
OUTPOST



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WHAT DID CLINTON PROMISE ASSAD?

Herbert Zweibon

The American public has a right to know what promises President Clinton made to Syrian leader Hafez Assad when they met in Geneva in January.

At the joint press conference that was held after the meeting, President Clinton made all sort of vague references to "hopes for peace," "reason for optimism," "new movement in the peace process," and the like. But when it came to specifics, Clinton was mum.

Assad, too, was mum, but that's precisely what one would expect of the Syrian dictator. After all, Assad has made huge p.r. gains in the West by keeping quiet. His advisers know that direct encounters between Assad and Western journalists could be a disaster for their efforts to milk the West for money, arms, and political concessions. The last time Assad gave a major interview to a Western reporter was in 1992, when he spoke with Patrick Seale. That should have been a safe bet, since Seale is one of Assad's most slavish European admirers. Indeed, Seale thought that the interview went so well from the Syrian point of view that he arranged to have it published in the *New York Times*. But more than a few eyebrows were raised when the text of the interview quoted Assad, on the subject of Israel's right to exist, as saying only that "both Arabs and Jews have their place in Palestine." Anybody who is even remotely familiar with the Arab concept of the Jews' "place" knows that in the Arab world, the Jew is always a second-class citizen, and certainly has no right to national sovereignty. The Assad-Seale interview, far from convincing Americans that Assad is "moderate," suggested that he still has not come to terms with the right of Israel to exist as a Jewish State. Hence Assad's unshakeable silence in general, and his brief, vague remarks at the Geneva press conference.

But Assad's shenanigans are no excuse for Clinton's behavior. In an open, democratic society like the United States, the public has a right to know exactly what sort of commitments their president is making to foreign leaders--that way voters can judge whether or not their president deserves re-election. President Clinton therefore has a moral obligation to clearly tell the

American public what he promised Assad.

Did President Clinton promise to take Syria off the State Department's list of terror-sponsoring countries--even though Syria continues to sponsor terrorism?

Did Clinton promise to pressure Israel to surrender the Golan Heights--even though that would severely weaken and endanger America's only reliable ally in the Middle East?

Did Clinton offer to put American troops on the Golan, even though that would make them targets for Islamic terrorist gangs?

Did Clinton promise to continue looking the other way, while Syria develops chemical and biological weapons?

Did Clinton promise to provide Syria with financial, or even military assistance as a reward for signing a treaty with Israel?

Did Clinton promise to play down Syria's involvement in the global drug trade, even though a substantial portion of Syrian-distributed drugs end up in the United States?

In the absence of answers to these and other questions, Americans can only judge the Clinton-Assad meeting by the Geneva press conference. And from what the two leaders said at that press conference, one can only conclude that America has given Assad respectability and political legitimacy, and Assad has given America nothing in return.◊

Herbert Zweibon is chairman of Americans For a Safe Israel.

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MR. RABIN, PLEASE TELL US THE TRUTH

Every time Prime Minister Rabin reassures the Israeli public that the country's security is being safeguarded, his PLO "peace" partners are quoted in the foreign media boasting of their intention to "liberate" Jerusalem, evict Jews from the territories, flood the area with millions of "refugees," and so forth. One would like to believe that such pronouncements are just the typical bombast one has come to expect from PLO spokesmen. Yet since it is the PLO, not Israel, that is scheduled to control Judea, Samaria, and Gaza, it would be reckless to so confidently dismiss the PLO's boasts.

Take, for example, the recent declaration in Vienna by top PLO negotiator Faisal Husseini. Paying no heed to Mr. Rabin's promise that Jewish towns in the territories will remain untouched, Husseini bluntly asserted: "There is no solution to the settlement problem except their total dismantlement. Only individual Jews will be able to live in Palestine." Husseini threatened that there would never be peace unless Jerusalem is made "the Palestinian capitol," unless the settlements are "dismantled," and unless "the Palestinian right of return" is implemented. He predicted that "a million Palestinians from the diaspora will move to the area of Palestine in the next two years."

For all of Mr. Rabin's soothing assurances, one thing is clear: Israel will no have real means, short of war, to prevent Arab immigration into PLO self-rule areas. Nor should anybody expect that Rabin will send the Israeli Army to invade "Palestine" in order to prevent the dismantling of settlements. And since Rabin has already put Jerusalem on the negotiating table, who can feel truly confident that he has no plans to make concessions on the status of Israel's capitol? Israel's citizens have a right to know just what their prime minister is planning. Isn't it about time he told them the truth?◇

THE FOREIGN MINISTRY SUPPRESSES DISSENT

Yossi Beilin's Foreign Ministry flew into action in early December--over an internal memorandum sent by the Jerusalem office of the American Jewish Committee to the group's headquarters in New York. Such a memo should not be any concern of the Israeli Foreign Ministry in the first place, and Beilin has repeatedly said that Jews around the world have a right to express views different from those of the Rabin government--but apparently Beilin and company are not so tolerant when critics actually dare to question their policies. And so it was that

unnamed "officials in Jerusalem" rushed to the Israeli media to denounce Dr. Michael Oren, of AJC-Jerusalem, for daring to report to his colleagues in New York that Prime Minister Rabin has chosen to "leave the application of the autonomy plans in the hands of ardent leftists such as Beilin's 'Mashov' faction, which recently called for the creation of a Palestinian capitol in Jerusalem." Oren wrote that there was need for "centrists" to oppose the Beilin group.

Once the anonymous "Israeli officials" got their story in to the press, of course, Oren was forced to backtrack and claim that he was merely reporting on various views in Israel, and AJC leaders immediately dissociated themselves from the whole messy affair. Chalk up another victory for the dissent-suppressers at Beilin's Foreign Ministry--and another defeat for the cause of common sense in Jewish life.◇

MISSILES IN DAMASCUS, SILENCE IN WASHINGTON

On the eve of President Clinton's meeting with Syrian dictator Hafez Assad, the Arab newspaper *Al Bilaad* reported that Syrian and Iran are working together on a joint project to develop missile technology. Clinton's State Department was too busy planning for the summit with Assad to comment on Assad's disturbing military activities.

The only wars that Syria has ever fought were those that it launched against Israel. The only reasonable explanation for Syria's massive arms buildup, then, is that the Syrians intend to eventually use those arms against the Jewish State. If the Syrians had truly become "moderate" --as the State Department, the media, and Peace Now, incessantly claim-- they would be spending their money on butter, not guns; as Shimon Peres notes in his recent book, Syria is, per capita, one of the poorest countries in the world. Instead, Syria's domestic needs go begging while Syrian military researchers continue developing nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons.◇

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IN MEMORIAM? ZIONISM, 1967-1993

Jerold S. Auerbach

(Editor's note: A longer version of this essay was accepted for publication in Midstream by that journal's editor, but subsequently rejected by the editorial board (whose members include Elie Wiesel, Emanuel Rackman and Milton Konvitz) on the grounds that all essays appearing henceforth in Midstream should reflect the views of the journal's sponsor, the World Zionist Organization, which supports the policies of the Rabin government.)

Within three months after the stunning handshake on the White House lawn, euphoria had vanished without a trace. That astonishing September moment of prophetic fulfillment, when "nation shall not lift up sword against nation," certainly seemed like a good day to invest in plowshares. Only the most churlish, who were quickly dismissed as ideological dinosaurs, dared to wonder whether peace now, yet again, presaged peace in our time.

Back in September, I watched faces, not hands. Yasir Arafat exulted. And why not: his PLO, wracked by internal conflict, verging on financial ruin, spurned by Arab states, and diminished in the media by newer claimants to superior victims status, had been rescued from terminal collapse by the government of Israel.

Rabin, by contrast, was funereal. And why not: after a year of fruitless negotiation, when repeated Israeli concessions proved insufficient, he was prepared to relinquish the geographical and historical cradle of Jewish civilization. The Rabin government seemed to exist for no reason other than to divest the Jewish state of its biblical homeland. The day after the signing, as if to affirm the body language in Washington, Palestinian flags fluttered over the Old City of Jerusalem.

This was hardly "a peace of the brave," as President Clinton and assorted pundits proclaimed, but a peace of the weak who needed to lean upon each other to avoid imminent political collapse. The Palestinian national movement, always dependent upon Zionism for its own identity, seemed incapable of sustaining itself. And Zionism, quite evidently, had lost its will to continue the struggle against its rival claimant for the land of Israel.

Perhaps it is understandable that decades of ceaseless conflict should have ground Israelis into political and spiritual exhaustion. For so long they have endured unremitting Arab enmity and vicious Palestinian terror that even a glimmer--or the mirage--of peaceful normality is irresistible. Most Israelis, after all, yearn for nothing more daring than a comfortable and secure life for themselves and their children--a Zionism no riskier than a

short Shabbat drive to the nearest beach or newest shopping-mall. Wary of peace, they are nonetheless weary of war.

Rabin defended the peace accord as a momentous Zionist victory, the crowning achievement of the generation that had come of age forty-five years earlier in desperate battle for Jewish statehood. But in the Samaritan settlement of Ofra, on the September day when Zionism, according to one resident, "died of its own will," Jews tore their clothes in mourning. Zionism, an Ofra settler declared, "has given up on itself." Was the Israeli-PLO accord a Zionist triumph or a Zionist tragedy?

Since 1967, tens of thousands of Jews have acted upon the realization that Zionism without Judaism is hollow nationalism. Throughout Judea and Samaria, they revived the biblical synthesis of religion and nationality. Their return to homeland and covenant was rooted in the most ancient themes of Jewish history. It was (as Harold Fisch wrote in *The Zionist Revolution* [1978]) "what Zionism is all about." For without "the theological dimension," Fisch warned, Zionism "turns to ashes."

Israelis on the secular left cannot comprehend this Jewish truth. None has been more eloquently critical of it than Amos Oz, the novelist whose political commentary (*In the Land of Israel* [1983]) illuminated the fierce struggle within Zionism, since 1967, to define the identity of the Jewish people in the Jewish state. If the biblical landscape of Judea and Samaria no longer enticed Oz, Jews who resettled there viscerally repelled him.

Oz offered a passionate defense of the fateful modern rendezvous of Judaism, with enlightened Western humanism. It was, he insisted, "formative" and "irrevocable"--and quite distinguishable from the Hellenization process that had once diluted Jewish civilization in the land of Israel. Why? Because for Oz Western humanism, especially its liberal and socialist varieties, contains, "Jewish genes." By now, Judaism and Western humanism are "one and the same." The only alternative is "fanatical tribalism, brutal and closed," a Jewish "museum" civilization rigidly fixated upon its ancient heritage.

Did 1967, then, signify regressive tribalism and immoral domination? Or was it a momentous step toward the fulfillment of Zionist destiny, finally unfolding within the ancient homeland of the Jewish people? That is not an idle question, for upon its answer turns the meaning of the fateful events of 1993.

If the covenantal moment of 1967 was a messianic mirage, then the Rabin government has indeed acted with consummate wisdom. If not, however, then it has abjectly surrendered the historical patrimony of the Jewish people to the Palestinians. For the Rabin government promises to divest Israel of much that is most distinctively Jewish about it--most conspicuously its own ancient homeland and the covenantal dreams that have endured for two thousand years.

Predictably, the "peace process" quickly

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JEW, TOO, HAVE NATIONAL RIGHTS

Sol Modell

There are in the world today approximately 190 sovereign nations, some encompassing a few hundred square miles, others with populations totalling mere tens of thousands of people, and still others at a level of development indistinguishable from what was typical of the dark ages. Fewer than half a dozen nations existing in the world today can trace their existence back at least three thousand years. One of these few is the Jewish nation, but only its right to a sovereign national existence has been questioned.

The reasons for this state of affairs are neither unknown nor unknowable. From the time of King David, circa 1,000 BCE, to the second of the Jewish people's wars of national liberation against the Roman Empire (132-135 CE), almost nobody questioned that the Jews constituted a nation, endowed with national rights and connected with a land that none but they could rightly claim as their own.

But after that terrible defeat, Jewish national rights, in the opinion of practically all existing powers, had been completely obliterated. The great majority of the Jews who remained alive after that carnage, constituting a minority of the pre-war total, were sold into slavery and dispersed throughout the Mediterranean world. The name of the country (whether known as Judah or Israel) was changed by Roman imperial edict, and for the next 1800 years was to be known as "Palestine," a name derived from the ancient Philistines. And the Christian Church, determined to scourge the Jews for refusing to accept the concept of the divinity of Jesus, insisted that it was the rightful heir to the former Jewish land, and as the "House of Israel," was the rightful ruler over the Land of Israel. As far as the Jews were concerned, it was to be their fate to wander across the face of the earth.

There were several quite remarkable aspects of those 1800 years of Jewish exile. Always, there were Jews living in the Land of Israel. Never did the Jews abandon the hope of returning to their land. And, despite all that had happened during those 1800 years to undermine and destroy the connection between the Jews and their historic land, the Western world somehow always retained the concept that there existed an ineradicable relationship between the Jews and that tiny land. So that, as the Jews, toward the end of the 19th century, began to return to the Land of Israel, still called Palestine, it was they, not the Arabs, who came to be identified, in the minds of those who controlled the land, as the true Palestinians. And so it was until 1948.

When, in 1917, the British Balfour Declaration was made public, the idea that the Jewish people were

entitled to a homeland, and that the Land of Israel, called Palestine, was the logical and supremely rational location for that homeland, naturally came to be embraced by wide sections of democratic world. But historically, the ruling elements of that world had generally been characterized by hypocrisy, venality, and greed. As a result, with regard to Jewish national rights, the years since 1920, when Britain was granted the Palestine Mandate by the League of Nations, have been marked by one betrayal after another, one renunciation after another of solemn pledges and commitments, and even instance after instance of Western powers giving aid and comfort to the Arabs as they launched wars designed to destroy the Jewish State.

At the same time, because of feelings of deep-rooted guilt and self-hatred (which we call masochism), many Jewish so-called leaders have failed to assert and insist upon the Jewish people's historic national rights, or to demand that the world's powers recognize these Jewish national rights, and that these rights involve sovereign control over land recognized for thousands of years as being intrinsically Jewish.

The Israeli left has advanced the slogan "Two people, one land." It is clear that while some advocate a division of Western Eretz Yisrael between Jews and Arabs, others would be very happy with the abolition of a Zionist state of Israel and the formation of a binational state. Most definite is the fact that they have abandoned the Zionist concept of a Jewish state encompassing all the land between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea. Either way, it is an abdication and surrender of our historic claim to the Land of Israel.

One of these two peoples already possesses 5.3-million square miles of land, including a country next door to Israel, with a Palestinian Arab majority, that covers, thirty-five thousand square miles. Israel, in contrast, even including the disputed territories, is the one and only Jewish state, with a total of only ten thousand square miles. Arab land, containing, 21 sovereign Arab powers, is 530 times as great in size as our Jewish land. No apologies are therefore necessary when we say that our national right to this one tiny piece of land, with which the Jewish people have been associated throughout history, and which has never been a sovereign power under any but Jewish rule, takes precedence over any other claim.

But when Jews, especially those who assume the rule of leaders, are prepared to compromise, even to negate, the valid assertion that Jewish national rights include the right to control the land that has been soaked, throughout history, with Jewish blood, they are betraying everything that is healthy and meaningful in the Jewish experience. No Israeli government has the right to violate the right of Jews to move to, and live on, Jewish land. This is one of the most fundamental of all Jewish rights.◇

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ISRAEL AND THE PLO: ASSESSING THE RISKS

Douglas J. Feith

Evaluating the Israel-PLO agreement requires weighing hopes against risks, for Israel's concessions could someday endanger its security. The hopeful argument runs along the following lines: (1) The concessions may actually pacify old enemies, removing the motive for attacks on Israel. (2) A serious military or terrorist threat can develop in relinquished territories only if the specified security arrangements are violated, in which case Israel will promptly take remedial action. The agreement provides that Israel will remain responsible for defense against external threats and for the overall security of Israelis. And (3) in all events, whatever the PLO's good faith or lack thereof, Israel is strong and can handle any threat from those territories.

One finds intense desire among Israelis that this first proposition will eventuate. But in a risk assessment, the essential question is not whether Israel would be safe if its enemies are appeased, but what are the dangers if those enemies remain ambitious and hostile.

It is natural that the Israeli government pledges to enforce rigorously the security provisions of any agreement. Every party to a peace or arms control agreement makes such a pledge. But the record of such agreements between democratic and non-democratic countries calls for a discounting. The World War I Allies said they would enforce the Versailles Treaty provisions on limiting the size of the German Army and demilitarizing the Rhineland. They did not. Though the U.S. government promised to enforce its various arms control agreements with the Soviet Union, Soviet violations were numerous and material and the United States did nothing but complain (and little of that). The Israeli government said it would insist on compliance with all the terms of the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty, but important compliance problems have remained unresolved for years.

The pattern in such cases is that, when the non-democratic treaty party violates the agreement, the democratic party, ever reluctant to provoke a confrontation, tends at first to ignore or belittle the evidence, then occasionally makes excuses for the other side, then says that the violations are unclear or, if clear, are not enormously important. Those advocating a response to the violations are ridiculed as legalistic. Even if the violations are clear and important, the government of the democratic party will lament that its options are limited and unsatisfactory for it certainly does not want to overreact. To be sure, it does not want to risk a war over an action by the other side that falls short of immediate preparation for war. The upshot is that the violation often stands.

This is not to say that Israel will necessarily remain

passive in the face of threatening developments or serious treaty violations. But, when the time comes, Israel will find that it is no easy matter to reverse such developments or violations simply because it may have a legal right to do so.

As for the proposition that Israeli strength ensures its ability to handle threats from the territories, it is hard to contradict the point *so long as circumstances prevail*: Egypt maintains peace with Israel. Iraq remains a stricken pariah. Syria lacks a great power sponsor. Jordan is weak and cautious. The Palestinian Arabs are politically divided, financially strapped and sit in the dog house in the Arab world because of their support for Saddam Hussein. In light of these and other favorable current realities, it is likely that Israel's Defense Forces could secure the state against existential threats even if withdrawn from most of the territories and even if the new authorities there remain hostile to Israel. But this begs the question: Are the current favorable circumstances permanent? And, if not, are they likely to change in desirable or undesirable ways?

Unfortunately, the big picture in the Middle East is deteriorating. The trends are not toward peaceful politics, liberal democracy, toleration and prosperity. On the contrary, Islamist movements, espousing violent, medieval, anti-democratic, anti-Western enmity and *jihad*, are gaining popularity throughout the region, exacerbating the region's structural economic problems. The electoral successes of Islamist parties in Jordan and Algeria, the bloodbath underway in Egypt as "fundamentalist" groups murder officials, foreign tourists and Copts and the government responds with mass executions, the Islamists' accession to power in Sudan, the

power of Hezbollah in Lebanon, the rise of Hamas to rival the PLO for leadership among the Palestinian Arabs and the large-scale flight of Christian populations from many countries of the region--all these warn us against assuming that the Middle East will be stable in coming years or that Israel's concessions regarding the West Bank and Gaza Strip can turn the tide of radical Islam. The risks inherent in Israel's concessions must be assessed in light of the possibility, grim though realistic, that within five to ten years Khomeini-style Islamist regimes may be running Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Syria and whatever new state is created for the

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MIDDLE EAST UPDATE

...Although it has not attracted much media attention, the Arab arson war against Israel still rages. Between April and December 1993, 893 fires erupted in Jewish National Fund-owned forests in Israel, and more than 25% were definitely arson, according to Gideon Kedar, chief of the JNF fire-fighting division. Another 37% may also have been the work of Arab arsonists. The fires destroyed nearly 70,000 dunams of forestry...

...All Palestinian Arabs who left Israel in 1947 and settled in Lebanon, and their descendants, "will be forced to leave Lebanon when a peace agreement is signed in the Middle East," Lebanon's foreign minister told the Agence France Presse on December 16. He called for the enforcement of United Nations resolutions demanding that they be permitted to flood Israel...

...Once PLO self-rule takes effect, Jews will be banned from Hebron's Cave of the Patriarchs and Bethlehem's Tomb of Rachel, two of the holiest sites in Judaism, vowed Hasan Tahboub, president of the Supreme

Moslem Council (the Wakf) in a December 16 interview with the *Jerusalem Report*. "They are mosques, not synagogues," Tahboub claimed. "We expect the Israelis to give us back these holy places because that is the democratic way. We believe in freedom of religion, but Jews won't have rights there because these are our holy places"...

...Israeli leftwing author Amos Oz recently toured Judea, Samaria and Gaza together with Hisham Sharabi of the PLO National Council and a television crew from the British Broadcasting Corporation. Oz was no doubt expecting a warm reception when they met with members of the Black Eagles faction of Yasser Arafat's Fatah movement, presumably the most 'moderate' of the PLO wings. But when Oz asked them what they thought of Israel, they bluntly replied, in Arabic, "For us, Israel doesn't exist." The BBC's English subtitle read "We have nothing against the Jews"...

...Three Saudi Arabian men were arrested in New Delhi in December for purchasing a 16 year-old girl and forcing her to marry one of them. The incident caused a public outcry, reminding many of the 1991 scandal in which a 70 year-old Saudi man bought and married a 10 year-old Indian girl...

ON SECOND THOUGHT

...The recent Israeli police brutality against nationalist and religious demonstrators should have shocked civil rights activists," wrote David Forman, leader of the leftwing Rabbis for Human Rights group, in the December 2 *Jerusalem Post*. Yet "not a word has been raised by so-called 'leftist' organizations: Peace Now, Yesh Gvul, B'Tselem, the Association for Civil Rights in Israel, and even my own Rabbis for Human Rights," Forman conceded with evident embarrassment. "In fact, in some quarters, there is almost a smug satisfaction that 'these people' are getting what they deserve...When excessive force is used against Palestinians, Israeli leftists go 'up the wall.' By the same token, they cry 'holy murder' when the police use tear gas to disperse Peace Now demonstrators. They assume that the forces of 'evil' are arrayed against the forces of 'good'...The left in Israel is too predictable. One can almost expect a knee-jerk reaction whereby everything is categorized as those who are 'for peace' (Peace Now, et al) or those who are 'against peace' (Bnei Akiva, et al)..."

...When a group of Arab journalists from Jerusalem recently interviewed Yasser Arafat, they were shocked to find Arafat treat them in a tyrannical manner--not at all the behavior to which they were accustomed in dealing

with Israeli political leaders. Israeli journalist Ran Dekel, writing in a recent issue of *Yerushalayim* (weekend supplement to the daily *Yediot Ahronot*), described the "humiliating treatment" accorded the Arab journalists and their shock at what happened. Dekel quoted an Arab reporter as expressing fear that when the PLO takes over in Judea, Samaria and Gaza, "every journalist who wishes to interview a senior Palestinian official must be equipped with the following items: a casket, a burial plot for himself and his family, and a will prepared well in advance"...

...The PLO's failure to change its National Covenant, which calls for the destruction of Israel, is cause for "concern," admits Mark Heller of the leftwing Jaffee Center for Strategic Studies, a longtime champion of PLO statehood. "Arafat hasn't carried out his obligation to Rabin to amend the elements of the charter, and that is worrisome," Haller told Michael Widlanski, Middle East editor of the *Jerusalem Post*, on November 26. "It is true that [Arafat] didn't commit himself to a date, but he hasn't done it yet. When I ask about, [government officials] come with lame excuses"...

CAN A PLO ENTITY BE DEMILITARIZED?

Louis Rene Beres

Now that an agreement on Palestinian autonomy has been formalized, attention is sure to be focused on the alleged advantages, for Israel, of demilitarization. Would a demilitarized Palestinian entity located in Jericho and Gaza represent a serious security threat to Israel? Not at all, say supporters of this first-stage remedy to a seemingly endless intercommunal conflict. Surely, argue proponents of this position, such an entity would likely be the weakest military force on earth.

From a purely tactical and political perspective, the fragility of this argument is well-known. The hidden dangers of demilitarization are clear and compelling. If there were to be a Palestinian entity in these lands now controlled by Israel, its threat to the Jewish State would not only lie in the presence or absence of a national armed force, but also in the many other Arab armies and insurgents that would inevitably compete for power in the new country. Indeed, as a demilitarized Palestinian entity would be especially vulnerable to hostile and foreign occupation, it might even represent a greater hazard to Israel than another fully militarized neighbor.

But there is another reason why a demilitarized nucleus of "Palestine" would present Israel with a substantial security threat: International law would not necessarily expect Palestinian compliance with agreements concerning armed force. From the standpoint of international law, enforcing demilitarization upon any form of Palestine would be problematic.

As an autonomous entity, Palestine might not be bound by any pre-independence compacts, even if these agreements included U.S. guarantees. Because treaties can be binding only upon states, an agreement between a non-state PLO and one or more states would be of no real authority and little real effectiveness.

But what if the government of a limited Palestine were willing to consider itself bound by the pre-state, non-treaty agreement, i.e., to treat this agreement as if it were an authentic treaty? Even in these relatively favorable circumstances, the new government would have ample pretext to identify various grounds for lawful treaty termination. It could, for example, withdraw from the "treaty" because of what it regarded as a "material breach" (a violation by any of the other state parties that undermined the object or purpose of the treaty). Or it could point toward what international law calls a "fundamental change of circumstances" (*rebus sic standibus*). In this connection, should a small but expanding Palestine declare itself vulnerable to previously unforeseen dangers--perhaps from the forces of other Arab armies--it could *lawfully* end

its codified commitment to remain demilitarized.

There is another factor that explains why a treaty-like arrangement obligating a new Palestinian entity to accept demilitarization could quickly and *legally* be invalidated after independence. The usual grounds that may be invoked under domestic law to invalidate contracts also apply under international law to treaties. This means that Palestine could point to *errors of fact* or *duress* as perfectly appropriate grounds for termination.

Moreover, any treaty is void if, at the time it was entered into, it was in conflict with a "peremptory" rule of general international law (*jus cogens*)--a rule accepted and recognized by the international community of states as one from which "no derogation is permitted." Because the right of sovereign states to maintain military forces essential to "self defense" is certainly such a rule, Palestine could (depending upon its particular form of authority) be entirely within its right to abrogate any treaty that had compelled its demilitarization.

It follows from all this that Israel should take little comfort from the *legal* promise of Palestinian demilitarization, whether in Gaza/Jericho or in the territories generally. Indeed, should the government of a Palestinian entity choose to invite foreign armies or terrorists on to its territory (possibly after the original government authority had been displaced or overthrown by more militantly anti-Israel forces), it could do so not only without practical difficulties but also without necessarily violating international laws.

There is, of course, another perspective: history. Throughout history, demilitarization has proven markedly unsatisfactory; i.e., demilitarized territory was eventually remilitarized, and--in most cases--failed to prevent war. Demilitarization's most conspicuous failure took place in 1936, when Hitler's army occupied the Rhineland, which had been demilitarized at Versailles in 1919. Other examples of demilitarization failure include League of Nations Mandates and the Naval Armament Limitation Treaty of 1924; the Straits Convention of 1923; the Convention Respecting the Thracian Frontier (1923); Soviet Agreements with Finland (1920, 1922) and with Estonia (1920); the Uqair Protocol and the Hadda Agreement (1922, 1925); the Aland Islands (1856); and the Convention of Karlstad (1905). [For more complete consideration of these demilitarization failures, see Bernard Smith, "Demilitarization Is No Answer," *Bulletin of the Jerusalem Institute for Western Defence*, 6:1, March 1993.]

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CAN THE U.N. KEEP THE PEACE?

(Editor's note: It has been suggested that Israel will be secure without the Golan Heights, and without Judea-Samaria and Gaza, if a United Nations "peacekeeping force" is stationed in those territories. But is the U.N. capable of performing such an arduous peacekeeping mission? Is the U.N. sufficiently stable and reliable to expand its international military operations? The following analysis considers these and other questions.)

Since the end of the Cold War, many world leaders have urged a larger role for the United Nations in international affairs. Some have advocated a bigger U.N. peacekeeping role, while others argue for expanding the U.N.'s responsibilities for environmental protection and economic development, particularly in the Third World. Rich and poor nations alike applaud a more activist U.N. In the industrialized world, environmentalists hope that the U.N. will save such natural resources as the rain forests, many of which are located in the Third World. Meanwhile, leaders of poor Third World countries are happy to see U.N. funds for environmental and development issues flow in their treasuries. (...)

More recently, the U.N. has found itself thrust into the role of world policeman. It has fourteen active peacekeeping missions around the world, from Angola to Cambodia. More than 80,000 troops are assigned to U.N. missions, which vary in size from 40 (India/Pakistan) to 25,000 (former Yugoslavia). The estimated cost of the Cambodia presence alone for 1993 is \$2-billion.

While there is merit to some U.N. peacekeeping role, the world body's dramatic expansion into this and other areas since the end of the Cold War demands a thorough review of U.N. goals and priorities. In general, a broad expansion of responsibilities is a big mistake for two reasons: 1) poor management, bad organization, and corruption plague the U.N., making the successful implementation of its goals unlikely; and 2) the U.N. has trouble with the far easier tasks it already handles, such as economic development assistance in the Third World. There are more than a dozen separate agencies, programs, and commissions independently assigned development responsibilities, and tangible results are hard to identify. (...)

The U.N. should [first] put its own house in order. It can do this by eliminating the waste and fraud that have crippled many of its operations. For example, studies have shown that even basic print services done in-house at the U.N. cost 40% more than they would if performed by private contractors. Also, the U.N. needs to set realistic goals. In peacekeeping, for example, the unconstrained growth of operations is clearly unsustainable,

yet there is no long-term program short of simply spending more money and establishing yet another bloated bureaucratic structure to "manage" unrealistic objectives. The post-Cold War U.N. should set its sights on attainable social goals like efficient international disaster relief and effective refugee assistance.

The U.S. should be a champion of reform of the U.N. It should promote reforms that eliminate project objectives. The Clinton administration and the Congress should adopt a five-point reform program:

1) *Insist that the U.N. establish the position of inspector general to target waste, fraud, and abuse.* Press reports, outside audits by management consultants, and even the sporadic internal scrutiny reveal systemic waste, mismanagement, and corruption at the U.N. A permanent internal mechanism must be established to ensure the U.N.'s integrity and safeguard American taxpayer contributions.

2) *Support merging all the U.N. economic and social committees and organs into one entity that would operate under streamlined management.* One reason the U.N. is so ineffective is that a variety of separate U.N. organizations seek to achieve identical goals in an uncoordinated manner. This causes confusion and wasted effort.

3) *Recognize that the U.N. has limited capabilities and redirect U.N. efforts toward attainable goals.* The U.N. should function less like an economic development agency that focuses on utopian tasks such as eradicating poverty and ending war, and more like the Red Cross, concentrating on narrower goals such as aiding natural disaster victims and refugees. Through the use of its funding lever, the Clinton administration should encourage these more limited, measurable, and achievable objectives.

4) *Continue to pressure U.N. Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali to live up to his promises on institutional reform.* Strong signals from Washington could encourage Boutros-Ghali to revive his interrupted reform efforts.

5) *Threaten to withdraw U.S. funding from U.N. economic and social programs if U.N. reforms are not forthcoming.* America pays about 25% of the regular budgets of U.N. economic and social programs, or about \$640-million in assessments for 1993, plus another \$200-million to those agencies which subsist on voluntary contributions from member states, such as the United Nations Development Program. By failing to reform, the U.N. wastes money provided by American taxpayers.◇

This report is excerpted from "Setting Priorities at the United Nations," a United Nations Assessment Project Study undertaken by the Heritage Foundation, and originally published in Heritage Foundation Background #952 (July 26, 1993).

SPOTLIGHT ON THE EXTREMISTS

...**James Baker** was the recipient of the "Peace Award" at the annual convention of the National Association of Arab Americans, in October. In his acceptance speech, Baker referred to the PLO self-rule scheme as "autonomy," provoking an angry reaction from PLO negotiator **Hanan Ashrawi**. "Let me remind Baker that it's statehood, not autonomy," Ashrawi bellowed during her keynote address to the conference...

...Israeli attorney **Avgidor Feldman**, co-founder of B'Tselem and longtime staff attorney for the Association for Civil Rights in Israel, was one of the featured speakers at the U.N.-sponsored Non-Governmental Organizations Meeting on the Question of Palestine, which was held in Vienna in August. Feldman told the audience that the Israeli justice system is comparable to the French judiciary during the Nazi occupation. Israeli judges, like the French, are guilty of "the evil that is silence and cooperation," Feldman declared...

...Demanding that Israel make more concessions on the Jerusalem issue, Lutheran activist **Aida Haddad** declared in the December issue of *Churchwoman* that Jerusalem "is the seat of the three monotheistic religions--Islam, Judaism, and Christianity." Evidently Haddad has never heard of Mecca or Medina, which are Islam's holiest cities...

...In one of her most outrageous allegations ever, Communications Minister **Shulamit Aloni** declared on Israel Radio on December 8 that Jewish residents of Hebron "urinated on local Arabs and destroyed their houses." Knesset Member Shual Yahalom (National Religious Party) said that the accusation proved Aloni's is "mentally unstable," and he demanded that she be dismissed. Prime Minister Rabin ignored the protests over Aloni's behavior...

...Incidents in which Jewish settlers have damaged Arab property, in retaliation for Arab terrorist attacks, are all part of broad Israeli conspiracy, according to **Saeb Erakat**, deputy head of the PLO negotiating team. Speaking on Egypt's "Voice of the Arabs" radio station on December 6, Erakat claimed that the incidents of Jewish retaliation "are rooted in coordinated action between the Israeli Army and the settlers that is meant to scare the Palestinian population"...

...In the wake of the Israel-PLO agreement, the pro-Arab Council for the National Interest has set itself a new agenda for the coming year. Top priorities are to help turn PLO self-rule into a PLO state, and to convince the U.S. to "cease bribing Israel." Other goals: the release of all 11,000 Arab terrorists imprisoned in Israel, the mass return of Arab "refugees" to Israel, and "normalizing relations with Iraq, Libya and Sudan"...

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by Joseph Puder - \$2.00 (non-members: \$3.95)

Order from: **Americans For a Safe Israel,**
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MAKING ISRAEL SAFE

There is a little-known episode in the life of Theodor Herzl, which took place just before he launched the Zionist movement. Herzl was wrestling with the difficult question of how Jews in Western Europe should respond to the recent rise of anti-Semitism, including the Dreyfus Affair. We all know that Herzl eventually came to the conclusion that the answer was to establish a Jewish State. But in Herzl's diary you find that at first he toyed with a very different solution to the 'Jewish problem'. He fantasized about leading the Jewish masses to Rome, bringing them to the Vatican, and having them baptized in a mass ceremony that would be presided over by the Pope himself. Fortunately, Herzl soon gave up his idea of making the Jews converts to Christianity, and embraced Zionism instead.

Today, we are witnessing a tragic and ironic reversal of Jewish history, in which the prime minister of Israel, Yitzhak Rabin, is giving up on Herzl's Zionist idea and trying to make the Jews convert to his own rather peculiar, and very un-Jewish, worldview.

Rabin's worldview is anchored in the notion that the Land of Israel has no real sanctity and can be given away in exchange for whatever promises the Arabs might make. This philosophy, that peace --whatever kind of peace it is-- is more important than land, begins with Judea, Samaria, Gaza and the Golan Heights, but of course it can't end there. Every time the Arabs make a demand for more territory, it will be a choice of "peace or land," and inevitably the Israeli Left --Rabin, Peres, and the Meretz crowd that really directs the government-- will vote for "peace." Can you imagine an Israeli leftist saying that we should keep Jerusalem, even if it means going to war? Of course not.

To the Israeli left, getting rid of the Land of Israel is just for starters. Next on the agenda is getting rid of that whole massive burden known as Judaism, Jewish culture, and Jewish history. During the recent Jerusalem election campaign, the Meretz Party hammered away at the need for what it called "a new culture." What they have in mind is a 1990s version of what used to be called "Canaanism"--the philosophy adopted by a tiny sect of ultra-secular extremists during Israel's early years. According to this philosophy, the Jews in Israel should cast off all of Judaism and Jewish culture, declare themselves to be "Hebrews," and construct a new identity and culture based on secular materialism. Meretz sees this idea as the way for Israel to "integrate" into the Middle East. By giving up their Jewishness, they can become Middle Easterners, who can freely mingle with, and intermarry with the Arabs.

Meretz is the guiding force in the Rabin

government's foreign policy, and we should expect that it will become the dominant voice in domestic policy as well, since the extreme secularism of Meretz is really not that different from the secularism of most of the Labor Party. The Meretz idea of a "new culture" has not been rebuked by Labor, which is a sure sign that Labor will sooner or later adopt it as its own.

Thus Israel heads ever further down the road to destruction, physical and spiritual. In our battle for a "safe Israel," we need to fight relentlessly to preserve Israel's physical safety--but we also must prepare ourselves for the coming fight against those who want to strip Israel of its Jewish identity. Unless Israel remains a Jewish State, its young people will feel no reason to defend its existence; its national morale will deteriorate; and it will soon crumble and fade as so many other countries have done in centuries gone by. For a "safe Israel," we need an Israel with a Jewish purpose and a Jewish identity, for that alone can instill the pride and patriotism needed to save Israel.◊

These are excerpts from remarks made by Dr. Irving Moskowitz on the occasion of his receipt of the Distinguished Service Award from Americans For a Safe Israel, in December.

ZIONISM: IN MEMORIAM?

(Continued from p.3)

degenerated into a spiralling cycle of violence. More Israelis were killed by Palestinian terrorists during the first three months of "peace" than during the preceding months of war. Jewish settlers know that the Rabin government has betrayed them. With their own homes, and the biblical Jewish homeland, in jeopardy, they confront yet another tragic abandonment of the Jews in this century. This one, astonishingly, is being perpetrated by the government of Israel.

The Israeli-PLO accord signifies the collapse, not the fulfillment, of Zionism; and the abandonment, not the embrace, of Jewish covenantal history and memory. Yitzhak Rabin, the first Israeli-born prime minister of the Jewish state, exemplifies the constricted boundaries of contemporary Zionist normality, a Zionism without Judaism. Jews must understand that Israel cannot remain the land of Jewish destiny if Judaism atrophies in Zion.◊

Jerold S. Auerbach is professor of history at Wellesley College.

ASSESSING THE RISKS

(Continued from p.5)

the Palestinian Arabs.

If this bad case materializes, how will the benefits adduced for Israeli territorial concessions--the benefits of escaping the "occupation"-- look when netted out against the resulting security threats? Will the strains of occupation have been replaced by the strains of living within once-again-insecure boundaries? Less territory, for example, means less mobilization time, which may necessitate, as threats increase, a larger standing army and less reliance on reserves. And the increased danger of getting cut in half may require increased reliance by Israel on destabilizing preemption strategies. Moreover, in any event, terrorism may continue and could worsen if the perpetrators use the new PLO-controlled land as a haven and if Israel's unreconstructed enemies credit *intifada* violence with having forced Israel to flee the territories.

It would be an enormous blessing if the new Israel-PLO agreement ended the conflict between Arabs and Jews. Grounds for skepticism exist, however. Offers of territorial concessions to secure Arab acquiescence to a Jewish state in Palestine have been tried in countless variations since the days of Balfour and Lloyd George. From Churchill's creation of an Arab emirate in Eastern Palestine (now the Kingdom of Jordan) in 1921, through the partition proposals of the Peel Commission in 1937 and of the U.N. General Assembly in 1947 and through the Rogers Plan of 1969 to the present, Arab nationalists have insisted that Palestine is Arab land to which the Jews have no legitimate claim whatever. This is a matter of

principle that ties into passionately-held religious and cultural convictions. Much blood--Jewish and Arab--has been shed over this principle. Whatever a nimble, wily and disingenuous operator like Arafat may pledge at the moment to advance his plans for PLO statehood, history casts doubt on the notion that the anti-Zionist cause, embodied in the Palestinian Arab national movement, would permanently abandon its traditional principles in favor of severely limited sovereignty in a small segment of Palestine.

National security analysts must evaluate the risks of the Israel-PLO deal on the conservative assumption of continued hostility and an increase of Islamist political power in the region. From that point of view, Israel must be seen as assuming very serious risks in seeking peace with the PLO, for the Israeli concessions may, under changed circumstances in the future, affect the state's ability to protect itself in war. And the legal safeguards intended to mitigate those risks can be expected to prove far less effective than hoped for. To be sure, the status quo too has its burdens and worrisome features. But as they work to define the full extent of their concessions to the PLO, Israeli officials will have to keep hopes in check and protect against trading current problems for worse problems. ◇

Douglas J. Feith served during the Reagan administration as Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense and a Middle East specialist on the White House National Security Council staff. This is the text of the lecture that he delivered at the American Leadership Conference on Israel, in Arlington, VA, on October 10.

Point of View

CONGRESS NEEDS TO KNOW THE WHOLE STORY

Congress will soon find itself faced with requests from the Clinton administration to commit American money, troops and promises to anchor an Arab-Israeli accord. The Rabin government will be unable to convince the Israeli public to agree to surrender strategic territory unless they can offer American "security guarantees" in exchange. But whatever the wisdom of the risks Rabin is willing to undertake, American Congressmen will have to decide whether such a U.S. commitment is genuinely in America's interest.

Making such a judgement will not be easy, in part because the Rabin government itself is systematically suppressing and withholding information vital to any analysis of the future Mideast peace prospects. Rabin's Foreign Ministry has, for example, instructed Israeli

consulates and embassies around the world to stop circulating copies of the PLO Covenant (which still calls for the destruction of Israel, and which Arafat has refused to change); to refrain from publicizing speeches that Arafat has recently made in Arabic, in which he describes the Israel-PLO accord as one stage in his "Phased Plan" to wipe out Israel; and to play down news about Arab terrorist attacks on Israeli residents of Judea, Samaria and Gaza.

Without such information, Congressmen will have a hard time deciding whether the PLO can be trusted or is already violating the accord; whether the PLO has really become "moderate" or will be a force for radicalism and discord in the region; and whether U.S. "security guarantees" will keep the peace or encourage another Somalia-like quagmire from which U.S. troops, and U.S. credibility, will soon flee. ◇

--Ruth King

BALDERDASH

"American Jews can begin now to take the road towards achieving normalcy. The process of de-Zionization could force American Jews to finally begin facing their own problems as Americans and as Jews."

--Leon Hadar of the Jewish Committee on the Middle East, in the Fall 1993 edition of *Issues*, published by the American Council for Judaism

"The Israelis are coming to understand that the Green Line brings [them] security."

-Knesset Member Naomi Chazan, of the leftwing Meretz Party, at the U.N.-hosted International Non-Governmental Organizations Meeting on the Question of Palestine, in Vienna last August

"Israel attacked Egypt, resulting in a war with Egypt, Jordan and Syria. Israel captured by force Arab territories, including the West Bank, the Gaza Strip and the Golan Heights."

--Summary of the 1967 war by Donald Neff, author of *Warriors for Suez*, in the 1994 *Desk Diary & Calendar of Facts on the Middle East*, published by the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee

"In 1974 Yasser Arafat addressed the U.N....It reminded me of Martin Luther King's 'I have a dream' speech made in 1963, beneath the shadow of the Lincoln Memorial, where he envisioned children of all races and creeds walking hand in hand."

--William Lord, explaining why he joined the Israel-bashing Council for the National Interest, in the January 1994 issue of the *Washington Report on Middle East Affairs*

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