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# OUTPOST



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## Out of the Fog of War II

William Mehlman

“The Jihadists do not hate the West because of Israel,” George Weigel, Senior Fellow at Washington’s Ethics and Public Policy Center observed in his brilliant 2009 updated book *Faith, Reason, and The War Against Jihadism*. “They hate Israel because it is part of the West, hence that standard Jihadist trope, ‘Zionist Crusaders.’” If the unprovoked direction of 3,500 rockets – and counting -- at Israel’s civilian population has failed to get Weigel’s message across, the West and the civilization it has created are in for a very rough ride.

In lockstep with ISIS, the malignant buds of a resurrected 7<sup>th</sup> Century Caliphate metastasizing its murderous way across the Middle East, we are stumbling into the “World War IV” former *Commentary* editor Norman Podhoretz warned about in his much criticized book of the same name. And for the second time in less than a century, the Jews, first as a sovereign-less mass spread across Europe, now as the nation-state of Israel, have been designated as stand-alone, stand-ins for a West ready to storm the barricades of delusional appeasement rather than lift a finger in its own defense. Israel, instead, is to face condign punishment for having defended itself against Hamas and Islamic Jihad, its self-anointed liquidators, by a Kangaroo court under the gavel of the United Nations Human Rights (sic) Council, which has, for all intents and purposes, already decided it is guilty of war crimes. This is the same body that put its imprimatur on the nefarious “Goldstone Report” following the 2008 conflict in Lebanon with Hezbollah. There are no plans at this writing for a UNHRC criminal investigation of either Hamas or Islamic Jihad.

Spain and the UK have already responded to Israel’s exercise of its right to strike back at the rocketeers in Gaza by terminating, in Spain’s case, all arms, and arms-related materiel to the Jewish state and severely limiting, in the UK’s case, shipments of ammunition and spare parts for some of the British tanks in the Israeli armada. France has laughingly countered Muslim and far-Left anti-Semitic lynch mobs threatening French Jews on the streets and in their synagogues by labeling the fledgling Jewish Defense League a “provocation.”

For its part, instead of leading an international effort to disarm the Iranian forward operating base known as Hamas, the Obama-Kerry team at this juncture appears to be focused on a back-door revival of the defunct “peace process” by spotting Mahmoud Abbas and his kleptocratic Palestinian Authority as trustees over the restabilization of Gaza and the curtailment of further deadly mischief on the part of its Hamas marriage partner. This, of course, is tantamount to sending in the jackals to stand guard over the wolves. That it is favorably regarded by Justice Minister Tsipi Livni, whose staunch support of Security Council Resolution 1701 in 2006 was a factor in Hezbollah’s amassment of 100,000 rockets in Lebanon under the nose of UNIFIL, gives pause for thought about the ability of some in Israel to ever learn from past errors.

Abbas and his Fatah army not only participated in the rocket and mortar fire on Israel during Operation Protective Edge, they boasted about it in their Facebook pages, describing themselves as “brothers in arms” with Hamas, pledged to “one god, one homeland, one enemy, one goal.” That goal is not a viable Jewish state. If the deaths of 63 of Israel’s best and brightest is now to be reconstructed as a diplomatic bridge for its retreat from Judea and Samaria, then their deaths will have been a sham. Operation Protective edge had nothing to do with awarding the PLO with a state in the Land of Israel. It had everything to do with destroying the war-making capabilities of an Iranian-supported terrorist army on its southwestern flank. That existential task is still to be completed.

*William Mehlman represents AFSI in Israel*

## From the Editor

### Kicking the Can Down the Road

Israel has agreed to a ceasefire. Negotiations are to proceed on Hamas's demands for a seaport, an airport and the release of prisoners and on Israel's demands for demilitarization of Gaza. Israel has already said it will not agree to a seaport and airport (avenues to flood Gaza with more lethal weaponry) without demilitarization. As for release of prisoners, Israel is always releasing terrorists so there Hamas should have easy sailing. Should Israel back down on the seaport and/or airport, Operation Protective Edge will have been a clearcut victory for Hamas, with all that means for destroying the remnants of Israeli deterrence.

Regarding demilitarization, a terror organization abolishes its *raison d'être*? The only way that is going to happen is if Israel takes over the territory, i.e. it is clearly not going to happen.

So for those Israelis who will be told all is clear, head back to your homes in the south, the question will be "How long until the rockets fly again?"

### Who is "Exploiting" the U.S.?

The U.S. is now demanding White House and State Department approval of hitherto routine munitions requests by Israel on the grounds—as reported in *The Wall Street Journal*—that Israel is exploiting (in the words of one official "playing" and "manipulating") the United States.

This spurious accusation is the more striking when contrasted with the real exploitation of the American taxpayer by Afghanistan. Here are just a few of the details provided by the London *Telegraph*:

1) More money has been poured into "rebuilding" Afghanistan than into rebuilding Europe after World War II.

2) About 80% of the country is beyond reach of U.S. government monitors and large additional areas will also be off limits due to base closures and troop withdrawals according to a report by the Special Inspector General for Afghan Reconstruction.

3) A U.S. army analysis made public in April said: "Corruption directly threatens the viability and legitimacy of the Afghan state."

4) Senior members of the Afghan government, including members of President Karsai's family, have accrued vast wealth since 2001.

5) Despite \$7.6 billion spent on counter-narcotics operations, opium production is now at record levels.

6) America and the EU spent over \$3 billion building up the Afghan police force, yet 54,000 of these policemen are "ghosts," paid each month, but non-existent.

### A Deafening Silence—Again

*The Deafening Silence* was the title of Raphael Medoff's 1986 book on American Jewish leaders during the Holocaust. Isi Leibler revives that phrase, pointing to the intensifying hostility toward Israel shown by the Obama administration. In the war with Hamas, that includes the attempt to substitute the pro-Hamas Turkey and Qatar for Egypt as mediators, the State Department's description of Israeli actions as "disgraceful" and "appalling," Obama's relating to Israel and Hamas in terms of moral equivalency and the new restrictions on arms supplies to Israel.

One would have expected, writes Leibler, "the American Jewish leadership to actively express its concern. Yet, other than the hawkish Zionist Organization of America, the Jewish establishment

appeared to have burrowed behind a curtain of deafening silence.... [N]ot a single criticism of White House policy was heard from the American Israel Public Affairs Committee, the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, the American Jewish Committee or the Anti-Defamation League." Leibler rightly concludes: "Failure to respond to such provocative outbursts from the White House sends a message of weakness that the Jewish community is no longer willing to publicly confront hostility, and could lead to a significant erosion of American Jewry's political influence."

### **A Perfect Choice**

In a master stroke, the UN has appointed Canadian law professor William Schabas to head the Human Rights Council's "investigation" of Israel's conduct of operations against Hamas in Gaza. He checks off all the boxes.

As NGO Monitor's Anne Herzberg writes in *The Jerusalem Post*, Schabas is an outspoken advocate of "lawfare" against Israel, the attempt to exploit legal frameworks to delegitimize—and ultimately end—Israel's existence as a Jewish state. At the Russell Tribunal on Palestine in October 2012 (a kangaroo court if ever there was one) Schabas declared that Netanyahu would be his favorite candidate to be tried by the International Criminal Court. Schabas is legal counsel to Ireland's Amnesty International Branch, an especially nasty branch of that deeply hostile-to-Israel outfit.

Herzberg observes that Schabas is the perfect choice for the Human Rights Commission mission. "He has already declared Israel guilty of 'war crimes' and 'crimes against humanity.'"

Schabas is a perfect candidate in a sense that Herzberg omits. Like Richard Goldstone and Richard Falk, the Human Rights Commission's previous choices to "investigate" Israeli military actions, he comes from a Jewish background. Schabas's paternal grandparents were Jewish immigrants from Galicia. For the UN that Jewish background is crucial cover to ward off charges of blatant anti-Semitism.

### **Shrinking Israel**

Martin Sherman, who has taken up Shmuel Katz's mantle as the clearest thinking and most outspoken columnist in *The Jerusalem Post*, brings up a little noted consequence of Israel's permitting the current conflict in Gaza to end in a renewed truce, rather than unconditional surrender. That is ending the viability of civilian life in the south of Israel.

Sherman writes: "Today several communities adjacent to Gaza are largely deserted. It is becoming increasingly clear that if no radical solution can be found to reassure the residents that they will no longer be threatened by overhead rockets and underground terror tunnels, these communities, now evacuated temporarily, will be permanently abandoned. Such an outcome can only be avoided in the long run by the IDF taking permanent control of the areas from which the rockets are fired and the tunnels are burrowed. Nothing else will have any lasting credibility or durability."

### **Branches of the Same Tree**

On August 20, in the midst of the war against Hamas, Netanyahu chose once again to obfuscate reality and not, as a true leader should, speak truthfully to the public. After saying he hoped Abbas would play a constructive role, he added: "I will look forward to restarting negotiations with a Palestinian government committed to peace with Israel, to the end of terror and fulfilling the previous obligations that we have." Underscoring the absurdity of this statement (a ritual mantra on a par with Islam is a religion of peace), Jibril Rajoub, Deputy Secretary of the Fatah Central Committee, said only a week earlier on Palestinian TV: "I'm telling everyone: Fatah has decided that our relations with the Israelis are relations between enemies...OK brother, here is the occupation, am I stopping you from slaughtering a settlement? No one is stopping anyone..."

Netanyahu concluded his August 20 statement by saying “ Hamas is like ISIS. ISIS is like Hamas. They’re branches of the same tree.” He should have added “ And the PA’s goals are the same as the goals of Hamas. They’re all branches of the same tree.”

### **Fall-out from Those Crazy Prisoner Exchanges**

When 23 year old Givati Brigade infantry lieutenant Hadar Goldin was found to have been killed—not captured—by Hamas, there was huge relief in Israel’s top echelons. While this was widely reported, what was not widely noted was that there is something very wrong when the deepest fear of political and military higher ups is that one of their soldiers has survived. The reason, of course, is the insanely imbalanced prisoner “exchanges” that follow the capture of an Israeli soldier. Netanyahu released a thousand to win the freedom of Gilad Shalit. All this has accomplished is to make the capture of an Israeli soldier hugely valuable to Israel’s enemies and hugely dangerous to the welfare of Israeli citizens, since substantial numbers of those “exchanged” return to terror.

If a given policy has untenable consequences, the reasonable expectation is that the policy be changed.

### **From Ordman’s Amazing Israel**

Soldiers wounded in Operation Protective Edge are benefiting from a brand-new Israeli technology to close open wounds quickly. TopClosure acts like a medical zipper to protect wounds immediately, allowing them to be treated fully later.

Israeli biotech BiondVax has announced that its M-001 vaccine has been validated against all H7 virus strains, thus protecting against all avian flu variations.

Israeli start-up SolarOr has developed BIPV (building-integrated photovoltaic) panels that convert Direct Current (DC) trapped in a building into AC energy that can be used locally or sold back to the electric company.

### **Not a Parody**

Investigative Journalism’s Steven Emerson says at first he thought he was reading a satire: “Washington officials have told Egypt that the US will guarantee Israel’s commitment to any agreement signed.”

The U.S. lists Hamas as a terror organization, which means it cannot even engage in talks with it. And now, on behalf of Hamas, it wants to act as guarantor that Israel will abide by the terms of any agreement signed with it? Hamas has a 100% record of violating each and every agreement it has made. The U.S. says nothing about making sure Hamas lives up its undertakings (a fool’s errand, that) so what it proposes is guaranteeing Israel lives up its undertakings while Hamas ignores its side of the bargain. As Emerson says, “the President has revealed his true colors for everyone to see.”

### **Politically Correct Warfare**

Israel’s Channel 10 has revealed that the Israel Defense Forces advised the residents of Nahal Oz (where four year old Daniel Tragerman was killed by a Hamas-fired mortar) that the five mortar launchers that rained fire on the kibbutz for 49 days were not taken out for “humanitarian” reasons. Three are located next to a school where Gazans had taken refuge and the other two are located next to houses whose occupants the IDF had not managed to get in touch with in order to request that they leave. Political correctness turned Operation Protective Edge from a just war into a hideous game in which Israeli children became sacrificial pawns.

# **There is Nothing to Talk About**

Moshe Sharon

*Editor's note: This useful overview of the dangers facing Israel (and the West) was written prior to the current war with Hamas and the rise of ISIS (which is a rebranded and reinvigorated Al Qaeda in Iraq, one of the groups to which Sharon refers in this article). The new developments only underscore the validity of Sharon's title. Nonetheless negotiations will go on, to the detriment of Israel and her ability to survive in an intensely hostile environment where the commitments of the Arab-Muslim side are meaningless.*

## **1. The trap**

Two rings of mortal danger have been closing on Israel:

The narrower is the Middle Eastern Arab ring and the wider is the Islamic ring. These two rings, which share a common purpose, interact with each other and enjoy almost unlimited financial resources.

## **2. The Islamic ring**

The Islamic ring is chiefly led by two states – Shiite Iran and Sunni Saudi Arabia – and has offshoots in the form of terrorist organizations which appear under various names: among them are the Hezbollah, the Hamas and Al-Qaeda. These are only the currently best-known names, representing prongs of the Islamic offensive on Israel in the narrower ring and on Western (Christian) civilization in the wider one.

The Hezbollah and the Hamas (the first Shiite, the second Sunni) are only two of the organizations directly connected with Iran and share with it the goals of the rest of the Islamic terrorist organizations, a few of which are an integral part of the Palestinian Authority (like the Tanzim, the Aqsa Brigades, and many others). Of these organizations, the Hamas is the strongest, the most organized, most popular, and best equipped.

## **3. Islamization of Europe**

On the other hand, Islamic activity, outwardly non-militant (or law-scale militant) has been growing in the Western world, particularly in Europe. Its aim is to establish Islam as a permanent, active component in Western societies, gaining political power, undermining Western civilization and ultimately reducing Europe to a satellite of the Islamic world.

## **4. Muslim usage of the West against itself**

The Muslims use Western political and judicial institutions and Western liberal ideas to forward their plans. They are backed and helped by what Lenin defined as “useful idiots,” that is to say Leftist organizations and individuals, human rights groups, the media, intellectual communities and academic bodies, to demand and obtain special concessions, undermining the Western values of freedom in the name of “multiculturalism,” “human rights,” “freedom of worship” and so on.

## **5. Use of language to mask intentions**

One of the most common tactics of Arabs and Muslims in their dealings with Israel and the West is manipulating words and the use of bazaar tactics. It is very difficult to alert Westerners, who give weight to the spoken and written word, to typical Arab language jugglery. In Arabic there is a saying: "There are no custom duties on words." The western mind cannot understand a culture in which a "good lie" is praiseworthy. "Lie is the salt of man," says another Arab proverb. Western civilization has yet to accept the fact that promises made by Arab or Iranian leaders, agreements signed, oaths taken, outwards signs of friendship (including hugs and kisses) are nothing but rituals of the bazaar game, which men of the East never take seriously.

Israeli and Western leaders are unable to accept the simple fact that Muslims regard "agreements" between the Infidels and themselves as instruments to gain as much as possible from the infidel, and give nothing in exchange. Their aim is not to live side by side with the Western world but live at its expense and ultimately to subdue it.

## **6. Islamic program: rule the world**

Throughout the ages, Muslim rulers and scholars have made no secret of their belief that the destiny of Islam is to rule the world. And since Islam is triumphant by nature, it has never lost the hope of achieving this goal by force, by waging *Jihad*, Holy War, against non-Muslims, whom the classical Muslim sources define as "the food of the Muslims."

In modern times, *Jihad* has also taken on an economic aspect: Muslim control of the major sources of energy and the takeover of Western economic institutions. However, the military component is much more important, for it is the essence of *Jihad*.

Iran is aiming at this military superiority when it strives to achieve nuclear capacity and use it either directly or as a weapon for control, harassment, and extortion.

The West is not alert to the Iranian danger because it cannot grasp the deadly combination of religious Shiite messianism and the megalomaniac dream of imperial revival.

## **7. Destruction of Israel and its Jews**

Ahmadinejad repeatedly promised the elimination of Israel and he meant it. He said openly what the Arabs and Muslims have been thinking, dreaming about and planning for. The astonishing thing is the non-reaction of the international community to this unequivocally clear message. The vicious, vocal Arab-Muslim anti-Semitism espoused by Muslim intellectuals, educators, politicians, religious leaders and media is accepted by many Europeans who would not be sorry to see Israel destroyed and its Jews exterminated.

## **8. Islamic messianic tradition: world without Jews**

The elimination of the Jews first from the Middle East and then from the rest of the world is a goal shared by Hamas, Hezbollah, and the Iranians, but it is also considered a religious duty of all Muslims, Sunnis and Shiites alike. It has to do with the messianic expectations of Islam, since according to all the most authorized Hadith compendiums the Jews must be killed before the bliss of the End of Days can take place. These hadiths are extremely popular, they are frequently used in the Friday sermons: they are repeatedly quoted in the

media and taught to children in schools side by side with the traditions which present the Jews as “the sons of monkeys and pigs”.

### **9. Shiite Messianic conviction**

Sunni Islam shares with Shiite Islam the view that Jews must be exterminated but for the Shiites this has an even more concrete meaning. The Shiite Mahdi–Messiah, the Hidden Imam, is a real person who is living on earth, in seclusion, since his “disappearance” 1134 years ago. When he comes, he will bring salvation to Islam and finally establish the Shiiah as its ruling and only version. Sunni Islam will then be eliminated.

The destruction of the Jews is a concrete necessity to achieve this goal but this alone cannot guarantee the coming of the Hidden Imam. He is supposed to appear with fire and blood, and fight an unprecedented great war. The current view of Iranian leaders is that if such an Armageddon-like war can be instigated it could “force” the Hidden Imam-Mahdi to appear. These are not empty words but a plan for action.

### **10. The failure to understand the Muslim language**

This grave situation is being ignored or played down by Israel and Western leaders. The main reason for this irresponsible neglect, which has led to wrong and fateful decisions, is that Israel and the West do not understand the cultural language of the East. The Muslims know the cultural language of the infidels very well and they use it. The West swallows the lies of the Muslims, lets itself be manipulated by them, ignores their threats and takes seriously their promises and “agreements.” It disregards the danger to Israel on all fronts, and blames the Jews for not enabling the Muslims, fast enough, to prepare the war for their destruction by both conventional and non-conventional means.

### **11. Before it is too late**

However, the situation, grave as it is, is not a Greek tragedy. Things can be done to fight back, particularly in the field of public opinion. The “infidel” victims can be alerted to the danger on their doorsteps.

On a different level, this danger concerns the Sunnis as well. True the *Jannah* (the Muslim Paradise) is wide for the millions of Muslims who would die in an Iranian Shiite style Armageddon but it is also true that if they are alerted to this possibility in time, many of them would prefer to live out their normal lifespan.

### **12. Israel: the danger within**

It has become clear that many of Israel's Arab citizens Israel have become an integral part of their Muslim brethren’s plans to destroy the state of Israel, weakening the state from within by delegitimizing the Jewish character of the state, by seizing and controlling huge parts of state lands, by spreading enemy propaganda and by educating their children to deny Jewish history, deny Jewish peoplehood, and deny any connection between the Jews and their land. All this is done in the name of “freedom of speech,” “multiculturalism” and “equality,” and is backed by the “useful idiots,” the various “human rights” movements, the media, the academics, the “intellectuals,” and the judicial system. The menace of Jews making every effort to help the enemy achieve its goals is an immediate one, even more dangerous than the Iranian



Bomb, because all these “useful idiots” have been creating the terminology, the argumentation, and the judicial tools for the Arabs to use in their unceasing attempts to demonize and delegitimize the State.

### **13. Isolation**

Do not expect anybody to help. Europe is up to the neck in neo-anti-Semitism. Besides, the Europeans have already given up and will not fight. The European Union has robbed the citizens of each member-state of their national identity, while the Muslims, who constantly grow in numbers, faithfully adhere to their Islamic identity. They are self-confident, and unlike their predecessors two generations ago, do not wish to become Europeans. Israel should take these developments very seriously, for the signs of Islamic influence on the foreign policy of the continent are becoming clearer each day, particularly in western European countries. (Eastern Europe cannot be relied on with or without Islam).

Israel is almost alone again. Fortunately, it has still the sympathy and friendship of a great number of Americans. But how many are aware of their own "useful idiots" and are aware that their local Muslims will use all the tools which the American constitution and democratic institutions afford them, as they do in Europe, to weaken America from within.

Unlike most countries of the world Israel is constantly in existential danger. Israel has to act as if it is alone dealing both with internal dangers and the Arab-Islamic plans to eradicate it.

Israel must also to understand and make it a cornerstone of her policy that, unless she wants to negotiate her own annihilation, there is nobody on the Arab-Palestinian side to talk to, and there is nothing to talk about.

*Moshe Sharon is professor emeritus of Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies at the Hebrew University.*

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# An Insider's Guide to the Most Important Story on Earth

Matti Friedman

Is there anything left to say about Israel and Gaza? Newspapers this summer have been full of little else. Television viewers see heaps of rubble and plumes of smoke in their sleep. A representative article from a recent issue of *The New Yorker* described the summer's events by dedicating one sentence each to the horrors in Nigeria and Ukraine, four sentences to the crazed génocidaires of ISIS, and the rest of the article—30 sentences—to Israel and Gaza.



A reporter near the Gaza border

When the hysteria abates, I believe the events in Gaza will not be remembered by the world as particularly important. People were killed, most of them Palestinians, including many unarmed innocents. I wish I could say the tragedy of their deaths, or the deaths of Israel's soldiers, will change something, that they mark a turning point. But they don't. This round was not the first in the Arab wars with Israel and will not be the last. The Israeli campaign was little different in its execution from any other waged by a Western army against a similar enemy in recent years, except for the more immediate nature of the threat to a country's own population, and the greater exertions, however futile, to avoid civilian deaths.

The lasting importance of this summer's war, I believe, doesn't lie in the war itself. It lies instead in the way the war has been described and responded to abroad, and the way this has laid bare the resurgence of an old, twisted pattern of thought and its migration from the margins to the mainstream of Western discourse—namely, a hostile obsession with Jews. The key to understanding this resurgence is not to be found among *jihadi* webmasters, basement conspiracy theorists, or radical activists. It is instead to be found first among the educated and respectable people who populate the international news industry; decent people, many of them, and some of them my former colleagues.

While global mania about Israeli actions has come to be taken for granted, it is actually the result of decisions made by individual human beings in positions of responsibility—in this case, journalists and editors. The world is not responding to events in Israel, but rather to the description of these events by news organizations. The key to understanding the strange nature of the response is thus to be found in the practice of journalism, and specifically in a severe malfunction that is occurring in that profession—my profession—here in Israel.

In this essay I will try to provide a few tools to make sense of the news from Israel. I acquired these tools as an insider: Between 2006 and the end of 2011 I was a reporter and editor in the Jerusalem bureau of the Associated Press, one of the world's two biggest news providers. I have lived in Israel since 1995 and have been reporting on it since 1997.

This essay is not an exhaustive survey of the sins of the international media, a conservative polemic, or a defense of Israeli policies. It necessarily involves some generalizations. I will first outline the central tropes of the international media's Israel story—a story on which there is surprisingly little variation among mainstream outlets, and one which is, as the word “story” suggests, a narrative construct that is largely fiction. I will then note the broader historical context of the way Israel has come

to be discussed and explain why I believe it to be a matter of concern not only for people preoccupied with Jewish affairs. I will try to keep it brief.

### **How Important Is the Israel Story?**

Staffing is the best measure of the importance of a story to a particular news organization. When I was a correspondent at the AP, the agency had more than 40 staffers covering Israel and the Palestinian territories. That was significantly more news staff than the AP had in China, Russia, or India, or in all of the 50 countries of sub-Saharan Africa combined. It was higher than the total number of news-gathering employees in all the countries where the uprisings of the “Arab Spring” eventually erupted.

To offer a sense of scale: Before the outbreak of the civil war in Syria, the permanent AP presence in that country consisted of a single regime-approved stringer. The AP’s editors believed, that is, that Syria’s importance was less than one-40th that of Israel. I don’t mean to pick on the AP—the agency is wholly average, which makes it useful as an example. The big players in the news business practice groupthink, and these staffing arrangements were reflected across the herd. Staffing levels in Israel have decreased somewhat since the Arab uprisings began, but remain high. And when Israel flares up, as it did this summer, reporters are often moved from deadlier conflicts. Israel still trumps nearly everything else.

The volume of press coverage that results, even when little is going on, gives this conflict a prominence compared to which its actual human toll is absurdly small. In all of 2013, for example, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict claimed 42 lives—that is, roughly the monthly homicide rate in the city of Chicago. Jerusalem, internationally renowned as a city of conflict, had slightly fewer violent deaths per capita last year than Portland, Ore., one of America’s safer cities. In contrast, in three years the Syrian conflict has claimed an estimated 190,000 lives, or about 70,000 more than the number of people who have ever died in the Arab-Israeli conflict since it began a century ago.

News organizations have nonetheless decided that this conflict is more important than, for example, the more than 1,600 women murdered in Pakistan last year (271 after being raped and 193 of them burned alive), the ongoing erasure of Tibet by the Chinese Communist Party, the carnage in Congo (more than 5 million dead as of 2012) or the Central African Republic, and the drug wars in Mexico (death toll between 2006 and 2012: 60,000), let alone conflicts no one has ever heard of in obscure corners of India or Thailand. They believe Israel to be the most important story on earth, or very close.

### **What Is Important About the Israel Story, and What Is Not**

A reporter working in the international press corps understands quickly that what is important in the Israel-Palestinian story is Israel. If you follow mainstream coverage, you will find nearly no real analysis of Palestinian society or ideologies, profiles of armed Palestinian groups, or investigation of Palestinian government. Palestinians are not taken seriously as agents of their own fate. The West has decided that Palestinians should want a state alongside Israel, so that opinion is attributed to them as fact, though anyone who has spent time with actual Palestinians understands that things are (understandably, in my opinion) more complicated. Who they are and what they want is not important: The story mandates that they exist as passive victims of the party that matters.

Corruption, for example, is a pressing concern for many Palestinians under the rule of the Palestinian Authority, but when I and another reporter once suggested an article on the subject, we were informed by the bureau chief that Palestinian corruption was “not the story.” (Israeli corruption was, and we covered it at length.)

Israeli actions are analyzed and criticized, and every flaw in Israeli society is aggressively reported. In one seven-week period, from Nov. 8 to Dec. 16, 2011, I decided to count the stories coming out of our bureau on the various moral failings of Israeli society—proposed legislation meant to

suppress the media, the rising influence of Orthodox Jews, unauthorized settlement outposts, gender segregation, and so forth. I counted 27 separate articles, an average of a story every two days. In a very conservative estimate, this seven-week tally was higher than the total number of significantly critical stories about Palestinian government and society, including the totalitarian Islamists of Hamas, that our bureau had published in the preceding three years.



The Hamas charter, for example, calls not just for Israel's destruction but for the murder of Jews and blames Jews for engineering the French and Russian revolutions and both world wars; the charter was never mentioned in print when I was at the AP, though Hamas won a Palestinian national election and had become one of the region's most important players. To draw the link with this summer's events: An observer might think Hamas' decision in recent years to construct a military infrastructure beneath Gaza's civilian infrastructure would be deemed newsworthy, if only because of what it meant about the way the next conflict would be fought and the cost to innocent people. But that is not the case. The Hamas emplacements were not important in themselves, and were therefore ignored. What was important was the Israeli decision to attack them.

There has been much discussion recently of Hamas attempts to intimidate reporters. Any veteran of the press corps here knows the intimidation is real, and I saw it in action myself as an editor on the AP news desk. During the 2008-2009 Gaza fighting I personally erased a key detail—that Hamas fighters were dressed as civilians and being counted as civilians in the death toll—because of a threat to our reporter in Gaza. (The policy was then, and remains, not to inform readers that the story is censored unless the censorship is Israeli. Earlier this month, the AP's Jerusalem news editor reported and submitted a story on Hamas intimidation; the story was shunted into deep freeze by his superiors and has not been published.)

But if critics imagine that journalists are clamoring to cover Hamas and are stymied by thugs and threats, it is generally not so. There are many low-risk ways to report Hamas actions, if the will is there: under bylines from Israel, under no byline, by citing Israeli sources. Reporters are resourceful when they want to be.

The fact is that Hamas intimidation is largely beside the point because the actions of Palestinians are beside the point: Most reporters in Gaza believe their job is to document violence directed by Israel at Palestinian civilians. That is the essence of the Israel story. In addition, reporters are under deadline and often at risk, and many don't speak the language and have only the most tenuous grip on what is going on. They are dependent on Palestinian colleagues and fixers who either fear Hamas, support Hamas, or both. Reporters don't need Hamas enforcers to shoo them away from facts that muddy the simple story they have been sent to tell.

It is not coincidence that the few journalists who have documented Hamas fighters and rocket launches in civilian areas this summer were generally not, as you might expect, from the large news organizations with big and permanent Gaza operations. They were mostly scrappy, peripheral, and newly arrived players—a Finn, an Indian crew, a few others. These poor souls didn't get the memo.

### **What Else Isn't Important?**

The fact that Israelis quite recently elected moderate governments that sought reconciliation with the Palestinians, and which were undermined by the Palestinians, is considered unimportant and rarely mentioned. These lacunae are often not oversights but a matter of policy. In early 2009, for

example, two colleagues of mine obtained information that Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert had made a significant peace offer to the Palestinian Authority several months earlier, and that the Palestinians had deemed it insufficient. This had not been reported yet and it was—or should have been—one of the biggest stories of the year. The reporters obtained confirmation from both sides and one even saw a map, but the top editors at the bureau decided that they would not publish the story.

Some staffers were furious, but it didn't help. Our narrative was that the Palestinians were moderate and the Israelis recalcitrant and increasingly extreme. Reporting the Olmert offer—like delving too deeply into the subject of Hamas—would make that narrative look like nonsense. And so we were instructed to ignore it, and did, for more than a year and a half.

This decision taught me a lesson that should be clear to consumers of the Israel story: Many of the people deciding what you will read and see view their role not as explanatory but as political. Coverage is a weapon to be placed at the disposal of the side they like.

### How Is the Israel Story Framed?

The Israel story is framed in the same terms that have been in use since the early 1990s—the quest for a “two-state solution.” It is accepted that the conflict is “Israeli-Palestinian,” meaning that it is a conflict taking place on land that Israel controls—0.2 percent of the Arab world—in which Jews are a majority and Arabs a minority. The conflict is more accurately described as “Israel-Arab,” or “Jewish-Arab”—that is, a conflict between the 6 million Jews of Israel and 300 million Arabs in surrounding countries. (Perhaps “Israel-Muslim” would be more accurate, to take into account the enmity of non-Arab states like Iran and Turkey, and, more broadly, 1 billion Muslims worldwide.)

A knowledgeable observer of the Middle East cannot avoid the impression that the region is a volcano and that the lava is radical Islam, an ideology whose various incarnations are now shaping this part of the world. Israel is a tiny village on the slopes of the volcano. Hamas is the local representative of radical Islam and is openly dedicated to the eradication of the Jewish minority enclave in Israel, just as Hezbollah is the dominant representative of radical Islam in Lebanon, the Islamic State in Syria and Iraq, the Taliban in Afghanistan and Pakistan, and so forth.

Hamas is not, as it freely admits, party to the effort to create a Palestinian state alongside Israel. It has different goals about which it is quite open and that are similar to those of the groups listed above. Since the mid-1990s, more than any other player, Hamas has destroyed the Israeli left, swayed moderate Israelis against territorial withdrawals, and buried the chances of a two-state compromise. That's one accurate way to frame the story.

An observer might also legitimately frame the story through the lens of minorities in the Middle



Yezidi Refugees

East, all of which are under intense pressure from Islam: When minorities are helpless, their fate is that of the Yazidis or Christians of northern Iraq, as we have just seen, and when they are armed and organized they can fight back and survive, as in the case of the Jews and (we must hope) the Kurds.

There are, in other words, many different ways to see what is happening here. Jerusalem is less than a day's drive from Aleppo or Baghdad, and it should be clear to everyone that peace is pretty elusive in the Middle East even in places where Jews are absent. But reporters generally cannot see the Israel story in relation

to anything else. Instead of describing Israel as one of the villages abutting the volcano, they describe Israel as the volcano.

The Israel story is framed to seem as if it has nothing to do with events nearby because the “Israel” of international journalism does not exist in the same geo-political universe as Iraq, Syria, or Egypt. The Israel story is not a story about current events. It is about something else.

### **The Old Blank Screen**

For centuries, stateless Jews played the role of a lightning rod for ill will among the majority population. They were a symbol of things that were wrong. Did you want to make the point that greed was bad? Jews were greedy. Cowardice? Jews were cowardly. Were you a Communist? Jews were capitalists. Were you a capitalist? In that case, Jews were Communists. Moral failure was the essential trait of the Jew. It was their role in Christian tradition—the only reason European society knew or cared about them in the first place.

Like many Jews who grew up late in the 20th century in friendly Western cities, I dismissed such ideas as the feverish memories of my grandparents. One thing I have learned—and I’m not alone this summer—is that I was foolish to have done so. Today, people in the West tend to believe the ills of the age are racism, colonialism, and militarism. The world’s only Jewish country has done less harm than most countries on earth, and more good—and yet when people went looking for a country that would symbolize the sins of our new post-colonial, post-militaristic, post-ethnic dream-world, the country they chose was this one.

When the people responsible for explaining the world to the world, journalists, cover the Jews’ war as more worthy of attention than any other, when they portray the Jews of Israel as the party obviously in the wrong, when they omit all possible justifications for the Jews’ actions and obscure the true face of their enemies, what they are saying to their readers—whether they intend to or not—is that Jews are the worst people on earth. The Jews are a symbol of the evils that civilized people are taught from an early age to abhor. International press coverage has become a morality play starring a familiar villain.

You don’t need to be a history professor, or a psychiatrist, to understand what’s going on. Having rehabilitated themselves against considerable odds in a minute corner of the earth, the descendants of powerless people who were pushed out of Europe and the Islamic Middle East have become what their grandparents were—the pool into which the world spits. The Jews of Israel are the screen onto which it has become socially acceptable to project the things you hate about yourself and your own country. The tool through which this psychological projection is executed is the international press.

### **Who Cares If the World Gets the Israel Story Wrong?**

Because a gap has opened here between the way things are and the way they are described, opinions are wrong and policies are wrong, and observers are regularly blindsided by events. Such things have happened before. In the years leading to the breakdown of Soviet Communism in 1991, as the Russia expert Leon Aron wrote in a 2011 essay for *Foreign Policy*, “virtually no Western expert, scholar, official, or politician foresaw the impending collapse of the Soviet Union.” The empire had been rotting for years and the signs were there, but the people who were supposed to be seeing and reporting them failed and when the superpower imploded everyone was surprised.

And there was the Spanish civil war: “Early in life I had noticed that no event is ever correctly reported in a newspaper, but in Spain, for the first time, I saw newspaper reports which do not bear any relation to the facts, not even the relationship which is implied in an ordinary lie. ... I saw, in fact, history being written not in terms of what had happened but of what ought to have happened according to various ‘party lines.’” That was George Orwell, writing in 1942.

Orwell did not step off an airplane in Catalonia, stand next to a Republican cannon, and have himself filmed while confidently repeating what everyone else was saying or describing what any fool

could see: weaponry, rubble, bodies. Spain, he understood, was not really about Spain at all—it was about a clash of totalitarian systems, German and Russian. He knew he was witnessing a threat to European civilization, and he wrote that, and he was right.

Understanding what happened in Gaza this summer means understanding Hezbollah in Lebanon, the rise of the Sunni *ihadis* in Syria and Iraq, and the long tentacles of Iran. Above all, it requires us to understand what is clear to nearly everyone in the Middle East: The ascendant force in this part of the world is not democracy or modernity. It is rather an empowered strain of Islam that assumes different and sometimes conflicting forms, and that is willing to employ extreme violence in a quest to unite the region under its control and confront the West. Those who grasp this fact will be able to look around and connect the dots.

Israel is not an idea, a symbol of good or evil, or a litmus test for liberal opinion at dinner parties. It is a small country in a scary part of the world that is getting scarier. It should be reported as critically as any other place, and understood in context and in proportion. Israel is not one of the most important stories in the world, or even in the Middle East; whatever the outcome in this region in the next decade, it will have as much to do with Israel as World War II had to do with Spain. Israel is a speck on the map—a sideshow that happens to carry an unusual emotional charge.

Many in the West clearly prefer the old comfort of parsing the moral failings of Jews, and the familiar feeling of superiority this brings them, to confronting an unhappy and confusing reality. They may convince themselves that all of this is the Jews' problem, and indeed the Jews' fault. But journalists engage in these fantasies at the cost of their credibility and that of their profession. And, as Orwell would tell us, the world entertains fantasies at its peril.

*This appeared in HonestReporting.com on August 26.*

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## Chasing Peace

David Isaac



Caroline Glick is well known for the sound analysis, strategic thinking, and mental toughness she brings to her op-eds in *The Jerusalem Post*—which makes the title of her new book *The Israeli Solution: A One-State Plan for Peace in the Middle East* all the more startling. It suggests a solution to a problem the tough-minded tend to view as insoluble.

Glick's book is divided into three parts. The first delivers a stake through the heart of the near universally accepted "two-state solution." The second—to this writer the most problematic—puts forward her own solution. The third argues the likely responses to that solution.

The author nails the chief problem with the two-state paradigm: The Palestinians don't want it. They do not seek to live side by side with Israel. "Rather," she writes "their principal goal has always been the destruction of Israel. For this reason, no amount of U.S. pressure and no Israeli concessions will bring peace."

She offers a dramatic case in point. When Prime Minister Ehud Barak and subsequently Prime Minister Ehud Olmert offered to return to the 1949 borders with only minor changes—offers so generous no future Israeli government could outdo them—the Palestinian leadership walked away in both cases.

Glick devotes a chapter to the supposed challenge of Palestinian demography, one of the key arguments of supporters of the two-state solution, and shows how this threat has been overblown, based on falsified numbers from the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics. Proportionately, it's as if the U.S. Census Bureau grew the U.S. population by 162 million people, Glick writes.

The demographic analysis is crucial because Glick's "solution" is to apply Israeli law to Judea and Samaria (essentially annexing these territories) and she is prepared to offer the Arabs of Judea and Samaria Israeli citizenship. She admits this will "doubtlessly cause a host of difficulties for Israel" but, she says, unlike the two-state policy, "it is a viable, realistic option, not a pipe dream."

Glick outlines the benefits of her plan. These include defensible borders for Israel, and the elimination of dangerous Palestinian forces within them. Glick also says Israel's diplomatic situation will improve in the long run, because the Jewish state's adherence to the two-state solution means it is complicit in the narrative that it is somehow responsible for the war against it.

Glick foresees a process by which the Arabs of Judea and Samaria start with the status of permanent residents, but are able eventually to apply for Israeli citizenship. Using the precedents of the Druze in the Golan and Jerusalem Arabs, Glick counts on relatively few Palestinians taking advantage of Israel's offer, though she does acknowledge that this is a risk: "The prospect that, contrary to expectations, the Palestinians will apply en masse for Israeli citizenship, and that as a consequence Israel's citizenship rolls will expand massively, is an important issue for policy makers to consider."



Here Glick returns to her demographic argument: "But we need to keep our sense of proportion ... were all the Palestinians of Judea and Samaria to apply for and receive Israeli citizenship, the Jews would still maintain a solid two-thirds majority of the population of the State of Israel."

Glick has come in for criticism on this point from some otherwise sympathetic to her perspective. Martin Sherman, a fellow columnist at *The Jerusalem Post*, and founder of the Israel Institute for Strategic Studies, cannot understand Glick's nonchalance. The addition of some 1.6 million Arab citizens to Israel's population is a recipe, he says, for Israel's "Lebanonization" — by which he means a state riven with ethno-sectarian strife.

It would mean the end of Israel as a Jewish State, Sherman says. He notes that in Israel the Star of David is on the national flag, the menorah is the state emblem, the calendar revolves around Jewish and Zionist holidays, Hebrew is the language of daily life, and Saturday is the day of rest. "In the absence of discriminatory repression, how would it be possible to persist in their use if up to 40 percent of the population is not only unable to identify with them, but harbors fierce hostility toward them?"

Glick would counter that Arab attitudes are changing. She cites polls showing Arab admiration for Israel's democracy. She also provides anecdotal evidence of an integrationist trend, like Corporal Eleanor Joseph, the IDF's first female Arab combat soldier, and the Arab brothers Atrash, who also served in Israel's military, illustrating developments she says have been "overlooked or belittled."

The evidence for integration is small beer against a wealth of surveys and anecdotal evidence showing the opposite. Glick herself writes: "By 2000 all of the Israeli Arab members of Knesset opposed Israel's right to exist." The latest Gaza war has provided evidence of such attitudes. On August 3, Israelis were treated to the spectacle of three Arab members of the Knesset rising to denounce the soldiers of the IDF as "murderers." When rumors spread that an Israeli soldier had been kidnapped by Hamas, the streets of Nazareth broke out in celebration. Israel's Channel 10 reports that ISIS flags have been flying for months in Arab-Israeli towns.



None of this is to say that Glick hasn't made an important contribution. She has thought outside the box. This encourages more out-of-the-box thinking. Mordechai Kedar, a well-known professor at Bar-Ilan University, has just proposed dividing Judea and Samaria into seven emirates. For over a decade, Martin Sherman has suggested encouraging voluntary migration by offering generous financial incentives to Arabs willing to relocate.

In the wake of the most recent Gaza war, alternatives to the worn-out two-state solution are bound to seem more attractive. Even long-time two-state proponent Alan Dershowitz has written, "Hamas' decision to fire rockets in the direction of Ben-Gurion Airport may well have ended any real prospect of a two-state solution." Four days into Operation Protective Edge, Prime Minister Netanyahu said leaving Gaza in 2005 had been a mistake, and there was no possibility Israel would relinquish security control west of the Jordan River. The West Bank, he said, was 20 times the size of Gaza. Israel is not prepared "to create another 20 Gazas."

Glick's contribution is to help consign the two-state solution to the dustbin of bad ideas. It will likely fall to others to build on the ruins.

*David Isaac is an editor at Newsmax. He is also the founder of the Zionist history site, Zionism101.org. This appeared on August 24 in the Washington Free Beacon.*

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## **Ruth King** **Iam Loqui Latine (Speak Latin)**

Latin was spoken throughout much of the Roman Empire for upwards of five hundred years. It was the language of orators, poets, playwrights and historians. Yet today the only large organization that retains Latin is the Catholic Church where it is the official language of the Holy See and spoken in masses, and rites. Latin is the primary language of the Roman Rota, the highest appellate court of the Roman church. And, by the way, Vatican City has the world's only ATM with instructions in Latin.

However, as the language of daily life, Latin has ceased to exist.

*Imaginare!* What if a Catholic intellectual and philologist (philologist comes from the Latin philologia, a love of learning) suddenly decided to renew Latin as a vernacular language to be spoken by all Catholics?

*Nequeo* (Latin for impossible) you say?

Well something just as improbable was actually done with Hebrew.

Eliezer Ben-Yehuda ( b. Lithuania 1858--d. Jerusalem 1922) was the driving spirit behind the revival of Hebrew in the modern era.

In 1858 Hebrew was mostly relegated to the reading of the holy books. By 1922, when Ben Yehuda died, it had become the recognized language of Palestinian Jews.

Today 8,000,000 people, including Israeli Arabs, speak, read, write, bicker, joke, shop and perform all diurnal duties in Hebrew.

Please see David Isaac's outstanding series "Zionism 101" and its episode on Ben Yehuda and Modern Hebrew <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pgiq8uqQ79E> Also read Norman Berdichevsky's Modern Hebrew, the Past and Future of a Revitalized Language

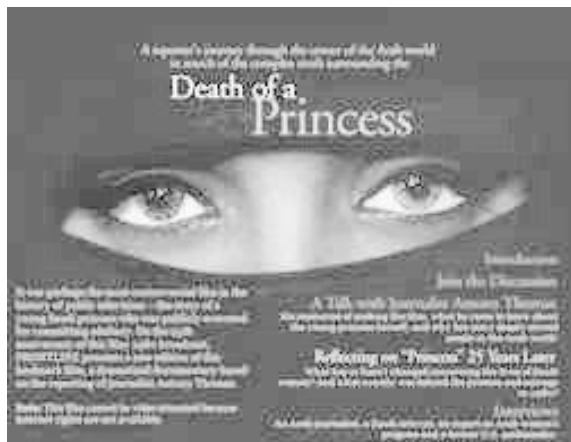
*Ludei* (Latin for Jews) should be mighty proud of this miraculous achievement.

## Short Memories And Willful Ignorance – Jihadist Brutalities

James Foley's brutal beheading shocked us, but should not have surprised us.

In 1977, a Saudi princess forcibly married to an older man committed adultery with a young Saudi boy and was sentenced to death by her grandfather. She was shot and her lover was beheaded in a public square in Jeddah. In 1980 the tragedy was made into a documentary "Death of a Princess." The film aired in Great Britain, and almost immediately Riyadh expelled the British ambassador and implemented boycotts of British products.

In America, the documentary was also shown in 1980 and oil companies and State Department Arabists including John West, Ambassador to Saudi Arabia, made yeoman efforts to suppress it and stop distribution.



In February 2002, only months after 9/11, Daniel Pearl, an American journalist was kidnapped in Pakistan and beheaded in a taped video.

Nicholas "Nick" Berg was an American businessman who went to Iraq after the US invasion. He was also beheaded in a taped video in May 2004.

"Honor" killings, equally brutal and performed by close relatives, have been performed by Moslem families here in the United States, not to mention worldwide.

For a few days in August, the media was focused on the Yazidis trapped on Mount Sinjar in Northwest Iraq. The Yazidis are an indigenous, pre-

Islamic religious minority whose syncretic beliefs derive, in part, from Zoroastrianism. The humanitarian crisis was shocking, but, again, hardly surprising. Seven years earlier, in August 2007, suicide bombers killed at least 500 people in two villages almost entirely populated by Yazidis. *Guardian* journalist Michael Howard described the atrocities at the time: "The Islamic terrorists had made it very clear that they wanted to see rivers of Yezidi blood," said Prince Tahseen. But no one, least of all the US army, which is nominally in control of the region, was listening. 'I'm sure it will happen again unless we take steps to protect ourselves,' he said. 'We are a peaceful people. We don't have force of arms. The only protection for all the Yezidis is to be part of the Kurdish self-rule zone.'"

As Andrew Bostom wrote recently in his blog post ([andrewbostom.org](http://andrewbostom.org)) "Long Before ISIL: The Chronic Plight of the Yazidis Under Islamic Domination:" "Sadly, ISIL's current bloody attacks on the Yazidis reflect a continuum of religiously-inspired, chronic Islamic oppression of this minority group, interspersed with paroxysms of violence no less brutal than what is now taking place." Boston notes that a hundred years ago ISIL's forbears also brutally slaughtered 250,000 Assyrian-Chaldean, and Orthodox Christians.

Belatedly the world is waking up to the Islamic oppression of Christians including destruction of their churches and shrines. Why the surprise? Only yesterday opinion-makers were cheering the advent of an independent Kosovo where militant Moslems trashed and destroyed ancient Christian churches and shrines. We can surmise they have not read Raymond Ibrahim's *Crucified Again: Exposing Islam's New War on Christians* nor the books by Robert Spencer on Islamic persecution of Christians.

ISIL is the new cousin of the Taliban, Al Qaeda, Abu Sayeef, Boko Horam, Al Shabbab, and the more specifically Israel-oriented Hamas, Fatah, PLO and Hezbollah. These brutal protagonists of a "Caliphate" that so astound the media are simply another manifestation in gore and carnage of the evil of their ideological kinsmen.

Why have the (non)think-tanks ostensibly studying the Middle East, and the pundits, and the Israeli commentators, and even stalwart supporters of Israel been behind the curve in recognizing the faith driven nature of the threat to Israel?

Many were soothed by the Bernard Lewis fantasy of comity between Arabs and Jews and ignored the murderous legacy of Islamic anti-Semitism. They pontificated endlessly without mentioning Islam. They wrote and rewrote the history of Palestine but ignored the warnings of Gisele Bat'Ye'Or and her late husband David Littman, and of Saul Friedman and Mordechai Nissan and Rafael Israeli and Moshe Sharon who understood the Islamic imperative to destroy Israel long before 9/11.

While the world slowly awakens to reality, Israel's leaders keep flogging a return to the table to negotiate with devils.

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