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# OUTPOST



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## Damage Assessment

William Mehlman

Until auction bids were invited last month (no responses to date) for the cast adorning Benjamin Netanyahu's left leg, product of a torn ligament incurred in a video-taped soccer game with Jewish and Arab kids promoted by Israel's Ministry of Tourism, photographers were strictly prohibited from snapping the prime minister in a walking mode. "He doesn't want people to say he's a lame duck," quipped Yoel Marcus in one of his Friday *Ha'aretz* columns. Given Mr. Netanyahu's sensitivity to American political symbolism, that could well have been the case. The cast might also have served as a deterrent to the powerful urge to "kick himself" that must still be keeping the prime minister awake these nights, noted Jeff Barak, writing in *The Jerusalem Post*.

If that compulsion is in search of a rationale, it needn't have far to look. The incipient horse-whipping Netanyahu has inflicted on himself and his party is evident in every poll taken since the annulment of Likud's 71-day marriage with the Center-Left Kadima and its leader Shaul Mofaz over the conscription of Yeshiva students into the Israel Defense Forces. If national elections were held at this writing (August 20th), they indicate that Likud would drop to 25 Knesset seats, down from its present 27. The same polls project 21 seats for Shelly Yachimovitch's left-leaning Labor party, up from its present 8. Had elections been held September 4<sup>th</sup>, as Netanyahu intended before striking his ill-fated deal with Mofaz, Likud might have bagged 37-40 seats in the next Knesset, a 10-13 seat gain that would have insured its governing authority until 2017. Labor would have been lucky to capture 12 seats.

Having triggered the perception that he sacrificed the Kadima partnership to an ultra-Orthodox rabbinate unwilling to consider any contribution by the 60,000 Yeshiva youth under its control to the national defense, Netanyahu proceeded to make his situation even worse. Losing Kadima, he attempted to emasculate it by luring seven of its 28 members--the minimum under Knesset rules to qualify as a breakaway faction--to abandon their party for Likud. Reported promises of deputy ministerial positions, future ambassadorships and who knows what else notwithstanding, he fell short of the mark by three. A more embarrassing demonstration of political fecklessness would be hard to imagine.

If Likud needed further grief, it was provided by a horribly ill-timed, however necessary, spate of new taxes and austerity measures by the Finance Ministry, including a 1 percent rise in the onerous VAT (value added tax) to 17 percent on virtually every commodity Israelis purchase, a 6.5 percent hike in the price of bread, higher electricity rates and a projected increase in income taxes. At mid-August the prime minister's national approval rating, never below 54 percent since taking office in 2009, stood at 31 percent, with a solid 60 percent of the population voicing strong disappointment with his performance.

It would come as no surprise to learn that university political science departments in Israel and possibly beyond were preparing credit courses on how Benjamin Netanyahu, in the course of four months, managed to transform the most predictable electoral victory in Israel since the Ben-Gurion dynasty into a precarious question mark. Perhaps the historians, after the dust has settled, will be able to provide a reasonable explanation for the prime minister's abandonment of a surprise Sept 4<sup>th</sup> election date that had caught his Left and Center-Left opponents and their media supporters so far off-balance they had all but conceded another four years of Likud rule. While they're at it, they might also give us a clue as to why, as Jeff Barack asks, "if Netanyahu had no intention of introducing some form of universal conscription for all Jewish males, he invited Kadima to join his government." He knew full well that Shaul Mofaz, a former IDF Chief of General Staff, had staked his political future on a commitment to terminate the open-ended deferment of military and national service obligations granted to Yeshiva students under Israel's expired "Tal Law." Nothing could have been more contrary to the prime minister's political instincts, avers veteran *Ha'aretz* observer Yossi Verter. Convinced that the perpetuation of his alliance

with the ultra-Orthodox rabbinate had become too expensive, Verter would have expected Netanyahu to “renew his bonds with his most trusted political ally – himself.”

The pundits, alas, appear to have been proven wrong. One thing is certain: with the electorate at a boiling point over military service equalization, if Likud, perceived as compliant with the refusal of a Haredi Yeshiva constituency to participate in Israel's defense, were to go to elections anytime soon, it could face a reversal of fortune potentially as stunning as the one inflicted on it by Ariel Sharon when he eviscerated it eight years ago to create Kadima. With Netanyahu having opened this can of worms by trying to metabolize Sharon's collection of ill-fitting parts, Kadima's departure isn't going to close it. “The time came for Bibi to decide between Zionist taxpayers who serve and the draft evaders,” Mofaz asserted on calling it quits. “He chose the evaders.”

The issue at hand supersedes Mr. Netanyahu's political fate. For, if by his miscalculations, he has thrown enough of a life-line to the Center-Left and its presumed far-Left partners to forge a coalition capable of forming the next government, he will have thrust Israel into a maze from which it might never extricate itself. To believe that such a governing coalition could be held back from ceding most of Judea and Samaria along with eastern Jerusalem on the strength of some ill-defined American guarantees would be delusionary. A bold resolution of the Iranian nuclear threat hanging over the Jewish state could undoubtedly put Likud's fortunes on reset. Otherwise, the prime minister will have 13 months, maybe less, to try to repair the damage that's been done. Let us hope he can still find a way.

*Bill Mehlman leads AFSI in Israel.*

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## From the Editor

### Israel's Aid to Africa

Historian Steven Carol's *From Jerusalem to the Lion of Judah and Beyond: Israel's Foreign Policy in East Africa* is a fascinating book on a long-neglected subject: Israel's effort, beginning in the early 1950s, to leapfrog the wall of hostile Arab states to establish close working relations with non-Arab (and non-Muslim) states beyond. In Africa that meant focusing on four East African states: Ethiopia, Tanzania, Kenya and Uganda. It is Israel's aid efforts and up and down relations with these countries over the last sixty years that Carol chronicles. His analysis is both judicious and in depth, making his book of great interest not only to those concerned with Israel but to anyone interested in Africa and/or foreign aid. This last is a fraught topic, with some saying it is essential, while others, following in economist P.T. Bauer's footsteps, insist it is counterproductive. Israel's experience provides ammunition to those on both sides of the argument.



Typically, Israeli leaders were not prepared to consider the policy of aid to African countries purely in terms of *realpolitik* but suffused it in the light of a Jewish messianic mission. Carol quotes Ben Gurion: "Israel has been granted the great historic privilege, which is therefore also a duty, of assisting backward and primitive peoples to improve themselves, develop and advance." To be sure, Ben Gurion also saw the policy as pragmatic, a backdoor to peace with Arab neighbors: "The way to peace in the area," he said, "will be by indirect approach--by fostering our relations with the peoples of Africa and Asia." Obviously, it didn't work out as planned.

Israel's inability to plow in lots of money helped avoid the pitfalls Bauer so well describes, money wasted on inappropriate projects and serving largely to pad the private bank accounts of third world politicians. For the most part Israel provided experts, technical aid and education. In most cases joint ventures were established so that each project was self-liquidating, with Israel leaving behind local personnel to carry on. But even then, there were problems as Israel ran up against African value systems. For example, most African graduates refused to work on the land once they had completed an agricultural program. They saw the programs as giving them a status bump toward careers in the army, police or bureaucracy.

Even without major capital investments, Israel made a sizable financial investment for a country of its size. While the honeymoon was still on, an article in a leading Ethiopian newspaper observed that in 1962, Israel's effort was the equivalent of the U.S giving one million training scholarships and sending 360,000 technical experts to Africa.

Political leaders in these African states especially valued (and demanded) Israeli military assistance and this opened a can of worms. Some very nasty types came to power with Uganda's Idi Amin the most notorious. Strengthening police forces and armies sometimes meant bolstering mass murderers (fortunately Idi Amin threw the Israelis out after only a year but Mengistu Haile Mariam in Ethiopia, not a huge improvement on Amin, kept them on for years). There was a pragmatic as well as a moral problem. These regimes were often not only unsavory but unstable. They were subject to constant revolutionary challenges meaning that Israel could be making enemies of those who tomorrow might seize power. Also Israel could be--and was--caught in the middle of border wars between two countries to which it provided military aid.

Was the Israeli effort worth it? Carol feels it was, but the issue is debatable. All four of these East African states turned their backs on Israel in her hour of greatest need. In the wake of the 1973 war, they succumbed to a combination of Arab blandishments and threats and cut off relations with Israel. Ethiopia's ingratitude was a special blow. It was then still ruled by Emperor Haile Selassie who spent a year of his exile (when Mussolini seized his country) in Rehavia, considered himself a descendant of King Solomon--hence his sobriquet "Lion of Judah"--and maintained close relations with Israel. In 1975 not a single one of the four states on which Israel had showered most of its aid voted against the UN's infamous Zionism is racism resolution. Tanzania and Uganda voted for it, while Ethiopia and Kenya abstained. All four countries have since restored full diplomatic relations but it took sixteen years in the case of Ethiopia and 22 years in the case of Uganda, with whom relations were fully restored only after the (disastrous-for-Israel) 1993 Oslo accords.



Operation Solomon (airlift of Ethiopian Jews)

The clearest benefit of Israel's aid program came in 1976 at Entebbe. Solei Boneh had built the Ugandan airport to which the Air France plane was brought by the team of PLO and German hijackers and still had the plans. This was a huge bonus for those who planned the rescue of Jewish and Israeli hostages (the others had been released by the hijackers). Carol provides an excellent analysis of the Entebbe rescue. He also provides a gripping

account of Operations Moses, Sheba and Solomon which brought a total of 23,000 Ethiopian Jews to Israel between 1984 and 1991. After an uncertain start (there was considerable dispute as to whether they should be considered Jews or not) Israel became fully committed to the enterprise. The extent of

U.S. involvement in its achievement, especially the role of the first President Bush and his Secretary of State James Baker (he of the well-deserved anti-Israel reputation) came as a surprise to this reader.

Carol points out that today Eritrea (which battled its way to independence from Ethiopia) is the only nation on the Red Sea which will allow entry to Israeli ships. A Muslim country with good relations with Israel, it is a weak reed to rely on. And should the entire Red Sea be turned into an Arab lake, Israeli shipping could be blocked at the Bab el Mandeb Strait, at the southern entry to the Red Sea. This would cut off the Straits of Tiran, and the right to free passage there was a major issue in two of Israel's wars.

The book can be ordered direct from Dr. Carol at drhistory@cox.net. It is well worth its price of \$35 (postage included).

### Islamist Egypt



At least in the short term Morsi's Egypt may pose a greater danger to Israel than Iran. After a mere month and a half in power, as former Israeli ambassador to Egypt Zvi Mazel has said, Morsi's rapid fire measures have given him "dictatorial powers surpassing by far those of erstwhile president Hosni Mubarak." Guy Bechor writes that "he has tamed the military, the political parties, the courts and mainly the press...Dozens of journalists are being replaced by Islamist representatives, and according to the new instructions it is prohibited to criticize the Brotherhood or the President."

Forget about threats to renegotiate the Israeli-Egyptian peace treaty. Morsi is changing its terms on the ground. He has been aided in this by the attack on the Israeli border which resulted in the deaths of 16 Egyptian soldiers. Israel eased the restrictions of the treaty to allow Egypt to operate against Islamist groups in the Sinai.

Israel Radio Arab Affairs analyst Eran Zinger reports that Egypt has now deployed anti-aircraft missiles near Israel's border in Sinai. These are specifically prohibited under the treaty. Moreover, as Aaron Lerner points out, the Bedouin against whom Egypt is ostensibly deploying its forces do not possess helicopters or planes. Egypt has also deployed forces and heavy weaponry to Sinai without Israeli permission. Indeed, with the large military buildup in the Sinai underway, including tanks, helicopters, armored vehicles and troops, Egypt is refusing even to speak with Israel.

Netanyahu has woken up to the danger, sending a sharp message to Cairo, via the White House, demanding Egypt withdraw its tanks immediately and cease sending additional military forces into Sinai without prior coordination with Israel.

But will Morsi pay heed? And is Israel prepared to use military force if he doesn't?

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## The Two-State Religion

Emmanuel Navon

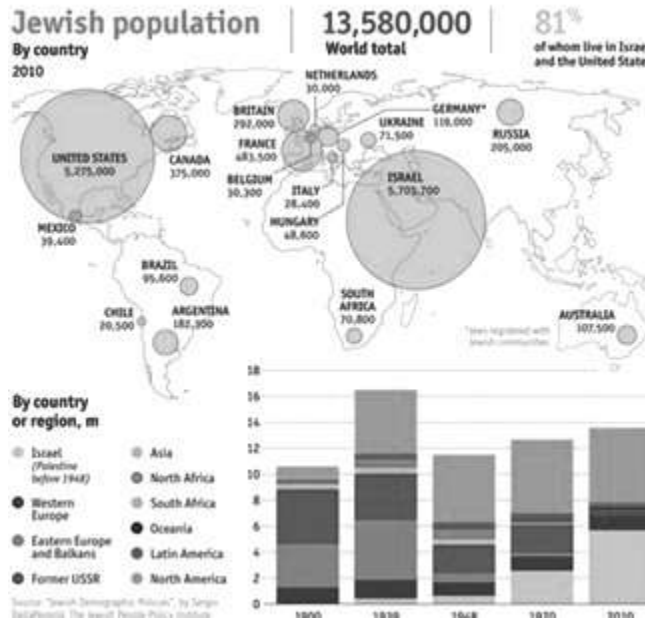
The main rationale of the Oslo Accords was that establishing a 23<sup>rd</sup> Arab state ten miles away from Tel-Aviv would bring peace to Israel and stability to the Middle-East. This theory no longer passes the laughing test. Besides the bloody mess engendered by Oslo, the so-called "Arab Spring" has brought the European-inspired model of Arab nation-states to its knees. So why resuscitate a failed and dying model for a fictitious "Palestinian people" that has embraced Islamism like the rest of the Arab world?

Because of demography, of course. A Palestinian state might not bring peace, we are told, but it is nonetheless a necessity to save Israel from turning into a bi-national or a segregationist country.

Since proponents of the “two-state solution” were so wrong about peace, why assume that they are so right about demography?

The two-state solution has become a two-state religion, so let me indulge in blasphemy.

For a start, Gaza is now out of the equation. The “demographic threat” must therefore be gauged in pre-1967 Israel as well as in Judea and Samaria, i.e. in what is known as “the area between the River and the Sea” (referred to as “the area” in this article).



The case for the “demographic threat” is based on a census conducted in 1997 by the “Palestine Central Bureau of Statistics” (PCBS). According to that census, there were 2.78 million Arabs in Judea and Samaria in 1997. This figure surprised many at the time because a similar census conducted by the Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics (ICBS) in 1996 had revealed that the number of Arab residents in Judea and Samaria was 2.11 million. How could the Arab population have increased so rapidly within a year?

The answer is that the PCBS included 325,000 overseas residents and double-counted the 210,000 Arab residents of Jerusalem. In 2011, there were about 400,000 Arab residents of Judea and Samaria living overseas. They are still included in the PCBS demographic count.

According to internationally accepted demographic standards, overseas residents who are abroad for over a year are not counted demographically. The PCBS does not abide by this international standard (Israel does). Yet Israel’s public discourse on the “demographic threat” is based on the PCBS’ flawed census.

The PCBS also assumed, back in 1997, that there would be an annual net Arab immigration to Judea, Samaria and Gaza of 45,000. In reality, there has been an annual net Arab emigration from Judea, Samaria and Gaza of 25,000 on average.

In 2012, Jews constitute a two-third majority in the area (66% exactly). When Israel declared its independence in 1947, there was an opposite ratio (one third of Jews). In 1900, Jews were an 8% minority. So far, therefore, time has been on the Jews’ side. The question is whether time will continue to be on our side. Recent demographic trends suggest that the answer is positive.

Since 1992, the Arab fertility rate in Judea and Samaria has decreased significantly and consistently (it is now 3.2 births per woman). Within pre-1967 Israel, the Arab fertility rate has decreased from 9.23 in 1964 to 3.5 today. This decrease has been constant. Jewish fertility rates have also decreased since 1964, but very slightly: from 3.39 in 1964 to 3.0 today. But, more significantly, the Jewish fertility rate started increasing in the late 1990s (it was 2.62 in 1999, 2.71 in 2004, and 3.0 in 2011). The fertility gap between Jews and Arabs went from 5.84 in 1964 to 0.5 today. So the gap is closing, to the Jews’ advantage.

The constant increase of the Jewish fertility rate since the late 1990s is not only due to traditionally high rates among Orthodox Jews. Indeed, this rate has been increasing among secular Israelis.

The ICBS has consistently overestimated Arab fertility rates and underestimated Jewish fertility rates. Yet the “demographic threat” discourse is based on the ICBS’ mistaken predictions.

Then there is immigration and emigration. While there have been constant waves of Jewish immigration (“Aliya”) since Israel’s independence, there has been a net annual emigration of Arab residents from Judea and Samaria and from Gaza in recent years: 10,000 in 2004, 25,000 in 2006, and 28,000 in 2008.

So the claim that Israel would turn into a bi-national state were it to annex Judea and Samaria is unfounded. Jews would still constitute a two-third majority, and that majority would continue to increase according to the latest demographic trends. Whether it is desirable for Israel to have a one-third minority of Arab citizens is admittedly a question that deserves to be asked, but the “bi-national threat” is groundless.

Future demographic trends must also take immigration and emigration into account. During the National Unity Government of Yitzhak Shamir and Shimon Peres (1984-1988), the two leaders disagreed on the likeliness of massive Aliya from the Soviet Union. Peres claimed that bringing Jews from the Soviet Union was completely fanciful and that Shamir was advocating this idea only to provide a demographic rationale for his “annexationist ambitions in the West Bank” (as quoted by Dr. Zvi Zameret). Yet Shamir was right and Peres was wrong: a million Jews immigrated to Israel from the Soviet Union and from Ethiopia under Shamir’s watch.

Today, the main reservoirs of potential Aliya to Israel are in North America and in Western Europe (5.27 million in the United States; 375,000 in Canada; 483,000 in France; 292,000 in Britain). Aliyah from English-speaking countries has increased significantly in the past decade partly thanks to the wonderful work done by Nefesh BeNefesh. Many French Jews are on their way out, as explained by Michel Gurfinkiel in his blog.

Those who say today that bringing even half a million Jews from America and Europe in the next decade is fanciful should remember that the same claim was made two decades ago about Soviet Jewry.

Last but not least is the issue of economic incentives to encourage emigration. On that issue I just want to ask a question: why is it acceptable to suggest economic incentives for Jews to leave Judea and Samaria, but unacceptable to suggest the very same idea for Arab residents?

In 1947, Prof. Roberto Bachi implored Ben-Gurion not to declare independence. Bachi, a Professor of Statistics at the Hebrew University and the founder of Israel’s Central Bureau of Statistics, claimed at the time that with a population of 600,000 the Jews would become a minority by 1967. Bachi did not take into account the massive waves of Aliya, in which he did not believe. His predictions were grossly mistaken but his spirit of doom was carried on by his student and follower Sergio Della Pergola (an Italian Jew like Bachi himself).

Had Ben-Gurion listened to statisticians and demographers in 1947, there would never have been a Jewish state. Contrary to what the same statisticians and demographers say today, Israel’s future as a Jewish and democratic state would not be undermined by the annexation of Judea and Samaria –provided that Israel actively encourages Aliyah from the West in the coming years. As Ben-Gurion said after declaring independence: “A Jewish government whose concerns and actions will not be predominantly geared to the enterprise of aliya and settlement ...will betray its foremost responsibility and will endanger the great historical achievement gained by our generation.”

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## Edward Alexander's *The State of the Jews*

Rita Kramer

To enter the world between the covers of Edward Alexander's new book [Transaction, 2012] is like sitting at a table around which are gathered some of the most interesting thinkers and writers (as well as some of the most repellent) of our time, all of them talking about one subject. That subject is Jew-hatred or, as it is commonly though erroneously called, anti-Semitism.

In *The State of the Jews* (which might well have been called *The Fate of the Jews*, although the pun would be lost) Alexander brings together a series of reviews and essays dealing with the current resurgence of the world's oldest hate in the ideological assault on Jews and the State of Israel by the leftist literati, particularly that of Britain.

It is in England that Alexander begins, with the comments of some eminent Victorians on the bill before the House of Commons in 1830 for the granting of civil rights to Jews, who at the time could not vote or sit in Parliament. Thomas Carlyle and Thomas Arnold, the intellectual leader of the liberal party and the father of Matthew, were among those who found the idea unthinkable. Thomas Arnold described Judaism as a "poisonous plant" and maintained that Christianity was the core of education (he was the head of the famous Rugby school) and an indispensable requirement for citizenship. As it happens, his son, the poet and critic, breaking away from the prejudices of his father, became something of a philo-Semite.

With reference to other influential thinkers of the period, including John Stuart Mill, Alexander quotes George Eliot's prescient suggestion that liberals had "a Jewish problem" and her belief that they should recognize in the Jewish people a "beneficent individuality among the nations."

Alexander goes on with his history of "Anti-Semitism, English-Style" to consideration of Chaucer's "cursed Jew," Shakespeare's Shylock, and Dickens' Fagin. These figures, the creations of three of English literature's greatest writers, have over the centuries created what Alexander quotes Anthony Julius, in his *Trials of the Diaspora: A History of Anti-Semitism in England*, describing as a "character prison" from which they are unlikely ever to escape.

Today, Alexander points out, the "new" anti-Semitism in England as well as in the United States takes the form of anti-Zionist, anti-Israel polemics like those of the "ASHamed Jews" in Howard Jacobson's novel *The Finkler Question*. Anyone who thinks Jacobson's satire is a stretch need only read London University professor Jacqueline Rose, who declares herself "ashamed" of Israel and would like to see the country "abolish itself."

Among others of Rose's persuasion cited by Alexander in a brilliant essay, is Oxford poet Tom Paulin, whose most famous statement was that Brooklyn-born Jewish "settlers" "should be shot dead. I think they are Nazis, racists. I feel nothing but hatred for them." Far from causing him any trouble in the world of academia, his call to murder and his expressions of sympathy for suicide bombers did nothing to impede his career. He has remained at Oxford and enjoyed lectureships and visiting professorships at Harvard and Columbia. And--no surprise here--he is a regular on the BBC and in the pages of the *London Review of Books*.

Not all of the reviews and articles printed in this indispensable book are about the perpetrators of hate. Many of them deal, in illuminating detail, with writers, some Jewish, some not, who have weighed in on the subject with insights and arguments of lasting force. They include Gertrude Himmelfarb, who has written about English philosemitism in such figures as John Locke, Benjamin Disraeli, and the trio of Lloyd George, Arthur Balfour, and Winston Churchill, without whom there would probably be no state of Israel today.

Another of Alexander's most admired figures is Ruth Wisse, who shows that the real "Jewish problem" is the problem of nations that "must blame their dysfunction on Jews." In her book *Jews and*



*Power* she traces the history of anti-Semitism up to the Dreyfus affair, "the dress rehearsal for the Nazi movement." And she maintains that the only alternative is Zionism, "although the creation of Israel has hardly solved the problem, in part because of its leaders' tendency to value morality above power." In considering her argument in the context of his wide-ranging knowledge of history, politics, and literature, Alexander accomplishes what he does in each of what he calls the "fugitive" pieces collected in *The State of the Jews*. He helps us, quoting Matthew Arnold's definition of criticism, "to see the object as in itself it really is."

It is a frustrating task for a reviewer to try to give an idea of the scope of this little volume in the space allotted. There are subjects which are fascinating but for which there is no space here. A few names in no particular order just to whet the appetite: Abba Kovner, Cynthia Ozick, Lionel Trilling, Mary Lefkowitz, Saul Bellow... No one who is interested in an original and understanding appraisal of what writers like these have said should miss this book.

*Rita Kramer has written for Commentary, The Public Interest, The Wall Street Journal, The International Herald Tribune, and other periodicals. Her most recent book is a novel, When Morning Comes.*

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## **Middle East Non-Solutions**

Steven Plaut

The mantra crops up almost everywhere. "You Israelis must make a choice between two alternatives," it goes. "You have two simple choices. You can either annex all of the 'occupied territories' and grant equal Israeli citizenship to all the Palestinians, in which case Israel will no longer be a Jewish state. Or you can agree to a two-state solution, in which Israel continues to exist alongside a Palestinian Arab state. Simple. Make your choice!" The posing of these two "choices" for Israel is part of the campaign to convince Israelis that there is no alternative to the "Two-State Solution."

The first "alternative" is often dubbed these days the "One-State Solution" by its anti-Israel advocates. Israel and its Jewish population would be enfolded within a larger Arab-dominated Islamic state. A better term for this is the "Rwanda Solution." It is little more than a recipe for a second Holocaust of Jews, a Nazi-style final solution, in which the Middle East conflict would end because the Jewish population of the Middle East would be exterminated.

But the "Two State Solution" is little better. The creation of a "Palestinian" state "alongside Israel" would not solve anything and would not end the conflict. To the contrary, it would be the opening round for a major escalation in the conflict and the launching of an all-out war by "Palestine" against the rump Jewish state, a war in which "Palestine" would be joined and backed by the entire Arab world and much of the non-Arab Moslem world. Like rump Czechoslovakia after Munich, the remaining Jewish mini-state would be the target for aggression and irredentist belligerence, manifested in rocket and missile attacks. The thousands of rockets that were fired at Sderot and the Negev after the unilateral Israeli withdrawal from Gaza will appear as a child's game by comparison.

Let us note that neither the "One State Solution" nor the "Two State Solution" are solutions to the Middle East conflict. Neither would resolve anything.

There is no Two State Solution, only a Two-State "dissolution." There is also no such thing as a "One-State Solution," at least if one means by that the granting of Israeli citizenship to all those claiming to be "Palestinians." So how must Israelis respond to the diktat that they choose either the one or the other? They must answer *neither*. The insistence that Israelis choose between these two non-solutions is in fact nothing more than the newest manifestation of anti-Israel aggression and bellicosity.

There is a real problem with the debate over "solutions" to the Middle East conflict. The only way to resolve the Middle East conflict is to stop the pointless quest for defining "solutions." For more than 20 years everything that has gone wrong in the Middle East was because of the search for "solutions" and is the ultimate reason why the conflict has not been resolved.

Israelis cannot formulate and propose "solutions" to the Middle East conflict for the exact same reason that the Western allies could not have proposed or formulated any "solution" to the ambitions of Germany in the late 1930s. No solution would have satisfied those ambitions and none could have appeased Hitler. The quest in the 1930s for "solutions" resulted in years of delay, during which Germany re-armed and support for Hitler within Germany solidified. Similarly, no "solution" could have prevented the assaults against Pearl Harbor, Malaya, and the Philippines by Imperial Japan. The only solution to those conflicts was Western victory.

"Solutions" are magical panaceas sought by lazy, shallow, and impatient minds. No "solution" of any sort offered by Israel can resolve the Middle East conflict because the Arab world has no interest in seeing the conflict resolved.

The entire Oslo "peace process" initiated by Yitzhak Rabin and Shimon Peres was based upon the belief that peace can be achieved by pretending that war does not exist. Its axiom was that if the leaders of Israel insist loudly enough that there is no war at all going on, then there will be peace. Never mind what the Arabs are saying.

The Middle East conflict also has nothing to do with territory. The Arab countries already control territory nearly twice that of the United States (including Alaska), while Israel is smaller than New Jersey. The architects of the "peace process" argued that possession of territory twice the size of the US without the Everglades-sized West Bank is a recipe for endless war, but if Israel just turns that Everglades-size zone over to the "Palestinians," all will be peaceful. Twenty two sovereign Arab states have produced war and barbarism, but creating a 23rd Arab state as a "Two-State Solution" will produce peace.

No peace solution is possible with an adversary who has no interest in making peace. And there is nothing that Israel can do, no package of concessions and goodwill measures it can proffer, that will change this fact. The 100% Israeli unilateral withdrawal from the Gaza Strip produced the nazification of Gaza under a Hamas regime, along with thousands of rockets being fired into Israel by Gazan terrorists. There is not the slightest doubt that any erection of a "Palestinian state" in the West Bank will result in far worse.

Now if Israelis refuse to embrace the above two pseudo-solutions, insists the Left, then Israel will end up as an "apartheid regime." One in which "Palestinian Arabs" live under endless Israeli "occupation" and control, but without Israeli citizenship, without the right to vote. It is always amusing to hear whining about the absence of the Palestinian right to vote in Israeli elections, especially when it comes from the very same people who do not care that Arabs have no free elections anywhere else in the Middle East. And never mind that Israel is the only country in the Middle East that is *not* an apartheid regime. Essentially the insistence that Israel must choose one of the two pseudo-solutions, or else it will morph into an "apartheid regime," amounts to the belief that Israelis are better off allowing their country to be annihilated rather than risk becoming the targets of name-calling.

In reality, the most productive way to seek to resolve the Middle East is to take as the starting point the list of what is ruled out, what must never be. No "solution" to the Middle East conflict is possible if it involves creation of an Arab "Palestinian" state, and none is possible if it involves "Palestinians" being granted Israeli citizenship. *Both* of these nonstarters must be ruled out absolutely. Once that is understood, any proposal based upon those two *nevers* can be taken into consideration.

The immediate implication is that Israel must remain in the West Bank, and the "Palestinian" population there will neither be granted Israeli citizenship nor national sovereignty. The United States occupied Okinawa for decade, and American national historic and cultural roots did not originate in

Okinawa. Indeed American armed forces *still* fill that island. There is no time limit on how long Israeli "occupation" can last, and the very word "occupation" is actually a misnomer. In any case the Israeli presence in the West Bank is *sui generis* and not comparable to any other case of "occupation."

So if West Bank "Palestinians" will neither be granted Israeli citizenship nor national sovereignty, what can they be offered? The original "peace proposals" offered by Israel in the 1970s and 1980s spoke about limited local autonomy. Had the Palestinians played their cards right, they could have enjoyed as much freedom and prosperity under local autonomy as do Puerto Rico, Guam, and American Samoa. But the Israeli Labor Party lost patience with the idea after a few years and decided to leapfrog to an instant "Two-State Solution." It imported Yassir Arafat's stormtroopers into the suburbs of Tel Aviv and Jerusalem, and proclaimed its "recognition" of the "Palestinian people."

There is indeed another "solution" for West Bank "Palestinians" unhappy with the two "nevers" defining conflict resolution. They can leave. There are those 22 sunny Arab states, plus lots of other Moslem states, whither any unhappy West Bank "Palestinian" can move and live amongst his kin. After all, Jews unhappy with life in Argentina, France or Hungary do not demand the annihilation of those countries but merely the right to move to Israel. The fact that the "Palestinians" prefer Israeli "occupation" over blissful residence in these alternative countries states volumes about just how badly treated the "poor suffering Palestinians" really are.

The "Palestinians" find these constraints on their options distasteful? Too bad! Part of adulthood means coming to terms with the fact that, as in Mick Jagger's words, "You can't always get what you want." What the "Palestinians" and their apologists want is the annihilation of Israel and a second Holocaust of Jews.

And they are not going to get what they want.

*Steven Plaut is professor of business administration at the University of Haifa.*

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## **A Small Step For One Man**

Daniel Greenfield

The death of Neil Armstrong, the first man on the moon, takes place in the shadow of the death of the space program. Last year Armstrong had called the dismantling of the space program under Obama, leaving behind a shadow space agency "embarrassing and unacceptable".

Armstrong had proposed not only future investments, but along with other astronauts had sensibly proposed retaining the space shuttle program until they were ready, instead of scrapping the shuttle program and distributing viable shuttles to museums. Armstrong was critical of the Bolden regime at NASA that had stripped the space agency of its best people and its ability to conduct manned space exploration or even reach the International Space Station without begging passage on Soviet Soyuz tubs.

"The reality that there is no flight requirement for a NASA pilot-astronaut for the foreseeable future is obvious and painful to all who have, justifiably, taken great pride in NASA's wondrous space flight achievements during the past half century," Armstrong concluded his testimony. "In space flight, we are in the process of exhausting alternatives. I am hopeful that, in the near future, we will be doing the right thing."

If we ever do get around to doing the right thing, in space or on the ground, Neil Armstrong will not be around to see it. The famously reclusive astronaut passed away after being drawn out to make a final bid at reviving the space program. His final contribution may be that he joined the many voices

warning of the decline of America. His final legacy may be determined by whether the American people choose to listen to some of his final words.

Neil Armstrong was born in 1930, the year that a young researcher watching the sky over Flagstaff, Arizona, discovered Pluto. By 2006, it was decided that Pluto was no longer a planet. By 2016 we may decide that Neil Armstrong never really walked on the moon and that walking on the moon is an assault on the lunar ecology.

Two years ago, Charles Bolden, the incompetent Obama appointee who has implemented his mission of killing America's space program, declared that the agency's chief goal was outreach to the Muslim world. This was not his original idea.

While visiting Egypt, Bolden told *Al-Jazeera* that Obama had given him three missions. "One, he wanted me to help re-inspire children to want to get into science and math; he wanted me to expand our international relationships; and third, and perhaps foremost, he wanted me to find a way to reach out to the Muslim world and engage much more with dominantly Muslim nations to help them feel good about their historic contribution to science, math and engineering,"

Space exploration was not on the list for a reason. Michael Griffin, Bolden's predecessor, who had done much to rebuild NASA, only to have his work ruined by Obama's affirmative action appointees, Charles Bolden and Lori Garver, said of those comments: "NASA ... represents the best of America. Its purpose is not to inspire Muslims or any other cultural entity. If by doing great things, people are inspired, well then that's wonderful. If you get it in the wrong order ... it becomes an empty shell... That is exactly what is in danger of happening."

NASA, like the rest of American exceptionalism, has become that empty shell in the throes of Obama's Post-American national order. It exists to make Muslim boys feel good about imaginary Muslim inventions and to provide jobs to Russian engineers. In the last week NASA premiered a new song from one of Obama's favorite musicians, will.i.am and demonstrated a new "green" alternative to existing rocket fuels.

In a memo for NASA's OEOD, Office of Equal Opportunity and Diversity, Charles Bolden declared that, "Diversity and inclusion are integral to mission success at NASA". Because how can we possibly reach the stars unless there are mandated diversity targets among the launch crews and the conflict management specialists?

"As NASA's Diversity and Inclusion Champion," Bolden wrote, "I believe it is incumbent on every member of the NASA community to advocate for, promote, and most importantly, practice the principles of diversity and inclusion in everything that we do."

*This appeared on Daniel Greenfield's blog of August 25th.*

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## **Monsignor Hugh O'Flaherty, Vatican Hero**

Ruth King

A few weeks ago I saw *The Scarlet and the Black*, a 1983 film starring Gregory Peck as Monsignor Hugh O'Flaherty. O'Flaherty was a Vatican scholar who mingled readily with Italian nobility, diplomats, and socialites. His charm and wit made him a regular at parties, concerts, operas and diplomatic receptions. He was bred in Killarney, earned a degree in theology in Rome, was ordained in 1925 and subsequently earned doctorates in divinity, canonical law and philosophy.

When the Nazis occupied Rome in 1943 a white line was painted across St. Mark's Square. Defining the border that rendered immunity to the Vatican, and its resident clergy, it was monitored continually by the Nazis.



Initially, because of a faith-driven conviction that all men were capable of redemption, O'Flaherty was neutral toward Mussolini's fascist regime and reluctant to defy the Germans. But the chief of Nazi police operations in Rome was S.S. Lieutenant Herbert Kappler, a ruthless anti-Semite who hunted down, tortured and killed partisans and Allied soldiers and rounded up and deported Jews after stealing their possessions. When the Monsignor witnesses the brutality, guile and deadly determination of the Nazis, he embarks on a mission to thwart Kappler. In a flagrant ruse, he obtains Kappler's autograph which he then forges on an order to release Lt. Jack Manning of the U.S Army Corps and Lt. Harry Barnett of the British Army from imprisonment and torture. The Monsignor is aided by an Italian heroine, Mrs. Lombardi, by two clergymen, Father Vittorio and Father Morosini, an Italian Count and the Swiss Consul. O'Flaherty's escapades obsessed Kappler, who developed a personal vendetta against him, going so far as to attempt to have him murdered by two of his men disguised as monks. O'Flaherty's boxing skills dazzle the would-be kidnappers and he escapes to the Vatican.

O'Flaherty's efforts were neither encouraged nor forbidden by the Pope. The Pontiff gave him a wide berth, only exhorting him to respect the neutrality of the Vatican.

As Kappler's iron fist tightened around Rome, he put a price of 30,000 lire on Monsignor O'Flaherty, who, variously dressed as a nun, a coal peddler, a Nazi (in a purloined uniform), and a street cleaner continually left the safety of the Vatican to rescue and hide Jews, Allied prisoners and refugees. Each time he returned by remarkable cunning and daring to the Vatican.

After the Allies took Rome, Kappler was imprisoned and, as the credits roll, we are informed that the only visitor he ever had was Monsignor O'Flaherty who ultimately converted him to Catholicism.

How hokey, how Hollywood, I thought, but I decided to look up O'Flaherty. To my amazement and delight I found that all the foregoing was true. In fact O'Flaherty was called "The Scarlet Pimpernel of the Vatican" for his many daring exploits and escapes.

O'Flaherty was a reluctant hero of the Allied cause. As a nationalist Irishman, he harbored suspicion and animosity toward the British. (Incidentally, it was this animosity which propelled many Irish pilots and captains to ferry refugees to Palestine in defiance of the British blockade of Palestine after World War II.) But witnessing the violence and deranged anti-Semitism of the Nazis, he was determined to defy them. He is said to have rescued over 6,500 Jews, Allied soldiers and partisans.

Before Kappler was arrested in 1944, he and his men killed 335 people hiding in the Ardeatine tunnels outside the city in retaliation for the killing of 33 German soldiers in a Resistance bombing. After his conversion Kappler remained in prison to serve out his life term. In 1977 his wife smuggled him out in a suitcase and took him back to Germany where he died a year later.

After the war Monsignor O'Flaherty visited Jerusalem to help many of the Jews he had rescued in their immigration to Israel. In 1960 he suffered a stroke and returned to Ireland where he died in 1963. Among his many accolades and honors was the United States Medal of Freedom. His memory is a blessing.

O'Flaherty's principled defiance and courage makes a mockery of the leftist self-righteous poseurs who pretend to be dissidents yet take no risks in their daily slander of America and Israel. Father O'Flaherty recognized the difference between good and evil and between civilization and barbarism. The BDS groupies, the leftist academics, the media "calumnists" and the J Street crowd are nothing more than cowardly fools.

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