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Fool's Errand

William Mehlman

“It is the greatest weakness of reasonable men and women,” Margaret Thatcher once observed, “that they imagine that projects which fly in the face of common sense are not serious or being seriously undertaken.”

Surpassing all contenders, the template expression of that syndrome is the proposed “two-state” solution to the 65-year impasse created by the Arab world’s inability to reconcile itself to the presence of a Jewish state in its midst. What might have been attributed to temporary insanity at some point along the line, has evolved, in the face of more than a decade of bone-weary dead ends, into an *idée fixe* that continues to indefatigably trump all other global concerns—from the nuclear Armageddons posed by North Korea and Iran to the genocidal conflagrations raging in Syria and central Africa.



John Kerry, who inherited command of the Arab-Israeli “peace process,” the conundrum around which the two-state solution is cleverly wrapped, vowed upon succeeding Hillary Clinton as Secretary of State (Mrs. Clinton wisely gave the issue a wide berth) to “hit the ground running” on the Middle East. As was notably the case with diplomatic predecessors George Mitchell and Dennis Ross, he promptly broke both legs. From

Jerusalem to Ramallah, from Amman to Ankara the uniform response to his efforts to reignite interest in the two-state formula was a brick wall.

Deep in plaster though he be, Mr. Kerry has promised to drag himself back to Israel every two or three weeks, the first stop on a planned round of shuttle diplomacy. What he expects to gain from this is anybody’s guess. His basic package, shopworn and several seasons out of fashion, is that perennial chestnut, the “Saudi Peace Initiative,” calling, inter alia, for an Israeli retreat to the 1949 armistice lines, the repartition of Jerusalem and the emasculation of the Negev in order to provide a corridor connecting Gaza to the proposed Palestinian mainland on the “West Bank.” If Israel flatly rejected this formula 10 years ago, can Kerry seriously envision its palatability being enhanced by Palestinian Authority president Mahmoud Abbas’ latest set of demands? Among conditions for a return to the negotiating table, he wants an open-ended freeze on Israeli construction in Judea, Samaria and eastern Jerusalem, the release of 107 Arab prisoners, many of them guilty of intended capital offenses, incarcerated prior to the 1993 Oslo Accords, the transfer of weapons by the IDF to his Palestinian “security services” and an Israeli map showing what his “Palestinian state” will look like. In a *quid pro quo* fit for the late night TV comedic circuit, Abbas has reportedly promised President Obama to temporarily put aside—not drop—the charges he plans to bring against Israel in the International Criminal Court.

Exemplified by Abbas' continued refusal to acknowledge Israel as the nation-state of the Jewish people, the extent of the fool's errand on which Kerry is embarked should be evident to all but the comatose. Well into the seventh year of his four-year term as president of the Palestinian Authority, Mr. Abbas' aversion to any connection between the Jewish people and the land over which they preside, was pointedly underscored at the close of March when he affixed his signature to an agreement with Jordanian King Abdullah II confirming their "common goal to defend Jerusalem and its sacred sites against 'Judaization'" at the hands of Israel. In the spirit of the agreement, Abbas generously crowned Abdullah "custodian of Jerusalem's holy sites" with "the right to exert all legal efforts to preserve them, especially the Al-Aksa mosque."

Prime Minister Netanyahu, presumably in deference to Kerry's diplomatic efforts, chose not to comment on this exalted bit of *chutzpah*. Not so Jordanian exile Mudar Zahran, leader of the "Jordanian Dignity Movement," a group actively promoting a "Jordan is Palestine" plan. Writing from London, Zahran points out that the 1994 Israeli-Jordanian Peace Treaty divested Abbas and the PA of any authority over Jerusalem's holy sites, thus giving them zero license to "grant Abdullah or anyone else title or authority over them." Mere legality, however, has never stood in the way of Abbas' tireless struggle to separate the Jewish people from their signatory capital. The same appears to apply to King Abdullah.

In assuming that it is primarily a territorial dispute that drives the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the Kerry mission may have doomed itself from the start. "Israel opposes placing the issue of borders at the preliminary stages of negotiations," a senior Netanyahu government spokesman told *Ha'aretz* diplomatic correspondent Barak Ravid. "We said this to Kerry. On this matter there is full agreement among all ministers dealing with the Palestinian issue, including [Justice Minister] Tsipi Livni." Mrs. Livni, the coalition's most vocal "peace" advocate, has been tasked by Netanyahu with the lead role in whatever discussions may ensue. If there are to be any talks, the spokesman asserted, "Israel will demand that they address in parallel all the core issues of a final settlement"—refugees, demilitarization, recognition of Israel as a Jewish state and full closure on all present and future legal claims. Off the table, at least at this juncture, are all "confidence-building" suggestions, including "the promotion of any economic measures that would require even the slightest transfer of land to Palestinian civic or security control."

If, as *Jewish Journal* editor Shmuel Rosner averred in a *New York Times* op-ed ("Draw Me a State..."), "President Obama has replaced the contentious issue of 'Settlements' with an even more contentious matter 'boundaries'," his actions pale alongside what Hebrew University political science professor Martin Sherman calls the "incredibly imbecilic, impudent... missive from 100 sycophantic North American Jewish Obamaphiles." This missive urges Netanyahu to show his readiness for "painful territorial sacrifices." At the least appealing moments of his 50-hour Israel stopover last month, Obama never ventured that far. The Palestinian response to the letter was predictable. Within hours, Abbas was demanding an Israeli map detailing the contours of his Palestinian State and warning that "any return to negotiations requires Netanyahu to agree on the [pre-June] 1967 borders."

Whatever new steps a limping Mr. Kerry might add to the old "Middle East Shuttle," that simply isn't going to happen.

William Mehlman represents AFSI in Israel.

Israel at 65

(Editor's note: On the occasion of Israel's 65th birthday we have asked some of Israel and AFSI's best—and clearest-eyed—friends to join us in reflecting on this milestone.)

Aids to Reflection

Edward Alexander

"Israel is extinguished, its seed is no more." Mer-Neptah, King of Egypt, 1215 BCE.

"Prophecy and say unto them...Behold, O my people, I will ... cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel." —Ezekiel, 550 BCE.

"You are disobeying a commandment of your Torah by not going to the land of Israel and living and dying there." —the King in Yehudah Halevi's *The Kuzari*, 1129.

"When a man can no longer be a Jew, he becomes a Zionist."—a character in Haim Hazaz's "The Sermon," 1942.

"I am a Jew by virtue of the fact that I am not a Zionist."—a character in Howard Jacobson's *The Finkler Question*, 2010.

"A land and a language! They are the ground beneath a people's feet and the air it breathes in and out. With them all things are possible... you cannot even buy cigarettes in Hebrew without stirring up the Bible, you cannot walk the streets of Tel Aviv without treading on promised land."—Hillel Halkin, *Letters to an American-Jewish Friend*, 1977.

"The other day, while the world debated, Israel's three millions imposed their will on their enemies. They had what any great people need—resolution, courage, determination, pride. They are what really count in men and nations."—Harold Macmillan, 1968.

"The French ambassador to Britain, his tongue unbuttoned in a London salon, speaks of 'that shitty little country.' European and British scholars, their Latin gone dry, will never cry Hep! [Hierosolyma est perdita "Jerusalem has fallen"]; instead they call for the boycott of Israeli scholars and academicians. Lies shoot up from the rioters in Gaza and Ramallah. Insinuations ripple out of the high tables of Oxbridge. And steadily, whether from street or salon, one hears the enduring old cry: Hep! Hep! Hep!"—Cynthia Ozick, 2004.

"The Jews, because they are Jews, have never been able to take the right to live as a natural right."—Saul Bellow, 1976.

"The recovery of the Jewish homeland from foreign occupiers after millennia of exile [came] not by the hands of an angel and not by the hands of a messenger, but by the self-reliance that their ancestors had practiced for millennia; and by keeping faith with their vow to return to Jerusalem, the settlers of Israel accomplished one of the greatest feats in history."—Ruth Wisse, 2013.

“And I will turn the captivity of My people Israel,/And they shall build the waste cities, and inhabit them; And I will plant them upon their land, And they shall no more be plucked up/ Out of their land which I have given them.”—Amos 750 BCE

Edward Alexander is professor emeritus of English at the University of Washington. His most recent book is The State of the Jews, (Transaction Publishers).

Israel's Just Getting Started

Ruthie Blum

Sixty-five is the age one usually associates with retirement. It is a number, then, that has more than chronological connotations. It evokes a stage of life—one of winding down, after working one’s way up.

This is how much of the world is trying to portray Israel: born in 1948 with the fanfare of a maternity-ward waiting room, but now ready to be put out to pasture minus the gold watch—a token that symbolizes gratitude.

No, Israel is treated like an embezzler who deserves not only to be stripped of his pension, but to be prosecuted. Even some Israelis have begun to refer to the realization of the Zionist dream as a “failed experiment.”

But it is the accusers of Israeli wrong-doing who are the criminals. And anyone who sees Israel as a failure has to have his head examined.

Indeed, it is precisely Israel’s spectacular success that is responsible for the ire it arouses among its ill-wishers.

It is precisely Israel’s warmth, openness and freedom that enable its citizens to sit around sushi bars and gay bars discussing the merits of its demise.

That’s the downside of being a “light unto the nations.” Israelis get exhausted from having to keep flicking the switch, and the nations are more comfortable in the dark.

The good news is that none of this has made the slightest dent in the Israeli will or ability to thrive. In spite of constant warfare, terrorism, political strife and international condemnation, Israel’s population not only continues to grow (in fact, we just exceeded the number of Jews annihilated by Hitler), but proceeds to produce, innovate and create in all fields. That all of this vibrant, cheerful hustle and bustle is accompanied by a lot of kvetching is par for the course. The Jewish state is full of Jews, after all.



"Settlement" of Ariel

The paradoxical nature of this tiny country that looms so large is part of what makes it so miraculous. It is also what causes everyone to forget that it is still in diapers. In a mere sixty-five years, it has managed to catch up to—even surpass—what others have taken centuries to accomplish.

This is not to minimize the external dangers and internal strife that pose genuine threats to its well-being. But let those of us who still harbor the hope of the triumph of good over evil not write it off just yet. I, for one, think Israel is just getting started.

Ruthie Blum, a columnist for Israel Hayom, is the author of To Hell in a Handbasket: Carter, Obama, and the 'Arab Spring.'

Jewish Reality

Midge Decter

The recent frisson of pride in Israel brought on by its having been designated “the startup nation” reminds me of nothing so much as the feeling I had as a child seeing the pictures of all those suntanned brawny boys and fierce girls waving in triumph from the seats of their tractors, the illustrations that were so regularly featured in many now long-gone Zionist publications: namely, that here was a high-romantic triumph over conditions other people would not likely have ventured even to touch, let alone master, in the first place.

What made all this possible, however, is something we don’t talk about—certainly not in public, and for many if not most of us not in private either, for civilized people like us prefer to think the matter at best an unhappy circumstance to be overcome. I am talking about guns—by which I mean, of course, guns, planes, tanks, and yes, nukes—in the hands of Jews. It was this that Zionism only, of all the various ideas and ideologies and movements, religious and secular, which down through centuries they have sought to deal with a tirelessly and murderously hostile world, has permitted them. Jews may be killed, but never again without dire consequence. Only a sovereign state could have made this a reality, and compared with this reality, the ideological and political quarrels among Jews, whether in the Knesset or anywhere else, are—and ought to be recognized as—mere blips on the surface of the reality of Jewish survival.

Midge Decter is a former editor at Harper's and Basic Books and was co-chair of the Committee for the Free World. Her most recent book is Rumsfeld: A Personal Portrait (HarperCollins)

A U.S.-Israel Partnership

Yoram Ettinger

Sixty-five years of Arab terrorism and conventional warfare, fueled by global pressure on Israel, have been bumps on the road of the unprecedented Israeli surge, economically, technologically, medically and militarily, to the benefit of the Jewish State and the Free World.

At 65, Israel demonstrates that principle-driven, highly motivated and defiant societies are capable of transforming tough times into challenges and opportunities, while surging to new heights. At 65, Israel proves, once again, that pressuring the Jewish olive yields superb oil.

At 65, Israel’s 6.3 million Jews include over three million Olim, who have constituted Israel’s most effective growth engine. The relative strength of Israel’s economy, the rise of global anti-Semitism, the gradual Islamification of Europe and the expansion of Jewish/Zionist education in major Jewish communities produce a potential wave of Aliya: 500,000 Olim during the next ten years from the former U.S.S.R, Germany, France, England, Latin America, U.S.A, Canada and Australia. The Aliya waves of the 1930s, 1950s, 1970s and 1990s facilitated the establishment of the Jewish State and its defiance of severe military and economic challenges. The next Aliya wave—which awaits vision-driven pro-active leadership—will produce the critical strategic mass, which will overwhelm adversity and secure the long-term growth of the Jewish State.

At 65, Israel is—in contrast to the tumultuous Arab Street—the only stable, predictable, reliable, capable, democratic and unconditional ally of the U.S. regionally and globally. In 1969 and 1978, the Qadhafi and Khomeini revolutions transformed Libya and Iran from pro—to anti—U.S. regimes. In 2003, the rise of Erdogan changed Turkey from a U.S.—to an Islamic—orientation. In 2012, the replacement of

Mubarak by the Muslim Brotherhood terminated Egypt's role as a U.S. ally. A regime-change in Jordan, Saudi Arabia and other Gulf States would trigger a similar anti-U.S. shift. On the other hand, Israel's right, left, hawks and doves are inherently allies of the U.S.

At 65, Israel's economy defies global economic meltdown and is praised by the International Monetary Fund, the three leading rating companies, major banks, astute investors, successful venture capital funds and high tech giants. Israel leads the world in research and development and features impressive economic indicators. For example, a 14.7% growth of gross domestic product (GDP) during the 2009-2012 global economic crisis was the highest among OECD countries. Israel's 2012 GDP of \$250BN has multiplied 120 times since 1948. Israel's 2012 budget deficit and unemployment were 4.2% and 6.9% respectively, lower than the OECD average.

At 65, Israel's robust demography—which leads the Free World with three births per Jewish woman—provides a tailwind for Israel's economy.

At 65, Israel is increasingly a unique contributor to vital U.S. economic and national security interests. Israel is the hub of research and development centers for Intel, Motorola, Microsoft, HP, IBM and other U.S. high tech giants. Cutting edge Israeli-developed technologies are converted into U.S. lines of production, expanding the U.S. employment, export and research and development base. Israel's Defense Forces employ hundreds of U.S. military systems, sharing with the U.S. defense industry unique upgrades and modifications, enhancing its competitiveness in the global marketplace. Israel—the largest U.S. aircraft carrier without a single American on board—provides the U.S. with more intelligence than all NATO countries combined.

At 65, Israel is grateful to the U.S., the senior partner in the increasingly mutually-beneficial, two-way-street, win-win U.S.-Israel alliance.

Yoram Ettinger is a former Ambassador who served as Minister for Congressional Affairs at Israel's embassy in Washington. He is a writer/consultant on Middle Eastern affairs and produces the online Ettinger Report.

My Take on Israel at Sixty-Five

P. David Hornik

I made aliyah in 1984 to an Israel in many ways so different from today's that to remember is almost like time travel. Socialist Israel was, comparatively, an almost sleepy country. The bloated bureaucracy made things happen three or four times more slowly than they needed to. Indeed, not a few people told us, "You'll like it here, you won't really have to work." The job I found—English-publications editor at an institute of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem—was soft and easy; "workdays" were in part drink-coffee, hang-around, shoot-the-breeze days.

In December 1987—on precisely the same day that I finished a shortened form of military training—the First Intifada broke out. Even for realistic people it was a stunning display of raw, tribal, murderous hatred after twenty years in which Israel had vastly improved the economic, health, and educational levels of the Palestinian population. But it was also—if one can put it this way—a godsend to leftists, who now found more receptive, disconcerted, despairing ears for their message that "the occupation" was the greatest evil and ending it the key to happiness.

And it was six years later in 1993 that Israel descended into the dreadful appeasement episode known as Oslo. I guess my reality-testing mechanism was always reasonably strong; I shuddered at the sight of a storied Israeli leader, Yitzhak Rabin, shaking the hand of Arafat. Very soon the streets of the

cities I'd come to love turned into a slaughterhouse. It got horrendously bad—and then, by the start of the new millennium, it got even worse, a lot worse.

And today, in 2013, as Israel turns sixty-five, both socialist Israel and appeasing Israel are for the most part—blessedly—memories. Let's give credit to the one figure—not perfect, but indispensable—most responsible for both turnabouts, Binyamin Netanyahu. For his key role in bringing about the thriving, hi-tech, powerhouse startup nation, see George Gilder's *The Israel Test*. And on security, while he makes verbal concessions to the left, Israel, as Netanyahu starts his third term, is a country much more realistic and unified. A leftist opposition leader like Shelly Yachimovich talks dinosaur, populist socialism but doesn't even bother polluting the airwaves with junk about peace with terrorists.

Yes, grave security threats remain—in part just a function of the nasty surroundings, no different than two thousand or three thousand years ago except that meanwhile the tribalism has been further inflated by a flawed religion. And yes, dinosaurs of socialism still stalk the land—cartels, robber-baron workers unions in some sectors. But overall, the joy of living in proud, self-affirmative, capitalist Israel is, well, inexpressible. If I were to concretize it in an image, I'd think of sitting by the Mediterranean at dusk in one of the coastal towns, filled with an immense sense of both vitality and peace.

David Hornik is a columnist for Frontpage and PJ Media and author of Choosing Life in Israel.

What Would Shmuel Say?

David Isaac

On the 65th anniversary of Israel's independence, Shmuel Katz doubtless would have had much to say about the state of that independence. Shmuel in particular was alert to anything that detracted from Israel's ability to act in its own best interest. He was also quick to praise anything that contributed to Israel's political independence.



He would have praised the opening of the Tamar deep-sea gas field, which began pumping at the end of March. It is a momentous event in Israel's history. Oil industry observers predict a \$76 billion lifetime production from the field. It's not the great wealth that would have delighted Shmuel but the energy independence that comes with it.

Indeed, wealth as such did not interest Shmuel. He lived a Spartan lifestyle and would have been uncomfortable with Israel's increasingly consumerist society. He often talked of the need for "belt-tightening" in a country that was basically at war, though many Israelis preferred to remain willfully blind to that fact. Shmuel's primary concern was the detrimental effect the pursuit of luxury and government wastefulness had on Israel's ability to maneuver politically.

Israel's overspending rendered it dependent on foreign largesse, which as he wrote, "is the heart of the problem, humiliating in its economic implications, debilitating in its social impact, and dangerous in its political consequences." In short, an Israel that takes \$3 billion from the U.S. has a more difficult time saying no to American pressure than one that does not.

So Shmuel would probably have issued a warning with Israel's newfound energy independence; that the wealth should not be used as a spigot by a spendthrift government, but to purchase the kind of capital that mattered most to Shmuel—political capital.

David Isaac writes a blog on Shmuel Katz and is writer/director for Zionism 101, an online course in Zionist history.

Scorecard at 65

Rael Jean Isaac

At 65 Israel has made astonishing economic and technological progress while regressing politically.

Israel has thrown off the dead weight of socialism which dragged down its early years when the joke was that the only way to make a fortune in Israel was to start out with a bigger one.

Yoram Ettinger has chronicled some of Israel's recent achievements: in the last few years, while most of the Western world experienced an economic meltdown, Israel's GDP grew 14.7%. Deloitte and Touche, one of the major global CPA firms, ranks tiny Israel the fourth most attractive site for overseas investors. Israel dedicates 4.5% of GDP to research and development, the highest proportion in the entire world.

Israel's contributions to human welfare through its medical research and advances in medical technology are wildly disproportionate to its size. Its demography reflects an optimistic citizenry: Israel leads the free world with 3 births per Jewish woman. Rounding off all this good news, Israel has even found the oil and gas that so long eluded it: by 2017 it is expected to become a net exporter of natural gas.

On the other hand, politically, it is hard to find ground for celebration. In the early years the public was unified by the slogan *Ein Breira—there is no choice*. Israeli Jews understood the Arabs were determined to wipe out their state and there was no alternative but to marshal their energies to meet the existential challenge. This is as true as it ever was, but over the last three decades public and government have become fractured by delusions of peace. Starting with Camp David, in place of accepting harsh reality, Israel has substituted the effort to win acceptance from its neighbors through territorial and other concessions. The Oslo accords and the destruction of Jewish communities in Gaza are the most appalling recent examples.

All this achieves nothing but to weaken Israel internally and deepen her international isolation. The more she attempts to appease her enemies, the more Israel puts herself in the dock, just the other day with the "apology" to Turkey—when it was Turkey who owed Israel an apology—for the Mavi Marmara incident. If Israel had hearkened to Jabotinsky's guiding principle of *hadar*, it could not have made this shameful and counter-productive confession of guilt.

Political folly can easily wipe out all the astonishing achievements of the state. Israel overcame its attachment to Marxist delusions in its first sixty-five years. Going forward the question is open if it can overcome its more deep seated penchant for political delusions. Israel's survival depends on the answer.

Rael Jean Isaac is editor of Outpost. Her most recent book is Roosters of the Apocalypse: How the Junk Science of Global Warming Almost Bankrupted the Western World, published by the Heartland Institute.

Israel at 65

Ruth King

Maurice Harold Macmillan, was the Conservative Prime Minister of the United Kingdom from January 1957 to October 18, 1963. He entered British politics in 1924 and was witness to British duplicity and betrayal of the Jews with respect to Palestine and the terms of the Balfour Declaration, the various White Papers that doomed European Jewry by severely limiting entry to Palestine, and the shameful

post war blockade of Palestine where British troops fired on vessels taking survivors of the Holocaust to Palestine.

There is no evidence in biographies or his autobiography that he disapproved of Great Britain's shameful role and, in fact, he was never known as a friend of Israel, although it was subsequently revealed that he sold uranium 235 and "heavy water" to Israel to enable their development of a nuclear facility in Dimona.

In 1984, nearing the end of his political involvement—and his life—he spoke forebodingly of England's domestic situation in Parliament:

"This terrible strike, by the best men in the world, who beat the Kaiser's and Hitler's armies and never gave in. It is pointless and we cannot afford that kind of thing. Then there is the growing division of Conservative prosperity in the south and the ailing North and Midlands. We used to have battles and rows but they were quarrels. Now there is a new kind of wicked hatred that has been brought in by different types of people. It breaks my heart to see—and I cannot interfere—what is happening in our country today."

He was asked by a reporter what he would envision for the future of Great Britain, and he responded that he would like to see Great Britain be like Israel....a small, proud, resolute nation willing and able to defend its sovereignty and security.

What would he say if he saw England today, its laws and national culture challenged by immigrants who wish to impose their Sharia laws? What would he say about the media and academia who daily defame and libel their history and government and "the wicked hatred that has been brought in by different types of people?"

How he would envy Israel today, a miracle of economic growth, technology, culture, science, research and development of life enhancing modalities. A small and proud and resolute nation willing and able to defend its sovereignty and security.

That's just one of the ironies of Israel's 65th birthday. Its detractors and those who willfully and maliciously opposed its creation and actively aided their enemies are dwarfed by its success.

Ruth King is a member of Outpost's editorial board and blogs daily at Ruthfullyyours.

Israel at 65

Rita Kramer

The history of the Jewish people is one of extraordinary achievement and unparalleled suffering, gifts made to the world in every area of human endeavor and in return a hatred made policy by much of that world. And finally, mass murder unthinkable until it was moved from thought to reality.

No, not finally. While Europe became a graveyard of Jewish bodies, Jewish life, and the European culture Jews had contributed so much to before it betrayed and murdered them, a new country, a new nation, a new state emerged. How fitting that its anthem should mean Hope. Out of the ashes, the desert blooming.

As a secular American Jew I feel enormous pride that such a small nation could in so short a time have produced so many life-giving innovations even while surrounded by so many life-denying enemies. And Israel's existence means to all Jews everywhere that at last there is a haven, a place that will take them in if Europe and the rest of the world once again turn on them.

The dream of a place where the wandering Jewish people might reunite was given eloquent description by one of the great nineteenth-century novelists of England, whose predecessors had created the indelible caricatures of the villainous Jews Shylock and Fagin. George Eliot, in her

masterpiece Daniel Deronda, created a counter Jew. Her hero, Deronda, raised as an English gentleman, discovers as an adult that he was born a Jew. He learns about his heritage and is inspired to pursue it by a dying sage named Mordecai. It is Eliot's Mordecai who says, in a book anticipating the creation of the state of Israel by some seventy years, "Looking towards a land and a polity, our dispersed people in all the ends of the earth may share the dignity of a national life which has a voice among the peoples of the East and the West—which will plant the wisdom and skill of our race so that it may be, as of old, a medium of transmission and understanding."

Since those words were written the nation of Israel has, in less than another seventy years, produced countless scientific advances such as those in medical technology that have benefited lives everywhere. The tiny country thrives despite persistent threats that range from boycotts to bombs. What it creates is life-enhancing and puts to shame the imprisonment of minds in its neighboring countries. George Eliot would surely have been gratified to see Mordecai's vision realized.

Rita Kramer is a member of Outpost's editorial board and the author of eight books, the most recent, Flames in the Field.

Jabotinsky's Legacy and AFSI

Seth Lipsky

What I keep thinking of on the 65th anniversary of the Founding of the Jewish state is a phrase Ariel Sharon used to offer to his friends in the diaspora. Israel, he would say, is a "world wide project of the Jewish people." It was his way of welcoming. As the anniversary nears, I've been re-reading the diaries of Herzl and essays of Jabotinsky and enjoying both their personalities that have done so much to inspire the state they envisioned.



Abraham Cahan

It happens that this week I am also putting the finishing touches on my biography of the Founding Editor of the *Jewish Daily Forward*, Abraham Cahan. It includes a telling of the events in the spring of 1940, when Jabotinsky gave, at the Manhattan Opera House, his speech calling for the evacuation of 6 million Jews to Palestine from Europe. He was promptly mocked in a column by Cahan. It filled a full page of the *Forward*, and Cahan sneered that Jabotinsky knew nothing of practical problems.

My own sense of it is that Cahan knew he was wrong even as he wrote those words. When, four months later, Jabotinsky died, Cahan couldn't find any of his senior staff willing to go to the funeral. He assigned a youngster. Then he sat down in his own office to write the editorial that began by asserting the death of Jabotinsky, at such a grim time for the Jewish people, was "in the true sense of the word, a national catastrophe."

He proceeded to laud Jabotinsky as a person, a writer, and an orator. When Jabotinsky spoke, Cahan wrote, "even the deaf could hear." What has always struck me about that editorial was Cahan's prediction that Jabotinsky would be missed not only then, "in the middle of the storm," but "also later, when the storm is over and the time comes to heal the wounds and rebuild Jewish life on new foundations in a new time."

How prophetic those sentiments were. And how much fans of AFSI appreciate the work it is doing—its programs, its *yahrzeit* gatherings for Jabotinsky, its celebration of the writings and life of

Shmuel Katz, and its publication of the *Outpost*. I believe I have read, front to back, every issue that's reached me. So on this anniversary I send this note of congratulations and appreciation, which I look forward to conveying personally the next time we get together, in either New York or Jerusalem.

Seth Lipsky is founder and editor of The New York Sun. It ceased its print edition in September 2008 but continues as an online publication.

A Personal Look at Israel's Losses

Moshe Phillips

In these times, when so many Jews in the U.S. are completely disconnected from Israel and Zionism, there may not be a better book to read than *Letters to Talia* even though its words were penned forty years ago.

Letters to Talia is eerily reminiscent of *Self-Portrait of a Hero: From the Letters of Jonathan Netanyahu 1963–1976*. Both reveal the tragic loss that Israel has suffered by sacrificing its best and brightest on the fields of battle for generations: 25,578 souls were remembered on *Yom Hazikaron*, the Day of Remembrance this year. *Letters to Talia* is a collection of correspondence between a kibbutz born secular Israeli high school girl and an Israeli soldier named Dov Indig.

Indig fell in the Yom Kippur War on October 7, 1973, 11 Tishrei, 5734 in the Golan Heights and was a dedicated yeshiva student and religious Zionist.

The Hebrew edition of the book was originally published in 2005 and became hugely popular.

In early October 2012 a book release event was held in the Knesset for the English edition and Prime Minister Netanyahu and other notables attended. Hagi Ben-Artzi, Sara Netanyahu's brother, edited the book and figures prominently in numerous letters from both writers.

Many of the letters center around Talia's desire to put the Jewish religion in proper context in her life as a modern, thinking young woman and Dov's answers to her questions.

What makes the book so moving is not just the emotion that each writer attaches to their search for truth but the commitment they demonstrate to the Jewish People, their love of the Land of Israel and their faith in the State of Israel.

The issues tackled run from the Israeli surrender of Sinai to women's rights and from emigration to the Diaspora to a critique of Western culture. The reader is left to ponder how these young Israelis have more common sense than the politicians who surrendered so much of the lands liberated in 1967.

Subjects such as religious coercion and the importance of Israeli settlements are discussed at length. The depiction of their visits to Sinai are vivid and leave the reader with a better sense of what Israel lost when this vast area was surrendered to Egypt at Camp David.

Here are a few random quotes that give a sense of the patriotism of these young Israelis:

Dov: I am happy to hear from you that most of the kids hold that it is forbidden to give up Sinai and it is forbidden to be tempted by the promises of the Arabs, who until today have broken all of them.

Talia: I really envy you that you were on the Golan Heights. I love hiking there more than anywhere else in Israel.

Dov: How fortunate we are that we are privileged to be soldiers in the IDF [Israel Defense Forces], which defends the lives of Jews in Israel and throughout the world.

Talia: We thought that our amazing victory in the Six-Day War would put an end to wars, and that the Arabs would resign themselves to our existence, but it turns out that we made a mistake.

Moshe Phillips is the president of the Philadelphia Chapter of Americans For a Safe Israel.

Countering Totalitarian Islam

Sol Sanders



Untangling all the strands of the Boston Marathon Terrorist Attack will take enormous effort and time, long past the patience of the American public to follow the full-fledged autopsy.

But one important element needs the attention of U.S. intellectuals who have largely abdicated their role. It is a discussion of the failure to meet the new totalitarianism of the 21st century after the long and often bloody struggle against the twin despotisms of the 20th century, Communism

and Fascism. Those successful outcomes required a theoretical skeleton and the struggle against a new onset of totalitarian violence will not be met successfully without a similar effort in the world of ideas.

Just as Americans on the left were often seduced by Soviet Communist protestations that it was dedicated to a glorious future of equality and rationality—V.I. Lenin called them “useful idiots”—a similar flirtation goes on today. Just as other Americans, often in high places, were initially infatuated with Fascism’s “efficiency”—Italy’s Benito Mussolini, after all, it was said, made the trains run on time and Germany’s Adolph Hitler built autobahns—a similar inability to cope with rising worldwide Islamicist terrorist irrational rationale exists today.

The Abrahamic legendary origins of the three largest monotheistic religions often are used to blind Western and Muslim intellectuals to the strain of totalitarianism that exists and often dominates Muslim religious society. Attempts to come to terms with this intellectual problem after the onset of terrorism on American soil on 9/11 have been blocked. Often the refusal to examine these very real intellectual issues is the result of political correctness—the belief that criticism of some of the basic tenets of traditional Islam are in themselves simply prejudice and a source of anti-Muslim persecution.

So-called “Islamophobia” has become a slogan to be thrown in the face of anyone expressing concern and alarm at the refusal of many if not most Muslim organizations in the U.S. and worldwide to confront the problem of the religious origins of Islamic radicalism. That includes Cairo’s Al-Azhar University, perhaps the world’s oldest existing university and long considered the center of Islamic and particular Sunni culture, which often spews out hatred and intolerance, along with the hundreds of preachers of hatred and violence in Muslim mosques and on Arab TV and radio.

While it can be argued, probably accurately, that American security organs have been remarkably successful in countering new terrorist threats since 9/11, the Boston Marathon Attack apparently opens a new era for such disasters. [One of the intellectual confusions is to call it “tragedy”; it was not a scenario in the traditional sense of an uncontrollable event with a dreadful ending.]

To maintain a vibrant and open American society—whose demise is the ultimate objective of the terrorists—has always presented a dichotomy, the relative defenselessness of such an open society against dedicated violence. The threat has now taken on new dimensions. For now there is the suggestion of lower intensity attacks against the almost limitless targets of large gatherings in the U.S., everything from sports events to gatherings for commerce. Whether the attackers be extensions of what looks to be the still metastasizing original al Qaida organization or the product of “lone wolves” is only marginally important..

When after 9/11, Ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick and a group of her old friends of the Congress of Cultural Freedom and such anti-Communist intellectual organizations tried to organize a similar effort to

combat Muslim extremism at the Pentagon, they were blocked. Bureaucratic scuffling had as much to do with the demise of the effort as did the failure by most observers to recognize the deep politico-psychological currents that underpinned the violence. Counter intuitively, it had been among the American military in postwar Germany where the first organized efforts at re-democratizing the former Nazi society were to begin. Now as then, the State Dept. and political leadership is slow to recognize the problem and even slower to know how to deal with the world of ideas.



When Pope Benedict XVI in 2006 tried to reopen an old fundamental dialogue between Byzantium Christians and Muslims, he was denounced in the West as well as among Islamic critics. And, in fact, the Vatican made an abject apology for what could only have been interpreted in more rational circles as an attempt to open the needed debate. He quoted from exchanges written in 1391, views of the Byzantine emperor Manuel II Palaiologos, one of the last Christian rulers before the fall of Constantinople to the Muslim Ottoman Empire. These referred to such issues as forced conversion, holy war, and the relationship between faith and reason. Surely those are concerns that must be addressed in a period when, again, as in the past, in the name of Islam murderers have taken up the sword against peaceful societies in the West and, indeed, against fellow Muslims who seek accommodation with modernism and tolerance.

Even worse, Pres. Obama and his coterie of friends and advisers on Islam and the Middle East are among the worst offenders in their failure to recognize the shading off of many common Muslim concepts into totalitarian dedication and terrorism. The President's 2009 speeches at Istanbul and Cairo, while ostensibly meant as outreach to the Arab and Muslim world, were varnished with false historical analogy and improvident appeals. The growing upheavals in the Arab world which have followed, to some extent as a result of the Obama Administration's strategies of retreat and appeasement, are proof of the inadequacy of this approach.

"The Arab Spring" is rapidly turning into the rout of the modernist forces in the face of the new totalitarianism. The abandonment, after horrendous sacrifice, of U.S. influence in Iraq, and the threat of a similar precipitous withdrawal in Afghanistan is undermining any effort to address the real issues between modern society and these antediluvians. The failure, for example, to work out a status of forces agreement for a continued modest American military presence in Iraq absent direct White House engagement was inexcusable and has sabotaged American efforts to influence events in the Persian Gulf.

The now totally failed strategy—loaded with corruption and bankruptcy—to stampede the traditionally low-cost energy American economy into high-cost so-called alternative fuels before their marketable time has weakened our constant bargaining against the stranglehold of Mideast producers on fossil fuels. Ironically, and despite the worst efforts of the Administration, the shale gas revolution is breaking that hold—with unforeseen consequences we may yet find difficult to accommodate. The U.S., again despite the Administration's efforts to boost fuel prices to force the transition to still largely untested alternate energy sources, is moving into self-sufficiency in lower cost, less polluting gas consumption through technological developments. Luckily, it was beyond the control of the White House and such mad "scientific" high-cost energy advocates as former Secretary of Energy Stephen Chu. Eventually, that will dry up some of the vast surpluses in both the Arab countries and Iran which have helped fund terrorism, although as the Boston Marathon Attack proved, low-cost terrorism is now likely to become the fashion of the day.

A frank and open discussion, hopefully with the participation of a growing number of well-meaning Muslim believers, is as necessary to face the new era of low-cost, low-level terrorism as the

security apparatus of government is needed to avoid actual incidents. And the effort cannot be postponed.

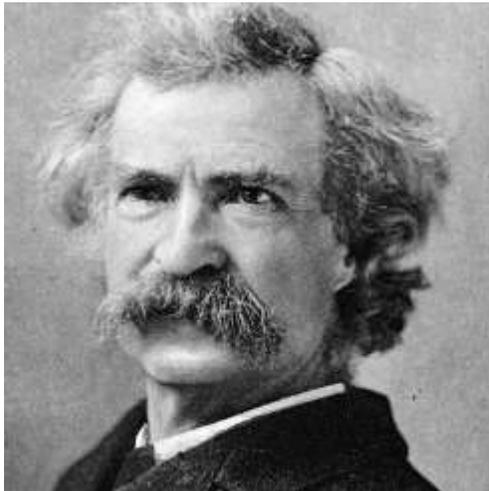
Sol Sanders is a former correspondent for Business Week, U.S. News & World Report and United Press International. He writes a weekly column for World Tribune.com and East-Asia-Intel.com. This appeared in worldtribune.com on April 22.

A Tribute To Israel's Leftist Pioneers

Ruth King

Relax! I am not getting squishy. I agree with Speaker of the Knesset Reuven Rivlin who stated in 2011 that the Altalena affair of 1948 was a crime for which there could be no atonement. And, for the record, I despise the political elite left in Israel which has spawned the moral equivalent of treason in Israel's media, academics and legislators.

This is a tribute to the Jewish pioneers who went to Palestine in the first and second Aliyas of 1882- 1903 and 1904-1914.



Here is what Mark Twain saw when he visited Palestine in 1867:

“ ...[a] desolate country whose soil is rich enough, but is given over wholly to weeds—a silent mournful expanse....A desolation is here that not even imagination can grace with the pomp of life and action....We never saw a human being on the whole route....There was hardly a tree or a shrub anywhere. Even the olive and the cactus, those fast friends of the worthless soil, had almost deserted the country.”

The women were especially remarkable. In spite of the hardships they toiled with the goal of creating a Jewish homeland which would also serve as safe haven for Jews facing unrelenting persecution from the czars. They created hospitals, schools, farms, collective agrarian settlements, day care facilities. They were determined to abandon Yiddish and speak, read and write in Hebrew. Their evenings were spent in political discussions and in singing patriotic songs.

For all their disputations, the pioneers shared the zeal to restore Israel and the goal of creating an agrarian homeland based on socialist principles. The land they wanted to till and farm was barren; their tools were rudimentary and they knelt in the hot sun and clawed away weeds and clay with their bare hands. They withstood waves of dry unbearable heat, freezing nighttime temperatures, malaria, yellow fever, insects and snakes.

From this noble group, too numerous to list by name, a nation emerged, and the organizations they subsequently created were ready for ingathering of the wretched survivors of the Holocaust and the refugees from Arab nations. They provided counseling, therapy, occupational guidance, warmth and welcome. They healed the wounds of the body and the wounds of the souls of people who had lost their confidence, their dignity and their will, racked as they were with memory of what they had lost, what they saw, what they endured and what they were forced to do.

They treated all Jews from every corner of the earth equally and without bias, unlike their political elite, who viewed the Jews from Arab nations with disdain.

This ingathering was the most epic rescue story of history.

I often ask myself who has the Zionist zeal of these pioneers today? Is it the yuppies of Israel's technological world or the professionals or the farmers and industrialists of the Kibbutzim? They are patriotic and good citizens.

But, who among Israelis will brave deserted hills, virulent enemies, harsh conditions, and endless danger to build and restore the ancient homeland of the Jews?

The answer is fraught with irony: The residents of the settlements of Judea and Samaria, politically the diametric opposite of the early pioneering socialists, are today's bearers of the Zionist standard.

Outpost

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