Israeli security services capable of dealing with the developments of this post-separation move? The second is given that we were separated from Gaza, Judea and Samaria until June 1967, why did not that situation of separation provide a solution to the Arab-Israel conflict over the Land of Israel? Could it be that something else, besides the desire to be "separated," is driving the Arabs and their hate and terror?◊

Yisrael Medad, a former parliamentary assistant to Knesset Members Geula Cohen (Tehiya) and Limor Livnat (Likud), now directs the Israel Media Watch group.

HIROSHIMA AND THE "PEACE PROCESS"

What do Hiroshima, the Holocaust, and the Israel-PLO "peace process" have to do with each other?

Last year, Shimon Peres caused a stir when, in a speech at a United Nations ceremony, he compared the Allied bombing of Hiroshima in World War II to the Holocaust. There were some protests, but the controversy soon faded away.

The Jewish War Veterans, to its credit, did not let the matter lie. The JWV pressed Peres for an explanation. The Foreign Minister himself was silent, but Israel's consul general in New York, Colette Avital, replying on his behalf, claimed that Peres had not made any such analogy. When a videotape of Peres's remarks revealed that he had indeed made the analogy, the JWV again wrote to Peres for a clarification. Again, Peres was silent. The JWV's leaders then met with Shlomo Gur, an official of the Israeli Embassy in Washington, to communicate their displeasure. Shortly afterwards, Gur sent the JWV a letter quoting Peres as saying that in the speech, he had merely "quoted an author who stated that nuclear weapons represent a threat to mankind." According to Gur, Peres denied comparing Hiroshima to the Holocaust

--even though the videotape showed Peres directly comparing the two, and even calling the bombing of Hiroshima "the Japanese Holocaust." The JWV wrote back to Gur, and it wrote again to Peres, and it passed a resolution at its convention protesting Peres's remarks.

Now for the clincher. On October 21 of last year, Gur wrote back to the JWV. He began by reiterating Peres' denial. Then he switched to a discussion of the Israel-PLO "peace process" and Labor's desire to have American Jewish support for that process. "I am sure that the Jewish War Veterans, who have experienced firsthand the horror of war, will be at the forefront of such support, and will find appropriate ways to express their support."

What does the "peace process" have to do with Hiroshima and the Holocaust? Nothing, of course--except to the Rabin government, which is so desperate to round up support for the failing "peace process" that it seeks to link the two topics. You want to complain about Hiroshima and the Holocaust?, Gur was saying--first endorse our peace process, then we'll discuss this Hiroshima business.

Peres and his gang have no use for Jewish history or the Holocaust. They don't even care if they've deeply insulted the American people with their foolish Hiroshima analogy. All they care about is pushing through endless concessions to the PLO, and if the historical record interferes with that, then the historical record better move over and get out of the way.◊

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