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The Pistol on the Wall

William Mehlman

"If in the first act you have a pistol on the wall," Anton Chekhov remarked of the inexorable laws of dramaturgy, "then in the following act it must be fired."

The Obama Administration's pistol on the wall, almost from the moment it took possession of the White House, has been the imposition of a "Palestinian State," on the Land of Israel. It is cocked and ready to go off in September when the United Nations General Assembly reconvenes in New York. Under its "Uniting for Peace" Resolution 377, designed to circumvent a Security Council veto, that august body, with a two-thirds majority safely in tow, aims to deliver unto the Fatah regime in Ramallah what its "prime minister," Salam Fayyad has described as a "birth certificate on the reality of Palestinian statehood" from the June 1967 Arab-Israeli armistice lines to the Jordan River.

This is no high school theatrical being mounted over at Turtle Bay. The script has been honed to a diamond-point, the veteran cast all knows their lines, but as in some of the best Chekhovian dramas, much of the build-up to the grand finale is taking place off-center-stage. With the president sequestered behind the curtain, as the Iowa caucus and the New Hampshire primary loom barely nine months off, and the secretary of state trying to contrive a Middle East policy line capable of sustaining more than 48 hours of non-stop Arab turmoil, some of the heaviest lifting for the Obama forces has been consigned to Dennis Ross, the administration's current top advisor on the Middle East.

Ross, who has all but air-brushed U.S. envoy George Mitchell out of the Middle East picture, was most recently seen strutting his stuff at the Anti-Defamation League Leadership Conference in Washington. "We have consistently made it clear," he declared from its rostrum, that "the way to produce a Palestinian state is through negotiations ...our position on that had been consistent." Not so "consistent," to sure, as to preclude some material nuances.

Negotiations, he asserted, must be conditioned on the need for the "young leadership" emerging from the Arab *sturm und drang* to see that they can "not only take place, but produce." And what is it Mr. Ross deems they must "produce," a *futuri*? "An independent [Palestinian] state that is contiguous and viable." The possibility (in deference to Israel's own contiguity and viability) that they could produce nothing does not show up on his radar scope.

Doing a supporting turn for Ross, former U.S. Ambassador to Israel Martin Indyk cautioned the ADL audience that though America would surely not hold still for a unilateral declaration of Palestinian statehood, the Obama Administration's indulgence should not be overly tested. "Time is not on Israel's side," he warned. "This would be a good time for the Israeli leadership to take the initiative."



Dennis Ross

What form such "initiative" might take was laid out for the ADL leaders by another Ross spear-carrier, Elliott Abrams, a deputy national security advisor in the Bush-43 administration. Mr. Abrams, in fact, had not one, but two "initiatives" boxed and ready to move. To lead off, he would have the Knesset pass a law offering cash compensation to residents of the more "far-flung" settlements willing to remove themselves to within the security defense line. And even as the "international community" struggled to catch its breath at the audacity of this gesture, he would have Israel beat the UN to the gate by unilaterally recognizing a Palestinian state. "We need to get past the notion that separating from the Palestinians is a favor to the

Palestinians," he averred. "The Zionists did not create Israel by waiting for the help of others."

However dismayed Mr. Abrams' "initiatives" may have left the Zionists among the ADL leaders, they had National Director Abe Foxman almost jumping out of his chair. "Ninety percent of American Jews want the prime minister to take some kind of initiative," he proclaimed. "Israel has to do it for Israel's sake. Part of Israel's sake is the diplomatic atmosphere."

Foxman never revealed what the other part was, but evidence that the Ross road show may be little more than diversionary static was indicated in an unsigned article in the March 17th issue of *The Economist*, Britain's leading news magazine. Under the heading "All the President's Messengers," explicating on the contradictory messages on Israel emanating from Prime Minister David Cameron (his February 18th aye to the Security Council's attempt to criminalize Israel's presence in Judea and Samaria, followed by his assurance days later that his "belief in Israel" was "indestructible"), the author submitted that "if Mr. Cameron offers Israel mixed messages he does so with the blessing of America's president, normally reliable diplomatic circles claim. Faced with what they see as the intransigence of the Israeli government led by Benjamin Netanyahu," he added, "Europe's big beasts and America are moving closer in outlook, according to those sources."

His anonymity in service to an apparent pipeline to No. 10 Downing St., the author informs that "before the UN vote of February 18th, Barack Obama reportedly encouraged Mr. Cameron and others to take a tough line on Israel. In phone calls to European allies, Obama is said to have expressed frustration at Netanyahu's approach to settlements, but to have explained that he had 'too many domestic fires to extinguish' to risk a bust-up with Israel." While the White House, the author concluded, "strenuously denies this account, No. 10 would only confirm that Mr. Cameron and Mr. Obama had been in 'regular touch' over the peace process...But in private, European officials have

told Israel that their pressure is choreographed with America."

Commenting on *The Economist* article in an April *Washington Post* blog, Jennifer Rubin, a free-lance journalist and occasional contributor to *Commentary Magazine*, found it puzzling that in light of its stated opposition to a unilateral declaration of Palestinian statehood, the Obama Administration had pointedly failed to persuade the Middle East Quartet, of which it is a member, to desist from public mulling over the potential for Palestinian statehood based on the pre-June 1967 borders, borders that Israel has repeatedly declared to be indefensible. She found the response to inquiries directed at the State Department equally puzzling. They failed to elicit confirmation that State would categorically reject a proposal for a Palestinian statehood configured on those 1967 lines or that the Obama Administration would oppose or seek to block moves by the UN or the Quartet to unilaterally recognize a Palestinian state. "We do not support any unilateral declaration of statehood" was the best she could get out of State's "Near East Affairs" desk --and that, only after prodding.

Reaction on Capitol Hill to the State Department's equivocal responses to Rubin's questions was anything but muted. "We need to hear in no uncertain terms that the administration will not allow any Quartet statement that endorses a Palestinian State," a senior Senate aide told her. And from a top-ranking member of the House this response: "Both parties are disturbed that the White House is playing this issue too cute by half. The administration ought to remember where Congress is on this issue. The fact that they go out of their way to upset many of their key supporters is baffling..."

Israeli "initiative" being the diplomatic demimonde's flavor of the hour, the Jewish State does have one to offer that would for the first time in recent memory actually serve its own interests. It'll never earn a spot on the Dennis Ross dog-and-pony show, but it would inject a shot of adrenalin into Israel's listing sense of self-determination. Even as the world prepares to coronate a "Palestinian State" with Jerusalem as

its capital, a bill sits in the Knesset Ministerial Committee for Legislation that would extend Israeli law in all its particulars to "Area C" of Judea and Samaria. Comprising 59 per cent of Judea and Samaria, its 300,000-plus Jewish residents, spread across 120 communities, represent 96 percent of the total population of the area.

Those who titter at the word "annexation" regrettably have nothing to fear. The bill in question merely guarantees Area C's residents the right to live, prosper and grow their presence in the Land of Israel. Its enactment would serve as a "notice of renunciation" of all strictures on that right, the termination of their unconscionable second-class status over the past

four decades. Not least among its virtues, the bill would wrest from the hands of Ehud Barak his unfettered power to inflict misery on the lives of 5 percent of Israel's population.

The Area C bill has the support of 27 members of the Knesset. While there isn't one Arab right that would be violated by its passage, securing it will take the kind of political courage Mr. Netanyahu has yet to demonstrate to the national Zionist constituency that elected him. As he prepares to make Israel's case before a joint session of the friendliest U.S. Congress in decades, he shouldn't have to probe too deeply to find it.

William Mehlman represents AFSI in Israel.

From the Editor

A Memorial at Ariel

The executive committee of the Nordau Circle of the Jabotinsky Fraternal Order, Ray Kaplan, David Krakow and Emanuel Zweibon, has proposed that one of the ways to



memorialize Herbert Zweibon be joint sponsorship with AFSI of an annual lecture series devoted to Israel's security at Ariel University in Samaria. This is indeed a fitting memorial to AFSI's sorely missed longtime leader, single-minded in his dedication to Israel and the Jewish people.

A Jewish-American Revolution?

It is an open secret that American Jewish communal organizations have to a large extent been taken over by radical leftists. Claiming that the Jewish mission is to promote "justice" (as dangerous a word as "peace" in the hands of

these moral imposters), they devote themselves to every trendy cause-du-jour (think cap and trade, attacks on school vouchers, illegal immigrant rights) while ignoring matters involving Jewish survival (think intermarriage, anti-Semitism on campus, the welfare of Israel). Indeed they do worse than ignore these issues—they promote outright enemies, eagerly participating in interfaith events with anti-Semitic jihadist outfits and insisting that educating groups about Israel include "pro-Palestinian" representatives.

In Indiana members of the Jewish community finally decided they'd had enough and in October 2010 the Jewish American Affairs Committee of Indiana (JAACI) was born, committed unequivocally to Israel's defense and the promotion of traditional Jewish and American values. In a few months it succeeded in completely rewriting the Jewish political landscape in Indiana. Underscoring how far the Jewish Community Relations Council had moved from Jewish mainstream opinion, within a few months the new organization had obtained support from the majority of Jewish congregational leaders in Indianapolis, the

majority of rabbis in Indiana and congregants from all the major synagogues.

With Republican winning control of the state government in 2010, JAACI has become the address to which the House and Senate leadership go on issues of Jewish concern. JAACI considers its crowning achievement thus far organizing support for a bipartisan pro-Israel resolution that passed both chambers of the Indiana legislature unanimously. The resolution expressed “steadfast commitment” and support for Israel, our “greatest friend and ally” in the Middle East, supported Israel’s right to act in self-defense and criticized attempts by the UN and other actors to delegitimize Israel.

Leaders of the JAACI point out that politicians are impressed with groups that take pride in who they are and what they stand for and Jews have many more friends among Americans than they realize.

Now that members of a modest-sized Jewish community like that of Indianapolis (operating on no budget to speak of) have shown how the unrepresentative Jewish Community Relations Councils, for all their Jewish Federation funding, can be upended, it is time for Jews who are part of larger communities (think , for example, Boston, New York, Los Angeles) to follow their lead.

Black Students Slam anti-Israel Apartheid Week

African-American student leaders from a number of black colleges and universities took out full-page ads in American college newspapers decrying the use of “apartheid” to describe Israeli society. The signatories, all members of the Vanguard Leadership Group, a leadership development academy and honor society for top students, framed their protest as an “Open Letter to Students for Justice in Palestine.”

Excerpts from the letter:

“The use of the word ‘apartheid’ by Students for Justice in Palestine in its characterization of Israel is patently false and deeply offensive to all who feel a connection to the state of Israel....playing the ‘apartheid card’ is

a calculated attempt to conjure up images associated with the racist South African regimes of the 20th century...[the strategy is] as transparent as it is base.”

The letter concludes by saying that decency and justice “compel us to demand an immediate cessation to the deliberate misappropriation of words and of the flagrant mischaracterizations of Israel.”

J Street’s Evil New Sibling

If the last two items are encouraging straws in the wind, the emergence of yet another poisonous organization bringing together the furthest fringes of the radical left and anti-Semites of all political persuasions is deeply disturbing.

Ron Radosh reports on this new group, which he calls J Street’s Evil New Sibling and which calls itself “Move Over AIPAC.” It is dedicated to demonizing the pro-Israel lobby (for its supposedly sinister influence on U.S. policy and “unrelenting support for the illegal policies of the Israel government”). Move Over AIPAC, unlike J Street, which hypocritically pretends to support Israel while doing all in its power to undermine her, does not disguise its hope to make Israel disappear. It opposes Israel’s “war crimes,” calls for boycotts of Israel, an end to all U.S. military aid to Israel, criticizes Israel’s “bellicose” policies against Iran (no mention of Iran’s repeated promises to annihilate Israel), and, to quote Radosh, “they dare to call last year’s flotilla and Israel’s response to it an ‘IDF assault on the Mavi Marmara,’ the Turkish ship that was filled with Hezbollah armed activists.”

“Move Over AIPAC” has scheduled its first national meeting in May, a few days before AIPAC’s conference, which it plans to use to obtain media coverage for itself through a “creative action” outside of the AIPAC gala dinner at which Netanyahu will be speaking. Walt and Mearsheimer, the anti-Israel Mutt and Jeff, will speak, along with Ralph Nader (who came out of the anti-Israel “closet” when he ran for President) and Patch Adams, the “clown” doctor Robin Williams played in the movies.

The list of sponsoring organizations, Radosh writes, is a who's who of "seemingly hundreds of anti-Zionist, anti-Israel and pro-Palestinian entities, many of which may be inflated names with few actual members." Some are better known, like the International Solidarity Movement, the Hamas-support outfit made famous by the "martyrdom" of Rachel Corrie, CODEPINK and the Fellowship of Reconciliation, an old-style supposedly "pacifist" far-left grouping. The far left is well represented here, with outfits like the Institute for Policy Studies, The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF)--whose U.S. branch, Radosh notes, morphed into a front for the American Communist Party--and the U.S. Peace Council, the preeminent front group of the Communist Party, U.S.A.

As Radosh sums up: "For the old American Left, opposition to Israel, to the existence of a Jewish state, and hence support for Hamas and Hezbollah, has replaced their old anti-Americanism and support for the Soviet Union. They have not moved on, and opposition to Israel is the equivalent of their old support to Soviet style Communism."

The presence in Move Over AIPAC of academics from the "realist" school like Walt and Mearsheimer carries the danger that it will become a haven not just for far left and Islamic support-groups but for anti-Semites of all political stripes.

Are Israelis Smart?



When it comes to political sense, the answer to this is an emphatic "No." A recent poll by *Haaretz* found that, of 16 senior public figures, Shimon Peres, positively rated by 72%, was the most popular by a long shot. That support came from all groups: religious and non-religious, immigrants from the Soviet Union and native Israelis. Indeed the only group dissatisfied with Peres were Israeli Arabs—a majority disapproved of his performance.

At least the poll shows that Israeli Arabs are as out of touch as Israel's Jews. In the name of "peace," Peres, ever since 1993 when he was father of the disastrous Oslo Accords, has been working tirelessly for Arab interests and against those of the Jews. Apart from being chief architect of Israel's dissolution, Peres is a buffoon, an endless fount of sonorous absurdities (see, for example, *Shimon Says* compiled by Roger Gerber and Rael Jean Isaac and available through AFSI).

As the Middle East has been racked by upheavals, with Egypt's notions of reform including ending the (already icy) peace treaty with Israel, reneging on her contract to supply Israel with natural gas, opening the border to Gaza and drawing close to Iran, Peres calls not for a policy of "wait and see" but a headlong rush to self-destruction. Peres told the 11th annual Herzliya conference that for Israel "deterrence must be faith as well as an intention for peace with our neighbors." Now that's a recipe for survival in the shark-filled waters of the Middle East. But then Peres had an even wackier pronouncement for those at the Herzliya conference hanging on his profundities: "Based on my experience, I can tell my friends in the government and outside, that making peace is like splitting the Red Sea. There are heavy costs, but the alternative is much more dangerous."

A No-Fly Zone Over Gaza?

In last month's *Outpost* I predicted that the UN vote for action against Libya based on the need to protect civilians and the approval of "neighboring countries" could one day become the template for UN military action against Israel. It didn't take long for the Arabs to start the ball rolling.

The Arab League Council adopted a Syrian initiative calling upon the UN Security Council to convene immediately to adopt a resolution imposing an air embargo on Israeli military flights over Gaza with the aim of "protecting the unarmed civilians" and affirming "the Palestinian people's right to resist the Israeli occupation by all means."

A New Low in London

Janet Levy in *The American Thinker.com* reports that anti-Semitism reached a new low in London as the Hamas-affiliated International Solidarity Movement (ISM) successfully forced the Israeli-owned firm AHAVA (which manufactures Dead Sea mineral skin-care products sold worldwide) to close its London store. Twice last fall ISM members carried a concrete block into AHAVA's store, blocked the entrance and disrupted business for nearly seven hours. ISM operatives were then charged with trespassing and disobeying a police officer.

That's when British anti-Semitism went into high gear. The presiding judge, George Bathurst Norman, called Gaza a "giant prison camp", disparaged U.S. support for Israel, said Gazans suffered "hell on earth." Not surprisingly, given the judge's attitude (his statements, as Levy says, should have been enough to disbar him), he acquitted all eight defendants who had terrorized the AHAVA store.

The behavior of neighboring storekeepers was almost as scandalous. Instead of condemning the behavior of the ISM hoodlums, they complained about AHAVA "bringing the street down" and appealed to the landlord not to renew AHAVA's lease. As Levy puts it: "By allowing anti-Israeli terrorist-affiliated groups to dictate which shops will be permitted on a London street, appeasement has reached a new low and London falls further down the slippery slope toward Islamization."

A Profile in Courage

No one has shown greater courage and dedication than David Horowitz in confronting campus haters of America and Israel. That courage—and the pusillanimity of those for whose interests Horowitz speaks up—was on vivid display at Brooklyn College during this year's Israel Apartheid Week which Horowitz rightly says is "a hate week against Jews, nothing more nothing less."

Horowitz came to defend Israel despite the fact that the campus atmosphere was so

hostile that no student organization, not even any Jewish organization, was willing to host his appearance. And with 3,500 Jewish students on campus, as Horowitz observes, there were several of those! Horowitz was able to come, he writes, because of one courageous professor, Mitchell Langbert, who reserved a room in the college library, and one brave student, Yosef Sobol, a Jewish immigrant from Ukraine, who organized the event.

The visit showed every prospect of ending in disaster. Horowitz writes: "For two weeks prior to my arrival, an adjunct professor at the college had been calling on students and political radicals to protest my appearance, while denouncing me as a 'racist' and 'McCarthyite.' This professor is a Muslim member of the International Socialist Organization, a communist party that seeks a 'dictatorship of the proletariat' in America. He urged students and outsiders to attack the event both outside the auditorium and inside it during my speech. My bodyguard—a requisite at any campus at which I speak—called campus security two days before the event and was told the policy of the university was that protesters who tried to obstruct my speech would not be removed from the room. Consequently I was fully prepared for the fact that I might not be able to speak at all and readied myself for the battle."

That Horowitz was able to speak for an hour in a civil atmosphere to an audience of a hundred people was thanks to a third person of courage and principle, Jeffrey Wiesenfeld, a trustee of the City University of New York, of which Brooklyn College is a part. Wiesenfeld demanded that the university protect the students who had invited Horowitz and to make sure the event took place. Horowitz writes: "In all my years traveling to over 400 universities this had never happened before. As a result of Wiesenfeld's intervention, there were seven armed and imposing guards at the entrance to the hall. They inspected each individual, wandng them and searching their bags before they entered. The campus Chief of Public Safety was there too, along with an official from the university who warned would-be protesters that

they would be removed if they obstructed my speech.”

What this illustrates, as Horowitz notes, is that the campus violence and obstruction of speakers, that comes exclusively from leftist and

Marxist radicals, would disappear if university administrators—and trustees—did their job.

A Hate-Israel “Spring”

Rael Jean Isaac

Only now is it beginning to dawn on some elements in the media (mainly online websites) that the vaunted Arab spring is likely to prove a nuclear winter to Israel and the United States. Yet for those willing to see them, there were plenty of signs from the beginning that Western style liberal democracy was not on the agenda of most of the anti-Mubarak demonstrators in Cairo. The most obvious were quite literally signs—numerous placards in Tahrir Square showing Mubarak with a Magen David etched into his forehead. Palestinian Arab journalist Khaled Abu Toameh reports that the Western media also managed to overlook the burning of Israeli and American flags by demonstrators and the slogans against Israel and the U.S. chanted in Tahrir Square.



In the general euphoria, no one asked the simple question that could have served as touchstone to test how “liberal,” “democratic” and “moderate” the Egyptian revolt was: “What is the attitude to Israel?” True, no one could expect the demonstrators, their entire lives indoctrinated in hatred of Israel by Mubarak’s regime, to be champions of Israel. But it should certainly have set off warning bells if the anti-Mubarak movement was more vociferously anti-Israel than the existing leadership—and this hatred was central to their identity.

It was left to people like Barry Rubin on *Pajamas Media* (March 30) and Stanley Kurtz in *National Review* (March 7) to dig a little deeper into the roots of the so-called April 6 Youth Movement which brought the first wave of young computer-savvy demonstrators into Tahrir Square.

Rubin notes that the Youth Movement began as a Facebook support group for a 2008 workers strike and by the following year had grown into a network linking 70,000 people. Other than the labor strike, the two issues on which the April 6 Youth Movement was active were support for bloggers being targeted by the government and ending the sanctions on the Gaza Strip. To quote Rubin, “a campaign to end Egyptian sanctions on Gaza was in practice helping to entrench Hamas’s dictatorship and making it possible to smuggle in more arms for use in attacking Israel.” In April 2009 the April 6 Youth Movement participated in creating the umbrella Egyptian Coalition for Change which called for abrogating the peace treaty with Israel--thus putting the Youth Movement on record for advocating this notion of “reform.”

Rubin writes that four other groups took an important role as the movement in Tahrir Square gathered steam. One of these was the Kefaya alliance. Kurtz focuses on Kefaya (meaning “enough,” the protester’s favorite chant), a coalition of Communists, socialists, Islamists and nationalists, which he believes emerged as the most important organization because it dominated the ten member steering committee that served as the protesters’ government-in-waiting. That Kefaya was as central as Kurtz believes can be debated but what is clear is that Kefaya originated as an anti-Israel movement. According to Wikipedia its origins are in the solidarity committees with the Second Intifada of 2000 which spread through Egypt. Kurtz writes that Kefaya was formally created in 2004 “to protect the Arab existence against the Zionist-American projects.” This sounds more like typical Arab paranoia than a manifesto of liberty-

loving Egyptians. In 2006 Kefaya became a pioneer in demanding abrogation of the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty. In 2007 its leader became Abdel Wahhab al-Messiri, formerly a Communist and Muslim Brother, who is one of Egypt's foremost anti-Semites (Wikipedia calls him an "anti-Zionist scholar!"), purveying conspiracy theories based on the fraudulent Protocols of the Elders of Zion.

The other three groups active in Tahrir Square cited by Rubin are the Marxist-oriented Tagammu party and two other supposedly liberal groups: the al-Ghad party, led by former opposition presidential candidate Ayman Nour and the National Association for Change led by Muhammad ElBaradei, former head of the International Atomic Energy Agency. Nour, despite his vaunted credentials as a reformer and champion of human rights (he spent four years in Mubarak's jails on trumped up charges after having the temerity to run for President against Mubarak in 2004), has announced that the Camp David era is "over" and he does not recognize Egypt's peace treaty with Israel. As for El Baradei, who has announced his candidacy for President of Egypt, on April 4 he promised that under his Presidency, should Israeli launch a military strike against Gaza "we would declare war against the Zionist regime." (Such a strike is virtually inevitable if Hamas reverts, as it has begun to do, to indiscriminate strikes on civilians in southern Israel). In short all four of the groups associated with the April 6 Youth Movement that spearheaded Mubarak's downfall give high priority to freezing altogether the already cold peace with Israel.

Indeed the only genuine courageous liberal democrat on the Egyptian scene has just been sentenced to three years in prison by an Egyptian military court. His crime? Twenty-five year old Maikel Nabil had run a blog deemed sympathetic to Israel.

The coming elections can only serve to reinforce the "reformist parties" positions on Israel. The Muslim Brotherhood was late to the party in Tahrir Square but stands to reap most of its benefits. For the Egyptian electorate, as all the polls show, is anything but liberal. Douglas Davis, a former editor at *The Jerusalem Post*, cites a Pew

poll published in December 2010, just before the January "revolution." The Pew poll found that 95% of Egyptian Moslems believed Islam should play a "large role" in politics, 82% supported stoning to death to punish adultery and 84% supported the death penalty for those who leave Islam. When it comes to implementing sharia, the "modernizing" parties cannot compete with the Moslem Brotherhood (or even more Islamically fundamentalist Salafists who recently mobilized 70,000 adherents for a convention at a Cairo mosque), so Israel by default becomes the most inviting target. *The Wall Street Journal* (April 19) reports that Amr Moussa, the former Secretary General of the Arab League, owes his front-runner status in the coming Egyptian presidential elections to his sharp statements against Israel when he was Egypt's foreign minister during the 1990s. Other inviting electoral themes are anti-Americanism and populist economics, i.e. repealing the economic reforms of the last Mubarak years in favor of nationalization of industries and other measures that will ineluctably further reduce the standard of living.

The ripening fruits of the revolution so uncritically celebrated by the media and political class are already visible. In April, as Khaled Abu Toameh writes, Egyptian soldiers, assigned to guard the Israeli embassy in Cairo, ran away when hundreds of "pro-democracy" demonstrators attacked the embassy and set fire to an Israeli flag. (The Israelis, to avoid "provoking" the liberal reformers had closed the embassy earlier and even taken down the Israeli flag from the building.) "Liberal reformers" demand the blockade be lifted from the Hamas-ruled Gaza Strip and the government has already announced plans to ease restrictions. (Mubarak, unwilling to strengthen Hamas, with its close ties to his chief foe, the Muslim Brotherhood, had cooperated with Israel in isolating Gaza.) The "enlightened" demonstrators of Tahrir Square want Egypt to break the agreements under which it provides Israel with natural gas. They want the Israel embassy closed permanently.

From Israel's point of view, the key element in the Israeli-Egyptian peace treaty was to transform relations with its most important

Arab neighbor. In order to achieve “normal and friendly relations” Israel gave up the Abu Rodeis oil fields, her settlements in the Sinai (including the town of Yamit), the Etzion air base (crucial to her defense), and the spaces of the Sinai that gave her the ability to deploy her aircraft. Ending the teaching of contempt was so important to Israel that it put the promise to abstain from hostile propaganda into the text of the treaty. Fifty side agreements to the treaty were signed, all designed to transform attitudes, from cultural and educational exchanges to joint youth and sport activities.

But the Egyptian government never made any attempt to humanize Jews. Not only did the campaign of vilification continue uninterrupted in flagrant violation of the treaty, it grew worse—under Mubarak, much worse. As David Isaac has pointed out (“Riding the Tiger of Jew Hate” Feb. 10, 2011 www.shmuelkatz.com), Mubarak rode the tiger of “Arab demonology” for decades. He was happy to give the frustrated Egyptian populace a foreign object on which to vent their rage and saw this as a way to rejoin the “Arab family”, incensed that the treaty had ever been signed. In the end the tiger swallowed him. In Tahrir Square, with those placards depicting him with a Magen David etched into his forehead, Mubarak became the Jew, the ultimate villain. Fittingly; he ended his career having himself become an anti-Semitic slur.

All signs point to Iran being the chief beneficiary of the Arab spring. Iran—the one country where a successful revolution would be a hugely positive development—seems to have once again put down anti-regime demonstrators. It now celebrates and eggs on the demonstrators in the Arab world (except when it comes to Syria, where for Israel there would at least be some upside in eliminating the Assad regime).

Egyptian Foreign Minister Nabil Al Arabi has announced his country is prepared to open “a new page” with Iran (there have been no diplomatic relations since 1980). Embassies will be opened within months. Iran has already taken over Lebanon, where the high hopes aroused by the Cedar Revolution have faded as Iran, via its Hezbollah proxy, has asserted control. Iran hopes

to profit from the anti-Western forces competing for control in Yemen and instability in Bahrain (where it has a hand in the Shiite uprising) and possibly down the road turmoil in the Shiite areas of Saudi Arabia. Once the United States has left Iraq (which, *The Wall Street Journal* of April 22 reports, is reluctant to accept the continued presence of any significant number of U.S. troops for fear of uprisings on its own streets), Iran is likely to be the chief influence there. Should it become a nuclear power (and U.S. sanctions show no sign of stopping her), there seems little to stand in the way of Iran assuming a dominant role in the Middle East.

Israel and the United States stand to emerge as the big losers.

When a proven antagonist of Israel like long time CIA veteran Michael Scheuer makes more sense regarding Israel’s interests than the panoply of Israel’s neo-conservative supporters, something is badly wrong. Yet Scheuer is right when he says that “the one thing the Arab spring is unquestionably bringing is the destruction of Israel’s physical security.” Scheuer goes after one of his favorite targets, Israel’s neoconservative supporters, but in this case, alas, he has a point: “Perhaps most ironic is that major pro-Israel U.S. pundits—Max Boot, Eliot Cohen, Charles Krauthammer, Elliot Abrams, Paul Wolfowitz and William Kristol, for example—have been shaking their pom-poms for the destruction of Arab tyrannies, an aspiration which, if attained, will...put their signatures on Israel’s death warrant.”

Scheuer is wrong (not that he cares, one suspects) in that the old tyrannies were (are) also intent on Israel’s destruction. But surely *The Weekly Standard* coterie (*National Review* has shown much more sense) should have seen what was obvious—that the Arab revolution is further radicalizing, not democratizing, the Middle East, dangerously strengthening anti-Israel and anti-Western forces.

It is not a new liberal Middle East that Israel can anticipate, but rather the famous foreboding of Yeats: “And what rough beast, its hour come round at last, Slouches towards Bethlehem to be born?”

Israel's Folly

Daniel Greenfield

The State of Israel spent the first 30 years of its modern existence reclaiming its territory, and the next 33 years negotiating the terms on which it would be returned to the neighboring countries which had made war on it, as well as an entirely new terrorist state created in the name of peace and maintained in the name of war.

Thirty three years after the country's first 'hawkish' conservative PM allowed himself to be browbeaten by Jimmy Carter into turning over territory three times its own present size to an Egypt whose new leaders are now disavowing the accords-- its current 'hawkish' conservative PM is readying himself to offer a whole new raft of concessions in the hopes of preempting a unilateral solution by Obama or Abbas.

For all the furious New York Times articles, there is little to distinguish Israel's hawks from its doves once they take up their residence in Beit Aghion on the corner of Lord Balfour's street. Like their American counterparts, they rapidly trade in the rhetoric about an "Undivided Jerusalem" and "War on Terror" for the burden of realpolitik built on a copy of the Art of Appeasement.

The governing mandate of every Israeli PM since 1992 (and perhaps even earlier) has been to try and make a deal with the Palestinian Arabs work. The folly of this has been amply demonstrated time and time again, filling Israel's cemeteries and hospitals, destroying its security and international standing, and dividing its people against themselves. And yet all these factors have only spurred on the perception that the deal must be somehow made to work. Somehow.

The doves have tried multilateral negotiations. The hawks tried unilateral concessions. The sum total of their efforts is the creation of two terrorist states, one recognized by the international community, one by the far left, and both at war with Israel inside its own borders.

The first state is run by the KGB trained funder of the Munich Massacre and backed by the international community. The second state is run

by the local affiliate of the Muslim Brotherhood and funded by the Muslim world. These two states, popularly known as the Palestinian Authority and Hamas run Gaza, differ only in their tactics, not their aims. Neither are anything but unelected leaders of terrorist groups dedicated to Israel's destruction.

Almost two decades of negotiations have led to nothing but eighteen years of terror. A state of affairs ignored by everyone except the people living on the firing line, their family sedans scarred by bullets, their kindergartens equipped with bomb shelters and their children equipped with emergency cell phones to check in after every attack. As the international community, the media and the government push forward for more concessions and negotiations, they have no way to push back except through the occasional unheard protest.

Year after year, and leader after leader, the Israeli response has been to push forward in the hopes of finding light at the end of the tunnel. But the tunnel has only gotten darker and narrower. And it is growing obvious to even the dimmest observer that the tunnel of peace is really a dead end. Talk of a 'breakthrough' keeps alive the hope that Israel can slim down enough to squeeze through a pinhole that simply doesn't exist.

Israeli leaders are surrounded by technocrats and diplomats who favor retreating from territory, rather than from bad policies. So the land goes, the people die and the bad policies remain.

Though Rabin had remained dubious about the illegally negotiated Oslo Accords, the inevitability of an agreement has been adopted by the entire political establishment. Even the 'hawks' spend most of their time moving border lines on a map to find some acceptable formula for a Palestinian state. No one asks anymore whether there should be a Palestinian state. Only how big it should be. And how many Israelis

should be evicted from their homes in the name of a lasting peace.

But few Israelis believe in a lasting peace anymore. Instead they expect that some form of negotiated separation will keep their sons at home and away from the firefights in Gaza and the West Bank. Never mind that such a separation is even more of an illusion. Barak's unilateral withdrawal from Lebanon and Sharon's unilateral pullout from Gaza put Hezbollah and Hamas into power and brought on the Second Lebanon War and the kidnapping of Gilad Shalit.

Caught between Israelis who want security and an international community that demands passivity, the government has innovated Passive-Aggressive Warfare. Israel's security barriers meant to stop suicide bombers, traded in the bombings for constant shelling instead, now its new Iron Dome defense system is meant to stop the shelling, which doesn't mean an end to terror, but the beginning of another form of terror. From security measures to drones to counter-missile defenses, Israel is revolutionizing the passive-aggressive war on terror. And minimizing the pain of its self-destructive policies with new technological feats that address the symptoms, not the problem.

Even fewer in Israel's political establishment believe that terrorism will ever end. The obligatory Rabin festivals and video clips have taken on the air of a hippie festival, charmingly idealistic and completely unrealistic. Not even the left believes anymore. Whatever idealism it ever possessed has been replaced by a dedicated climate of hate. The New New Left is no longer interested in peace, but in assigning blame for the war. Haaretz columnists drag forward everyone from Netanyahu's wife to the settler boogeyman, while their grandchildren don keffiyahs and stone Israeli soldiers in the company of protest tourists from Norway and Scotland.

The logic of pushing forward to an agreement has little to do with stopping terrorism anymore. Not when all it takes to make your own terrorist group is a dozen friends and a Dubai bank account. The Palestinian Authority and Hamas are umbrella groups supported by numberless militias, any of whom can form their own terrorist

group at any time, or moonlight between working as police, running a protection racket and their own splinter terrorist organization for which the official leadership claims plausible deniability.

Israel's culture minister said this week that her nephew was murdered by a terrorist disguised as a security officer. But the difference between terrorists and security officers in the Palestinian Authority is that they're called security officers when they draw paychecks from the US and the EU, and terrorists when they murder Israeli civilians. This formal distinction allows Western diplomats their own plausible deniability, pretending that they aren't funding terrorism. When that's exactly what they're doing and have been doing since Arafat got his first aid package. But if they were to admit that Palestinian security forces are nothing more than terrorists in uniforms, they would also have to admit that the Palestinian Authority government is nothing more than terrorists in suits.

At stake is Israel's legitimacy, or at least that's how the politicians see it. To maintain its legitimacy in the international community, its relations with the United States and Europe, it must continue working toward an agreement. But the more it has labored over an agreement, the more the boycotts and the culture war have grown. The withdrawal from Gaza has done far more to feed hate against Israel, than any combination of checkpoints and security measures. Every effort to preserve Israel's legitimacy endangers it further.

Israeli leaders search for some magic formula that will either achieve a peace agreement or convince the world that the gangs of suit decked Palestinian Muslim terrorists are not serious about peace. This futile brand of alchemy, with the goal of turning hate into gold, is futilely perverse. No amount of negotiated failures will ever convince international diplomats that the Palestinian Arabs aren't serious about peace.

For Western diplomats, a Palestinian state isn't the goal, but the means of convincing the Muslim world that they are serious about their concerns. For Muslim leaders, a Palestinian state isn't the goal either, it's only a means of diverting attention from their domestic misery. It isn't even

the goal for Palestinian leaders who have shown no ability or interest in running a state.

If a Palestinian state were declared tomorrow, regardless of what papers were or weren't signed, this state would still be economically dependent on Israel and on Western aid, and it would still be full of terrorists taking potshots at Israelis.

The 1967 borders are as legally and demographically random as any other. The 'Green Line' is nothing but a convenient talking point. With all the territory back to the 1967 borders in terrorist hands, their attention would turn to the territory beyond it. 1967 would give way to 1948. New terrorist attacks would be carried out in the name of claiming even more land for the 'refugees'. Israeli Arabs whose MK's already preach terrorism and align themselves as Palestinians would quickly scramble on board. And the international community would demand new concessions. And eventually a One State Solution.

Israelis have learned not to think about the future to avoid confronting this reality. The discredited leader of the last decade becomes the savior of the next, only to be discredited yet again. Peres, Barak and Netanyahu rise from the ashes of their failures. The discredited plans of the last government become the template for the failures of the next. Each leader denounces the past, but refuses to part ways with it. As a dog returns to its vomit, so Israeli leaders repeat the folly of the past.

Netanyahu's proposal will take the position of the kid who punches himself in the face half as hard as the bully would, in the hopes of dissuading the bully from beating on him. Or in

the even fainter hope of gaining the sympathy of some well-meaning observer. And every time Israeli leaders have tried this, the bully hits them twice as hard anyway, while the observers cheer on the bully. The observers hope that cheering on the bully will save them from his wrath. And Israel's leaders still think that they can minimize the pain, and outmaneuver the bully and the observers through some clever deal making.

The bully is Islam. His shouts about historical justice are motivated by a violent inferiority complex. Despite his belligerence, he is weak. But America, Europe and Israel suffer from national inferiority complexes that prevent them from standing up to him. So the bully rampages about the global playground. There is no use bargaining with him. Even less use appeasing him. You can either stand up to him, or keep getting beaten by him. For all the idealistic songs and images of flowers in gun barrels, there has never been a third way.

The Israeli flag is the symbol of the House of David, a lad who built a nation by standing up to Goliath. To be worthy of the flag, is to be worthy of the act. Israel survived by standing up to the armies of Islam. Not willingly, but reluctantly. After all other options had been exhausted. Now it faces a political war in which all the diplomatic options will never be exhausted, until its enemies overreach themselves with a full invasion. And by then Israel may no longer be capable of defending itself.

Daniel Greenfield blogs at: SultanKnish.com. This article appeared on March 27.

BBC Bias is a National Disgrace and a Global Menace

Robin Shepherd

For two decades, Peter Sissons was one of the most visible faces of the BBC. Prime time news presenter, prime time interviewer, prime time moderator, prime time everything in sight. Safe to say, then, that he knows a thing or two about the

organisation he used to work for. Here is how he recently characterised the culture that pervades it: "By far the most popular and widely read newspapers at the BBC are *The Guardian* and *The Independent*," he said. "Producers refer to them

routinely for the line to take on running stories, and for inspiration on which items to cover. In the later stages of my career, I lost count of the number of times I asked a producer for a brief on a story, only to be handed a copy of *The Guardian* and told 'it's all in there'".

Violating the party line is clearly dangerous, and heaven forbid that you might be seen in possession of anything signaling an awareness of the views of the political right:

"If you want to read one of the few copies of the *Daily Mail* that find their way into the BBC newsroom, they are difficult to track down," said Sissons, "and you would be advised not to make too much of a show of reading them. Wrap them in brown paper or a copy of *The Guardian*, would be my advice."

A former employee with a grudge? Hardly. The man made millions out of the BBC which also cemented his reputation as one of the most celebrated journalists of his generation. And it's not just Sissons. To the horror of senior executives, another



Michael Buerk

BBC megastar, Michael Buerk, has just come out in broad support of his appraisal in a review of Sissons' recent book on his life and career in the latest edition of *Standpoint* magazine. "What the BBC regards as normal and abnormal," he said, "what is moderate or extreme, where the centre of gravity of an issue lies, are conditioned by the common set of assumptions held by the people who work for it."

Precisely. And if all you ever read are the opinions of left-leaning commentators there is no mystery about the form that that BBC groupthink is inevitably going to take.

This is all in evidence on a daily basis when one considers the style and substance of the BBC's reporting on three of the great litmus test issues in international politics: the United States of America; The State of Israel; and climate change.

America is largely characterised as a brutish, avaricious exploiter of the global and domestic poor: a country that will leave you to

bleed to death in the road following a traffic accident if the ambulance team can't find the appropriate health insurance card in your wallet. Admittedly, things are a little better now that the country has a president who, unlike his predecessor, is not mentally retarded, and at least has the good graces to appear thoroughly ashamed of everything America has ever stood for.

Israel, of course, is an international outlaw which takes delight in bombing and strafing Palestinian primary schools and health centres, while the Palestinians themselves are helpless third world victims of a pitiless war machine financed and equipped by America's military industrial complex.

As for climate change, it's literally gospel. The only questions worth asking are about the timing of the world's appointment with Armageddon: will it be when Bangladesh disappears into the Bay of Bengal, or will it be when the last arctic polar bear cub succumbs to the tropical heat as its ice float finally melts into the bubbling stew that by then represents the ocean beneath it?

Unfortunately, the hierarchy at the BBC doesn't see the problem. In fact they seem totally oblivious to the fact that there might be anything wrong at all. Referring to the salvo fired at it by Michael Buerk, an unnamed BBC spokesman was quoted in the *Daily Mail* as saying the following: 'While Michael is entitled to his opinion, it has been some time since he has worked for BBC News so it's interesting he feels in a position to comment. We certainly do not recognise the picture he has painted and nor would his colleagues. Impartiality is critical to our success as a news broadcaster and is always at the centre of what we do.'

No. Being a state funded monolith is the critical element in their "success", and since a critical mass of the BBC's editorial staff appears to regard the *Guardian*--Britain's most ideologically charged newspaper--as a paragon of truth and objectivity it is hardly surprising that most of Michael Buerk's colleagues are so utterly clueless about what the word "impartiality" even means.

But, if you're hoping for change, don't hold your breath. Guess who has just been appointed chairman of the BBC Trust, the BBC's governing body. None other than Chris Patten, former Commissioner for External Relations at the European Commission, who in 2010 became president of a charity called, wait for it, Medical Aid for Palestinians.

It is tempting to just shrug one's shoulders and walk away. But as the most powerful media outlet in the UK and, via its website and its world service television and radio platforms, the most influential broadcaster in the world, we can't. So, what to do?

Three possible strategies come to mind: work to reform it; work around it by pressing for a freeing up of the regulatory environment so that a robust competitor can be established in the private sector; or work to abolish it.

The first has been tried. That is no reason not to try again. But the rot runs so deep that we may have to face the prospect that the BBC is simply unreformable. The second is a good idea regardless of what the BBC does. In an open society it is deplorable that the state should dictate who can say what in the public domain. The airwaves should be free.

Looking to the long term, the third is a less remote possibility than it might currently appear. While today's political establishment is largely supportive of the BBC, there are significant strands of opinion taking shape within it that have

grave misgivings about the way things have been going.

But the key dynamic here is technology. As the internet continues to develop at breakneck speed, web-based "television" is surely set to explode. As more and more channels appear in an environment which is all but impossible to tax, regulate, or make subject to a television license, it will become increasingly difficult to explain why one particular channel should get state support while others do not. When that day arrives, a sustained campaign for abolition, drawing on the growing ranks of the BBC's critics, may yet be strong enough to deliver a fatal blow, or at least to shrink it to a pale shadow of its former self.

That would be a shame since, particularly in the fields of drama and the arts, much of the BBC's output is exemplary. It is also a huge global brand which Britons should be able to be proud of. But if they won't play by their own rules on bias and objectivity in politics and current affairs, they will leave us no choice.

Whatever happens, we need to say loudly and clearly that the current state of affairs is unacceptable. If the BBC eventually goes down, it will have no one to blame but itself.

Robin Shepherd is the owner/publisher of the Commentator. His most recent book, A State Beyond the Pale: Europe's Problem with Israel, is now out in paperback. This appeared on <http://www.thecommentator.com>

Free Speech in a Non-Free World

Rachel Ehrenfeld

Editor's Note: The International Free Press Society awarded Rachel Ehrenfeld the 2011 Sappho Award for Free Speech. This is excerpted from the speech Dr. Ehrenfeld gave at the award ceremony held in Copenhagen on April 2, 2011.

I am honored and privileged to accept this award from the Free Press Society, a dedicated and effective warrior in the battle to protect our right for free expression. Special thanks to Lars Hedegaard, who helps to uphold this freedom in Denmark by fighting to ensure that reporters can

speaking the truth without fear of censorship and intimidation by those abusing the country's inadequate libel and hate speech and hate crimes laws.

These laws are written so broadly as to allow a suit by almost anyone who claims that he or she feels insulted or intimidated by a public

statement. The truth does not matter. The prosecution is subjective and the judgment can be entirely based on the plaintiff's misguided perception. Many European countries have similar low standards for defamation suits. Speaking one's mind risks civil and criminal suits. The combination of the European Union's decision in November 2008 to criminalize Hate Speech and Hate Crimes and the draconian defamation laws in member states facilitated the triumph of censorship and the suppression of free speech.

Over the years England, in particular, has become a libel suit hotbed where wealthy plaintiffs from anywhere in the world with even the most tenuous links to England could obtain a judgment against writers from other countries, no matter how carefully the work in question has been documented. Known as a "a town called Sue," London has become the Mecca for libel tourism.

Soon after September 11, 2001, Saudi and other Middle Eastern financiers of al Qaeda and other radical Muslim terrorist organizations started exploiting plaintiff-friendly British libel laws to silence the Western media from exposing their activities. The financiers' tremendous wealth and Britain's speech-suppressive legal framework created a double-pronged weapon of intimidation that succeeded probably beyond what were even the plaintiffs' expectations.

In addition to deterring the media from exposing terrorist financing, this form of lawfare was so effective that the press refrained from identifying it. This kept the public ignorant of the media's submission to forces determined to destroy Western freedoms.

I discovered this impact in 2004, when I was first threatened with a libel suit in London by a Saudi terror financier, who I had named in my book, *Funding Evil: How Terrorism is Financed and How to Stop It*. He chose London's High Court to sue me and more than forty writers, many Americans included, because he could have never succeeded to prove his innocence under American libel laws.

Since my work focuses on exposing the means used to suppress our freedoms, I recognized that it was important to stop this form

of oppression. My actions following the Saudi suit in London led to the passage of the Anti-Libel Terrorism Protection Act, also known as "Rachel's Law," by the New York legislature in May 2008.

Since May 2008, Rachel's Law has protected New York-based authors and publishers against the scourge of libel tourism. It has served as the basis for similar legislation in seven other states, and more importantly, for the federal SPEECH Act that was passed by the U.S. Congress unanimously, the only law to gain bipartisan support in the 111th Congress. The SPEECH Act provides American writers and publishers protections from the enforcement of foreign libel judgments from countries with lesser protection for free expression than those provided by the First Amendment. It was signed into law in August 2010.

While the SPEECH Act was enacted to protect Americans right for free expression, it has also spurred legal reform in Britain. The British Parliament is now considering a libel law reform bill, which reflects the American notions of free speech protections. Significantly, it establishes truth and honest opinion as defenses to a defamation suit. The bill will also curtail libel tourism by only allowing suits to be brought by plaintiffs connected to Britain through residence or if they can prove that the alleged defamation affected them there.

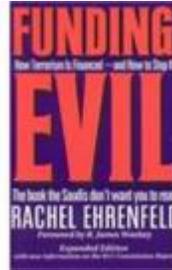
I hope the bill passes swiftly and that other European countries soon follow suit in liberalizing their defamation laws. However, Europeans' free speech rights will remain obstructed until European hate speech and hate crimes laws are also reformed.

I wish the Danish Free Press Society success in its efforts to reform Denmark's libel, hate speech and hate crime laws that now hinder your free expression. Some of you have stood up to oppression before and I hope that you soon prevail and regain your right to speak freely.

The preservation and advancement of free societies, our Western values and the integrity of our respective democracies depends upon our ability to freely investigate, publish, and exchange information and opinion.

Advancing the protection of freedom of speech in the United States is one of the proudest accomplishments of my career.

We should remember that free speech is a right, not a privilege. Therefore we must be alert to prevent any attempt to take it away from us.



Dr. Ehrenfeld is director of the American Center for Democracy.

The Nasty King's Speech

Ruth King

Colin Firth is a fine, versatile actor. He is undoubtedly the best Mr. Darcy in all the movies made of Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* and is now set to play Avraham Stern, the intellectual and poet who became leader of the Jewish underground Fighters for the Freedom of Israel (LEHI), called the Stern Gang by the British.

Michael Winterbottom, who produced the film (to be called "The Promise") did much of the research at the Begin Center and has stated that it is based on the true story of two British police detectives, Thomas Wilkin and Geoffrey Morton, who caught and killed Stern.

Thomas James Wilkin was decorated several times by the Crown for his services in Palestine in tracking down members of the Jewish underground. He spoke fluent Hebrew, taught to him by his Jewish mistress Shoshana Borochoy.

Wilkins was himself killed two years after killing a handcuffed Avraham Stern, and, Winterbottom states: "Weirdly, we have at the end of the film, we have an interview, which we've already done with one of the people who assassinated Wilkin, who is still alive, two of them in fact, so we have them talking about how they assassinated Wilkin already, so it's a great story."

It is certainly an interesting story. Stern published a newspaper, made clandestine radio broadcasts against the British, robbed British banks and participated in actual military operations which resulted in deaths of both Jewish and British police. On 12 February 1942 Wilkins and Geoffrey arrived in an underground safe house, discovered Stern, handcuffed him, told him to stand and executed him.

Will Avraham Stern's story be told in the context of British perfidy in Palestine and Jewish desperation? Will it recount the years between 1930 and 1940 when Stern traveled to Eastern Europe to promote immigration of Jews to Palestine in defiance of British restrictions?

Any bets? The only bet I would make is that Firth will give a splendid performance--which brings us to Firth's portrayal of King George VI, little recognized as one

of the Jews of Palestine's British tormentors.

Firth has won international accolades, including an Oscar, for his magnificent performance as the King (Albert Frederick Arthur) George VI, who assumed the throne upon the abdication of his older brother David (King Edward) and overcame his stammer to deliver



Avraham Stern

inspiring speeches to his subjects during World War II.

The movie offers flashes of his foppish brother's appeasement, but the abdication is painted chiefly as a love story. In fact, Edward was a Nazi sympathizer who commented in 1970 to an interviewer: "I never thought Hitler was such a bad chap." That's an understatement. In October 1937, exiled Edward and his bride visited Nazi Germany, met Hitler, and the Duke gave a full Nazi salute. Oh those Royals. That was not in the movie.

King George, however, is portrayed as a fine chap. He was nothing of the sort. He too was a wholehearted supporter of Chamberlain when the Sudetenland was offered to Hitler in return for a halt to the Nazi's territorial demands. The King rejected the entreaties of Winston Churchill, Anthony Eden, and others who attacked the Munich agreement and supported appeasement until Hitler's forces seized the rest of Czechoslovakia.

The King then turned his attention to Palestine. The White Paper published on November 9, 1938 and approved by Parliament in May 1939, limited Jewish immigration to Palestine to 75,000 people over five years, effectively trapping Europe's Jews. The King not only supported the White Paper but also stated that he was "glad to think that steps are being taken to prevent these people leaving their country of origin." He went even further. He instructed Foreign Secretary Lord Halifax to make sure the Nazis cooperated. Halifax's office telegraphed Britain's ambassador in Berlin asking him to encourage the German government "to check the unauthorized emigration of Jews." King George VI was stalwart and brave during the Blitz, but

unflinching in his hostility to the Jews.

The notorious White Paper remained British policy even after the war. A royal admonition might have prevented Britain's post war crimes against wretched displaced persons seeking haven in Palestine. Between August 1945 and May 1948, 65 "illegal" immigrant ships, carrying 69,878 people, arrived from European shores. The British shot them, crippled their engines and interned those they caught in camps in Cyprus. Approximately 50,000 people were detained in the camps, 28,000 of whom were still imprisoned when Israel declared her independence.

In 1947, the famous ship Exodus, carrying 4500 Jewish refugees, including 600 orphans, was attacked by five British destroyers who rammed the ship and stormed it with truncheons and tear gas. The ship was finally able to limp into harbor, but prisoners were taken to Cyprus and subsequently to a prison in southern France. When they refused to disembark, they were threatened with a return to Germany.

The international media, including British journalists, responded with outrage. The King and Queen, who visited orphans and soldiers and used their rations in a display of solidarity with ordinary people, were unmoved and silent. They did find time, that same year, to salute warmly Indian independence and deliver a message of congratulations to Pakistan, although both countries had engaged in armed resistance to British colonial occupation.

King George died in 1952. He overcame stammering but not bias. And it is a huge irony that Colin Firth, who gave such a convincing portrayal of King George VI, will now play the part of one of his fiercest opponents in Palestine.