

OUTPOST

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Israel's Leadership Vacuum

Herbert Zweibon

Facing greater challenges than at any time in its modern history, Israel is without leaders.

Nothing illustrates the vacuum better than the way in which failed leaders are rewarded, recycled and propped up. Take the election of Shimon Peres as President of Israel. In "Rewarding Failure is Becoming the Prevailing Norm in Israel," Professor of Political Science at Tel Aviv University Martin Sherman notes the bizarre symbolism in his election on the exact day Hamas was completing its takeover of Gaza. As Sherman observes, it is difficult to think of any individual who bears greater responsibility for the transformation of Gaza into "Hamastan," yet "on the very day that the utter failure of his alleged 'statesmanship' was so starkly and irrevocably exposed to all, on that very day, somehow Peres, through the torturous, convoluted machinations of the Israeli system, found himself elected to represent the State of Israel."

While the Presidency is largely symbolic it is important for that very reason, signifying that this individual represents the best of Israel. The Knesset could have chosen Natan Sharansky, whose years of defiance in Soviet prisons made him an international symbol of courage and who has since become a political leader and an articulate champion of democracy worldwide. Instead it chose Israel's Prince of Folly, whose babble shames the state. (AFSI has published several selections of his most idiotic remarks under the title *Shimon Says*.) And open his mouth Peres will in this bully pulpit. Moreover the President has the power of pardon, which Peres is likely to bestow on convicted terror chieftain Marwin Barghouti.

Then there is the return to public life after six years of Ehud Barak, newly elected head of the Labor Party and now Defense Minister in Olmert's government. In any sane polity Barak's earlier abysmal failure both as Prime Minister and Defense Minister would have consigned him permanently to the political dust-heap. As Sherman notes "The major security problems that Barak will be called on to contend

with...are all the result of his mishandling when he served as Defense Minister in the government headed by – Ehud Barak. His flaccidity in facing the Palestinian gangs and his flight from the Lebanese militia constitute the 'original sin' that eventually led to the takeover of the radicals in the south and the enhancement of their prowess in the north."

Meanwhile the failed government of Ehud Olmert is propped up by a coalition with a comfortable Knesset majority even though polls have shown Olmert's public support as low as 5%. The ill assorted coalition members cling to their ministerial chairs as life rafts, terrified of being cast away in new elections.

Alas, the opposition also features failed re-treads. Benjamin Netanyahu, whose bitterly disappointing performance as Prime Minister resulted in Barak's victory in 2000, is all but certain to lead the Likud. His performance since then offers fair warning to those who dream of a "new" Netanyahu. Rather than taking the leadership of those opposing the strategically and morally insane destruction of Jewish communities in Gaza, Netanyahu clung to his position in the Sharon cabinet until the very eve of the pullout when his resignation was too late to have any impact.

Israel desperately needs a Prime Minister with bedrock conviction in Israel's legitimate rights, with sufficient iron in his soul to stand up to pressures to falsify the realities Israel faces, someone who will encourage and energize Jews in Israel and abroad looking for direction and hope. To be sure, needing such a leader does not guarantee his emergence. But Israelis must seek him out. If Israel persists in rewarding failure, in clinging to hallucinations of Fatah-as-peace-partner, the chances for such a leader coming to the fore dwindle to the vanishing point. •

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From the Editor

Carter for Hamas

Jimmy Carter, crowned by the media (and himself) as this country's highest representative of virtue, whose true guiding moral principle is hatred of Israel, now champions Hamas. In a June 19 speech in Ireland to (what else?) the eighth annual Forum on Human Rights, Carter declared that the Bush administration's actions to sideline the terrorist organization are "criminal."

Sustainable Development, UN Style

Given the UN's inversions of reality, Francis Nhema, the new chairman of the UN Commission on Sustainable Development, is a perfect fit for the job. In 2003 Nhema (also Zimbabwe's Minister of Environment) seized the highly productive Nyananda farm in northern Zimbabwe after its rightful owner Chris Shepherd and his family were run off the farm by Mugabe's goon squads. Under Shepherd a prosperous cattle ranch and high grade tobacco and corn producer, under Nhema the farm produces – nothing. The London Times of June 27 reports: "'This year there is nothing,' said a former farm security guard, who asked to remain anonymous. 'There is a small patch of soy beans. The rest is weeds. The whole 1,000 hectares are weeds.'"

Note: In the first week of July Zimbabwe went into total meltdown. Writer and dispossessed farmer Cathy Buckle, who has remained in the farming village of Marondera, describes the goon squads the government sent forth with a new mission: forcing shop owners and businesses to cut their prices by 50%. Those who refused were arrested, their goods seized, their premises trashed. The end result is empty shelves since no one can refill them only to sell below cost.

Sy Hersh, Again

Backed by *The New Yorker* and its ludicrous fact checking, Sy Hersh has been untouchable. Until now. For once there has been real fact-checking, this time by Lebanese journalists. Journalist Tom Gross quotes an article in *Haaretz* about these enterprising souls: "Sharp-eyed reporters in Beirut read Pulitzer Prize winner Seymour Hersh's article in astonishment, so obviously were Hersh's allegations about the Bush administration's cooperation with Al Qaeda-linked groups in Lebanon untrue."

The Lebanese reporters dug up the behind-the-scene details of Hersh's shoddy modus operandi. "Hersh said he heard the story from Robert Fisk, the bureau chief of *The Independent's* Beirut office. But Hersh did not check out the story himself. For his part, Fisk said he heard the unconfirmed report from Alastair Crooke, a former British intelligence agent and the founding director and Middle East representative of the Conflicts Forum....Crooke, who gained his repu-

tation through his involvement in the conflict in northern Ireland, does not know Arabic. When Lebanese journalists spoke to Crooke about the report, they said he told them only that he had heard it 'from all kinds of people.'"

And this hearsay piled upon hearsay passes the "fact-checkers" at *The New Yorker*.

British Boycotts

Kudos to Leo McKinstry for his "Shame on the Left and its Vicious Hatred of Israel." McKinstry cites Pamela Hardyment, a member of the National Union of Journalists, explaining her support for the boycott-Israel resolution. "Israel," she said, is "a wonderful Nazi-like killing machine backed by the world's richest Jews." With a glancing reference to the "so-called Holocaust" she declaimed "Shame on all Jews, may your lives be cursed."

The best riposte to the assorted U.K. boycotters (this one on the belatedly-rescinded college professor union boycott) came from Bryan Reuben, a Professor Emeritus of Chemical Technology, published in the London Times:

"Sir, In the early 1920s Johannes Stark and the Nobel Laureate Philipp Lenard declared that all science is racially dependent, and that relativity must be rejected because of its non-Aryan and theoretical origins. Because Einstein was a Jew, they led a campaign to boycott him, to prevent him lecturing and to avoid references to his work in the literature.

"The University and College Union has distinguished antecedents."

It's the Oppression, Stupid

Pundits and politicians struggle to understand how doctors could become mass murderers. Our thanks to Prof Joakim Isaacs who has written from Jerusalem with the explanation. Clearly, he observes, these doctors have suffered such oppression from the British National Health service that in their desperation they have turned to terror. He adds a plea for physicians around the world to organize a boycott of the United Kingdom medical establishment.

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An Alternative Universe

Rael Jean Isaac

Mugged by reality. The well-known phrase encapsulates the commonsense notion that reality will intrude and overwhelm false beliefs. Thus Chamberlain finally woke up when Hitler invaded Poland and even Jimmy Carter, a leading candidate for the title of worst President-ever, changed his rosy view of Soviet intentions after the invasion of Afghanistan.

But while in the long run, reality will indeed trump wishful thinking, the process is often not simple. Another less down to earth, less widely understood term is cognitive dissonance, which can be remarkably successful in retarding the process. Cognitive dissonance comes into play when the mind experiences contradictory “cognitions” (ideas, emotions, beliefs, or a combination thereof) and seeks a way to reduce the conflict without sacrificing the “cognition” that has bumped into an unwelcome reality. The term was originally coined in 1957 by Leon Festinger in *When Prophecy Fails* to describe the surprising response of members of a UFO doomsday cult when the day its leader had proclaimed the world would end passed uneventfully. Most members dealt with the “dissonance” between their beliefs and reality by proselytizing for the cult even harder, modifying their belief system to incorporate the idea that aliens had spared the planet for the sake of the cult’s believers.

In the aftermath of Hamas’ seizure of Gaza, both Israel and the United States are in cognitive dissonance mode, adapting their belief systems, hard-pressed by reality, into an equally erroneous set of ideas that seemingly surmount the difficulties. Has the putative state of Palestine, the holy grail “solution” to all the problems of the Middle East, split into the warring geographic units of Fatahstan and Hamastan? Is the latter likely to serve as a base for a plethora of Islamic terrorists (just what we are trying to prevent elsewhere at great cost of men and money)? Never mind. Basically this is good news. That’s because now Fatah-land, under peace-loving Mahmoud Abbas can become a showcase of plenty and good governance (if sufficiently showered with arms and funds). It is up to Israel to make a territorial offer so good Abbas cannot refuse, proving that moderation produces results. Hamas will be isolated, grouching in Gaza, and its population will soon be clamoring to become part of prosperous Fatah-controlled Palestine. Representing the Quartet (remember the Roadmap?), the high profile Tony Blair hopes to be the powerhouse to wrap the whole thing up.

The beliefs of the UFO cult and its response to a disproving reality were no more absurd than the

premises—and response to their repeated disproof—of the peace processors. The Arab world has never altered its view of Israel as a theological scandal in the geographic heartland of Islam that must be wiped from the map. In backing the PLO as the “sole representative of the Palestinian people” the Arab states were endorsing its Covenant, which in article after article denied Israel’s right to exist in any boundaries. Sample: “Article 15: The liberation of Palestine, from an Arab viewpoint, is a national duty to repulse the Zionist, imperialist invasion from the great Arab homeland

and to purge the Zionist presence from Palestine.” (The Hamas Covenant of 1988 differs in being explicitly Islamic, declaring bluntly for example that “Israel will exist until Islam will obliterate it.”)



In 1993 perennial inhabitant of an alternative universe Shimon Peres and a few supportive academics overlooked such disquieting realities to come up with the Oslo

accords, overnight converting terror chieftain Yasser Arafat into a world statesman and Nobel Peace prize material. Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin had his own “hard-headed” reason to go along: the PLO, he declared, could be counted on to eliminate troublemakers without being bothered with the human rights outcries of B’Tselem. (B’Tselem is mischaracterized as a human rights organization in Israel since it is more interested in attacking Israel than in human rights.) It did not take long for both Peres’ notions of a New Middle East and Rabin’s of a PLO that clamped down on terror to be shown up as equally fantastical. Since Peres is incapable of contact with reality, this had no impact on him. Rabin, rather than being “mugged by reality,” chose the path of cognitive dissonance. As terror attacks mounted, Rabin, rather than admitting Oslo was a failure, came up with the invention that “enemies of peace” were responsible: both the enemies of peace who launched the attacks to weaken Arafat and the enemies of peace in Israel who assailed Rabin’s policies.

All subsequent Israeli governments have chosen to cling to the original false premise of Oslo, coming up with one “invention” after the other to overcome the dissonance with stubbornly encroaching reality. Arafat’s decision to start a new *Intifada* rather than accept a Palestinian state on 95% of Judea, Samaria and Gaza—Barak’s offer under Clinton’s aegis—should have finally put paid to the idea that Arafat wanted a state alongside (rather than in place of) Israel. Instead the supposed hardliner Ariel Sharon came up with yet another “invention,” namely unilateral

disengagement. If the Palestinian Authority would not sign a peace treaty, Israel would nevertheless advance peace by giving up territory without any quid pro quo – in the first instance, the Jewish communities of Gaza and northern Samaria.

The result was predictable and predicted. Hamas won the Palestinian Authority elections and assorted terror groups used Israel's once idyllic communities, now rubble, as launching pads for rockets into southern Israel. As a third of the residents of the Israeli town of Sderot fled, Olmert offered up an astonishing new "invention" to justify the "disengagement" to Sderot's desperate residents: "A country cannot protect itself ad infinitum because there would be no end to it." So much for the generally-agreed principle that the basic duty of any country's political leaders is to protect the security of citizens.

The United States has been a proponent of the delusory proposition of "territories for peace" since Israel's creation (in the early 1950s then Secretary of State John Foster Dulles wanted Israel to give up part of the Negev). After 9/11 it looked as if an American administration might finally have been "mugged by reality" and break with the outworn formulas. President Bush spoke boldly of the dichotomy between those who were with us, with civilization, and those who sided with terrorists. By this time there could be little doubt on the part of even the most determined State Department wishful thinkers where Arafat stood; as for the Palestinian "people," they turned out en masse to celebrate 9/11 in the streets. Subsequently the PA openly identified with both the Taliban and Saddam.

But once again cognitive dissonance triumphed. President Bush "saved" the disproven mantra by coming up with the "invention" that the Palestinian people, despite all evidence to the contrary, were hungry for peace. Bush became the first U.S. President to call openly for a Palestinian state, which his "vision" told him would live amicably side by side with Israel. As Andrew McCarthy has pointed out, by ignoring everything he should have known about the goals (eradication of the "Zionist entity") and behavior (terrorism, education of children to hatred, massive corruption) of the Palestinian Authority, the President made a mockery of his own central message.

Subsequently the willingness to stand reality on its head has become breathtaking. Case in point: last October Condoleezza Rice told columnist Cal Thomas that one could look at "any" opinion poll in the Palestinian territories and 70% say they are ready to live side by side with Israel because they just want to live in peace. As McCarthy points out, polls show that up to 93% of young Palestinian Arab adults (18-25) deny Israel's right to exist and 75% of the total popula-

tion agrees. Rice has it exactly backward.

Nor has subsequent exposure to reality had any effect – on either the U.S. or Israel -- other than to produce behavior supporting earlier delusions. By all accounts the Bush administration was stunned by Fatah's collapse in Gaza and the easy Hamas takeover (there was "shock and awe" according to one insider). But the response has simply been to pour money and diplomacy down the same rathole. Another \$86 million of U.S. taxpayer dollars is going to Fatah, apparently without considering that \$400 million dollars worth of military equipment similarly invested is now in the hands of Hamas. Indeed Hamas has openly welcomed the infusion of funds to Fatah. Says spokesman Abu Abdullah "Like the American weapons in Gaza we told you will come to Hamas, the weapons and aid the Americans are giving to Abu Mazen (Abbas) as part of their conspiracy against us on the West Bank will find its way to the Palestinian resistance and Hamas."

Not that the arms to Fatah are less harmful to Israel. The preponderance will go to Force 17, whose members overwhelmingly belong to the Al Aqsa Martyrs Brigade, responsible for most of the suicide attacks within Israel.

There is even the same General, Keith Dayton, assigned to train Fatah forces in Judea and Samaria, although he was responsible for training the Fatah forces in Gaza who cut and ran despite far outnumbering and possessing vastly more arms than their Hamas challengers. There is even more open adulation of Abbas, whom Bush proclaims represents Palestinians "who believe in peace." And there is even more pressure on Israel to shore up Abbas by giving him whatever he demands so as to produce that mythical Palestinian state living in peace and harmony with Israel.

As for Israel, it engages in the same old pattern, constantly repeated since Oslo, of releasing terrorists, 250 of them this time, to show, says Olmert "our hand outstretched in peace." In the real world the government is simply showing it is not serious about combating terror and in its obsession with appeasement is prepared to act as enabler for the future murder of Israeli citizens. (Additional evidence is that it goes on supplying Gaza with electricity, gas, food and all types of so-called "humanitarian assistance," further enabling its enemies.) In another oft-repeated "goodwill gesture" it has released \$120 million to Abbas, which, if past is prologue -- and it surely is -- will chiefly go to fund more anti-Israel terror and villas in the Mediterranean. If anything, Fatah officials will feel a more urgent need to pile up funds in foreign bank accounts; they must now be acutely conscious that Hamas may soon take over, putting an end to the



President Bush with Abbas

party. As Michael Oren has pointed out in *The Wall Street Journal*, investing in Abbas is like investing in the Titanic for “any sovereign edifice built on the rotten foundations of the PA is bound to implode, enhancing, rather than diminishing Hamas’ influence.”

The whole notion of a peace-hungry Fatah pitted against extremist Hamas is an absurdity. As Fouad Ajami has pointed out “Nablus in the West Bank is no more amenable to reason than is Gaza; the writ of the pitiless preachers and gunmen is the norm in both places.” The Al Aqsa Martyrs Brigade (which the U.S. will now arm via Force 17) has already announced that it rejects Abbas’ presidential decree that militias disband and that it “will not be committed to a truce with the Israelis as long as the occupation continues the crimes and incursions against Palestinians and their cities.” Moreover, given Fatah’s rivalry with Hamas for “legitimacy” as representative of the Palestinian cause, there is no way Abbas will enter into a “peace agreement” that gives up the “right to return,” i.e. the abolition of Israel as a Jewish state. Abbas has repeatedly said he would never give up this “sacred” right and he is signatory to the treaty of understanding with Hamas which declares “the right of the refugees to return to their homes and their property must be guaranteed.”



Moshe Feiglin

The opposition in Israel shows scarcely more propensity to be mugged by reality than Olmert (who has chosen this moment to reaffirm his readiness to give the Golan to Syria). Benjamin Netanyahu, the likely next Prime Minister, has called for sending into Judea and Samaria the 1000 man Badr Brigade of the Palestine Liberation Army, presently stationed in Jordan. As Moshe Feiglin has said “It is very sad that Netanyahu is reviving via the back door the Oslo illusion that Palestinian terrorists should protect the State of Israel against other Palestinian terrorists.” As Netanyahu ought to know, the end result can only be to increase the number of terrorists attacking Israel.

And so policy-makers, rather than being mugged by reality, are propelled deeper into their alternative universe, playing out the fantasy with more determination than ever. The U.S. is “engaging” the Moslem Brotherhood. Tony Blair remains convinced that absence of a Palestinian state is responsible for the global jihad. Israel professes enthusiasm for Abbas, Blair, the EU, anything that shows the most illusory prospect for lifting from the Israeli government responsibility for ensuring the security of its citizens.

Given Fatah’s rivalry with Hamas for legitimacy there is no way Abbas will enter into a “peace agreement” that gives up the “right to return.”

In the end reality will out over the most entrenched illusions. The UFO cult members described by Festinger may have proselytized harder than ever after the end of days did not come at the appointed time, but the cult eventually fizzled out. In this case, the only question is the eventual price to be paid for reality-avoidance. Clearly Israel pays the highest price for the longer it clings to illusions, the costlier coming to grips with reality must prove. As sociologist Martin Sherman writes: “No administrative or government system can survive the ravages of irrationality that the Israeli system is presently being subjected to. No such

system can sustain itself if it operates on the basis of disregarding the facts....No amount of stock market peaks, or scientific advances or of technological advances will be able to fend off eventual collapse and catastrophe if this mode of conduct persists.”

But the United States (and the West) also pays a high price for clinging to the delusion that Islamic ambitions will be

sated rather than whetted if the Arab-Israel conflict is “solved,” i.e. Israel is dissolved. Western leaders seem to be guided by magical thinking – don’t say it and it doesn’t exist. How else explain British Prime Minister Gordon Brown’s direction to his ministers to omit “Muslim” when discussing (Muslim) terrorism. As the astute columnist Diana West observes, it is not only the British who engage in this form of denial; at the elite levels in the U.S. “Islam itself is politically and strategically beside the point.” She notes that “debate now divides the Pentagon over a new lexicon for Centcom. At stake is the Islamic term ‘jihad’ itself, which could become officially verboten within the ranks of the fighting force that is actually supposed to defeat it.”

Finally (too late?) both Israel and the United States will be mugged by reality—the reality of the lesser jihad (aiming to destroy Israel) and the greater jihad (whose target is the infidel West).

AFSI Books

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Dubious Allies: The Arab Media’s War of Words Against America —\$5.95

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Confrontation at Petra

William Mehlman

Evoking empathy for Ehud Olmert from any point on the political spectrum these days has got to rank among the tallest of tall orders. In a one-on-one with the Israeli prime minister at the Third Annual Conference of Nobel Laureates in Petra, Jordan, co-sponsor Eli Wiesel almost managed to pull it off.

“Almost” is the operative word. With few exceptions, Olmert’s responses to the “questions” put to him by Wiesel in the nearly hour-long interview clearly mark him as having learned little from last summer’s Lebanon debacle. The risk of investing him with the grave decisions Israel may be compelled to make at any time over the months ahead comes at us like a flashing red light. Apparently, the only source of sleep deprivation the prime minister is suffering these days is his concern over “the fate of the Palestinian children. I don’t want to shoot them,” he declares “and I don’t want them to shoot me.”

The traumatized children of Sderot don’t seem to contribute to his tossing and turning (perhaps because they don’t have guns), but neither, apparently, does the armor the Syrians are massing along the Golan border, the Kassam rockets daily raining down on the western Negev, the 20,000 Katyushas in the hands of a reinvigorated Hezbollah, the Al-Qaeda takeover of Hamas terrorist instruction in Gaza or even the specter of an Iranian nuclear bomb. None of the above was deemed worthy of mention.

The PM’s “other”-rooted humanitarian focus also dominated his thinking on the question of peace. The main, perhaps the only obstacle to its achievement in his eyes is “how to solve the issue of refugees.” The defensibility of Israel’s borders, the continued unity of Jerusalem were reduced to matters of “great sensitivity.” However “sensitive,” such considerations, Mr. Olmert gives us to understand, will not, at the end of the day, be permitted to obstruct his embrace of the “Saudi Initiative,” which, inter alia, obliges Israel to re-divide Jerusalem, dispossess 220,000 Jewish residents of Judea, Samaria and the Golan of their homes and villages and remove itself to the 1949 Armistice lines.

If anything was more disturbing than the PM’s replies, it was the tenor of the questions Wiesel threw at him. “Questions” hardly describes them. They were jabs of the “wise-man” variety, designed to burnish the gravitas of the questioner at the expense of his subject. The elicitation of any real information seemed a peripheral matter. The predominantly pro-Palestinian audience ate it up.

Believe in democracy, do you? “What about

Hamas, weren’t they democratically elected?”

Big on peace are you? So “next year is going to be 60 years since the creation of the State of Israel and the start of war. Don’t you think it’s enough?”

Sitting down with Mahmoud Abbas and working out an end to the terror? “What does that mean? You are negotiating in order to negotiate further, or is it something of more substance?” The audience roars with delight. Indeed, who would be so ingenuous as to imagine that terrorism was an issue of substance?

Truth? Truth is whatever facilitates the creation of Palestine in the heartland of Israel.. “Twenty two Arab states are ready to make peace immediately with Israel,” Mr. Wiesel announces. “To establish diplomatic, economic, even military relations with Israel. What’s the problem?”

The problem is not only the absence of any real evidence for such a claim, but the additional vilification this chimera from the lips of an iconic figure like Wiesel bestows on Israel from a world all too eager to believe the worst of the Jewish state.

What was this dumb-show in Petra all about? Would even the Fourth Son at the Passover table have feigned ignorance of the lengths to which Israel has gone in quest of a modus vivendi with its neighbors over the last 60 years? In pursuit of that will-o-the-wisp, Israel mindlessly injected a terrorist virus into its bloodstream in 1993 which has, to date, consumed 2,000 of its citizens and maimed thousands more, with no end in sight.

Israel tried “Land for Peace” in south Lebanon and was rewarded six years later with 4,000 rockets on Haifa and the Galilee.

It would have gone that route again at Camp David II – 95 percent of Judea and Samaria, the re-division of Jerusalem and who knows what else -- had Yasser Arafat not pulled the plug.

Arafat was no longer on the scene when Israel walked away from 25 vibrant Jewish communities in Gush Katif and northern Samaria, destroying the lives and fortunes of their 9,000 inhabitants as “Land for Peace” morphed into “Land for Nothing.” But even Arafat could not have been other than awed at the reconstitution of Gaza as an Al-Qaeda-Iranian protectorate and the transformation of the western Negev into a Kassam free-fire zone.

We have too much regard for Eli Wiesel’s intelligence to believe him innocent of the knowledge that the only real obstacle to an Arab-Israeli peace is the Arab world’s unaltered refusal to accept the permanent presence of a Jewish state within any borders



Eli Wiesel

and under any circumstances between the Mediterranean Sea and the Jordan River. With due respect to his 22 Arab states panting to establish all kinds of relationships with Israel, that message of rejection rings out from every mosque, every newspaper, radio and television station, every kindergarten classroom from Morocco to Yemen.

Mr. Wiesel might have used his global eclat to speak truth to the power of those 25 Laureates assembled at Petra, to draw a blue pencil across the myths propagated just a few months earlier by his co-host King Abdullah before a joint session of the U.S. Congress. He chose instead to play to the crowd.

Taking the liberty of picking up on his impassioned plea to Ronald Reagan in 1986 to rethink his decision to participate in a wreath-laying ceremony at

a military cemetery in Germany, we would say of Mr. Wiesel's Petra performance that those words in that place were not what we expected to hear from the witness-bearer for the stilled voices of one-third of world Jewry. Eli, we looked for you at Gush Katif, when 9,000 Jews were being reprocessed as refugees in their own land, their homes, their synagogues, their schools, their dreams put to the torch. You were not there. We looked for you again at Amona, when Jewish children were getting their skulls cracked by Jewish police for the "crime" of defending a Jewish home from destruction. You were not there either. Should we abandon the search?

William Mehlman represents AFSI in Israel and is co-editor of the internet magazine ZionNet.

Elon Moreh

Zeev Saffer

(This is the fourth in a series on the Jewish communities of Judea, Samaria and Gaza.)

When, a new immigrant, I arrived in Israel thirty-three years ago, my wife and I, with our two children, joined a group (*garin*) of families that decided to settle in Samaria. There were no Jewish families living in Samaria at the time and because of its importance as the place where the Jewish nation began, we chose the area of Elon Moreh.

The Bible first mentions Elon Moreh when God tells Abram (his name not yet Abraham) to leave his father's home and go to the land He will show him (Gen. 12:1). "And Abram passed through the land unto the place of Shechem, unto the terebint [Hebrew 'elon'] of Moreh." (Gen. 12:6) Here God tells Abram "to your children will I give this land." (Gen. 12:7) When Jacob returns from Laban's home, he goes to Elon Moreh and purchases a parcel of land (Gen. 33:19) which he bequeaths to his son Joseph (Gen. 48:22) on his deathbed. Decades later, after the Exodus and the conquest of Canaan, Joseph was buried there (Jos 24:32). It was also at Elon Moreh that the children of Israel stood on Mt. Gerizim and Mt. Ebal and received the Blessings and the Curses (Josh. 8:30) Joshua built an altar on Mt. Ebal and the Bible says that on that day and at that place, the children of Israel became a nation. (Deut: 27:9)

Our group ran into intense opposition from our own government, which even then hoped to exchange "territories for peace." Six times our *garin* were thrown off by the army. The seventh time, during

Chanukah 1975, thousands of supporters joined us and in a compromise, the government allowed us to settle in Camp Kaddum, an old Jordanian army camp.

Kaddum (now known as Kedumim) has since flourished and grown into a substantial town, but our nucleus was still determined to settle in Biblical Elon Moreh. Even as we built Kedumim, we looked east to Mt. Gerizim and Mt. Ebal. Our opportunity came in 1977 when Menachem Begin was elected Prime Minister. On *Tu Bishvat* (the traditional Arbor Day) in 1980, our *garin* moved to the site of our present village on a mountaintop overlooking the city of Shechem. Elon Moreh is two miles east of Shechem, facing Joseph's Tomb, Mt. Gerizim and Mt. Ebal. Today, a multi-cultural microcosm, 250 families from 25 countries live here, over 20% recent immigrants from Peru, Russia, India, the U.S. and England.



Elon Moreh seen from Mt. Ebal

Elon Moreh has a large mini-market, stores selling books and stationery, clothing stores and offers a variety of personal services, from barbers to electricians to plumbers to gardeners. A number of scribes (*sofrim*) live in the community, who write mezuzot, tefillin, megillot (for Purim) and Torah scrolls. A post office also provides some banking functions. There is a swimming pool, sports center with gymnasium and an exercise room. Medical facilities include an infirmary and dental clinic. A large commercial center is in the planning stage.

Education is a high priority in this religious community, going up to a Yeshivat Hesder (providing mixed religious and military training) and a rabbinical college. Under the leadership of Rabbi Elyakim Levanon, the village's rabbi and Yeshiva principal, there are adult classes for men and women.

Over the years Elon Moreh has suffered more than its share from Arab terror. The main synagogue is dedicated to the memory of two of Elon Moreh's children, Rami Chaba and Tirzah Porat, killed during

an outing of teenagers eighteen years ago. The worst single disaster occurred during Passover of 2002, when a terrorist shot his way into the home of Rabbi David Gavish. The terrorist killed David, his wife Rachel, their oldest son Abraham and Rachel's father Yitzhak Kaner. David, 50 years old at the time of his murder, had taught in Elon Moreh for many years, at one time serving as school principal. Rachel taught in Elon Moreh schools for 20 years, before her death acting as counselor at the Michlalah girls school. Rachel's father, 83 when he was killed, lived in Jerusalem but had come, as was his custom, to be with the family for the holidays. Avraham, at 24, was the oldest of David and Rachel's seven children, and had come to Elon Moreh as an infant. An officer in an elite corps in the army, he was married, leaving a baby daughter, Naamah.

The murder of the Gavish family was a tremendous shock, and we feared many families would leave. In fact not a single family left in response to the tragedy and many new fami-



lies have continued to come. We have built a security perimeter around Elon Moreh and special cameras and monitors ensure that this kind of tragedy will not happen again. The first stage of the new cultural center, including a library and lecture rooms in memory of the Gavish family and all Elon Moreh's terror victims, has been built.

Those of us who formed the nucleus of Kedumim and then Elon Moreh take great pride in having been the pioneers in settling Samaria. Today the homes of tens of thousands of Jews, with their schools, yeshivot, factories, vineyards and orchards, cover the hills of Judea and Samaria. Our supporters abroad, especially American Friends of Elon Moreh, give families here the sense they are not alone in their struggle to continue to build and grow in this biblical homeland of the Jewish people.

More information can be found on the Elon Moreh website shechem.org/elon-moreh

Casting Terrorists as Defenders of the Constitution

By J.R. Dunn

With a series of decisions made over the past few weeks, the American legal establishment—both civil and military—has met and surpassed the lowest expectations of its critics.

At Guantanamo on June 4, a pair of military judges threw out the cases against two active members of Al-Qaeda. These were not trivial figures. Salim Ahmed Hamdan served as no less than Osama bin Laden's driver and bodyguard, apart from his role in planning and carrying out attacks against civilians. The second defendant, Omar Khadr, is of an altogether different order. The junior member of Canada's "Al-Queda family", a clan in which every adult male member was a made *mujahadin*, Khadr was picked up while fighting against U.S. forces in Afghanistan. The soldier he killed there was a medic in the process of treating the injured. You will look hard to find that fact mentioned in any media coverage, though reporters have no trouble making the space to point out that Khadr was fifteen at the time.

You'd think that the flaws in the government's case would have to be pretty egregious for such a pair of high-profile defendants to be so abruptly freed. But in truth, they're closer to textbook examples of misplaced-comma nitpicking. The case against Khadr is void, claims Army Col. Peter Brownback, because the military review board labeled him only an "enemy combatant", not an "unlawful enemy combatant." The same logic (if that's the word I'm groping for) was ech-

oed by Navy Capt. Keith Allred in the decision on Hamdan. Because "unlawful" was left out, he is "not subject to this commission". It has to say "unlawful". They're not kidding. Presumably, it also has to be highlighted, underlined, and italicized as well. The court clerks will check.

The sole relief for this error, according to Brownback and Allred, is to cut Khadr and Hamdan loose. And that means doing the same with every last one of the 380 goons now awaiting trial—as ripe a collection of child-killers, head-cutters, bomb-makers, and mass murderers ever taken into custody.

Of course, nothing of the sort is going to happen. The actual aim appears to be to kick the entire caseload into the civilian courts, which will represent no improvement.

On May 30, in a decision of which the Guantanamo judges were no doubt well aware, a U.S. District court ordered the release of a Palestinian Arab named Majed Talat Hajbeh. In Jordan, Hajbeh had been convicted of terrorism for, among other things, bombing an American school. (Which didn't stop him from running to the U.S. to hide out.) Picked up on an immigration charge, Hajbeh was held for four years while the U.S. searched for somebody willing to take him off our hands.

For some obscure reason, no state, including the Israelis, was interested in providing a home for a hardened Palestinian terrorist. (I assume he could have been sent back to Jordan but for rules forbidding this.) And there things stood until the last days of May, when Judge Jerome B. Friedman revealed that international terrorists who cannot be dumped elsewhere must be turned loose without further ado.

And on June 11, the umpire called, "strike three!" in the form of *Al-Marri v. Wright*. Ali Saleh Kahlah al-Marri is an easy match for Khadr and Hajbeh, a Qatari who trained at an Al-Queda camp, actually met 9/11 planner Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, and was sent to the U.S. to establish a sleeper cell to be activated for later terrorist strikes. The Fourth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals argued with none of that. Nor did they dispute the fact that Al-Marri is an enemy combatant, unlawful or otherwise. What they found was that, despite those unquestioned facts, the United States "lacks the authority" to hold Al-Marri, and, by extension, any other active terrorist.

So in under two weeks time, the judiciary of the United States has established that known international terrorists, bent on causing as much destruction within this country's borders as humanly possible, cannot be held at Guantanamo, cannot be held in U.S. prisons, and cannot be returned to the only countries that will accept them.

All this was predicted in detail as early as 2002, when the first large-scale arrests of terrorists occurred. If the response to terrorism was allowed to rest in the hands of civilian courts, it would become a matter of legal minutiae, all sense of its actual import would be lost, and it would deteriorate into precisely the kind of circus we see here. The courts have followed the script exactly. The only variation lies in the fact that the military judges have proven just as frivolous—but of course they would be; they attend the same schools after all.

Originally law represented the interests of society as a whole. The goal of legal proceedings was to repair breaches in the social fabric brought about by torts or criminal activity. Law was a balanced entity which (at least in the English system, and in the ideal sense) represented the interests of no party more than any other.

This classical paradigm underwent deep and massive changes during America's cultural revolution beginning in mid-century. Thanks to a serious misinterpretation of psychology by criminologists and other academics, the law began to shift its focus from the general to the particular, from society at large to the criminal. Psychologists such as Karl Menninger and criminologists beginning with the Chicago School of Social Science promoted a belief that rehabilitation of the offender must become the central pillar of the justice system. This way of thinking soon spread into the law schools and legal journals, becoming the consensus view of the legal profession (and beyond them the public at large).

By the mid-60s this viewpoint had become

formalized through the "procedural revolution", in which a number of landmark Supreme Court cases—*Mapp v. Ohio*, *Miranda v. Arizona*, and *Escobedo v. Illinois*—shifted the offender to the very center of the criminal justice system. All other claims, including those of society and the crime victims, took second place from that point on.

The argument was sharpened as the 60s progressed, with claims that the criminal was the "first line of defense of the Bill of Rights," a kind of revolutionary hero serving as a Marxian vanguard for the rest of the proletariat. Criminals "stood alone against the full power of the state," and deserved all the assistance they could get.

Of course, it ended in disaster. The sanctification of the offender was a key element in the great crime explosion that wracked the country from the mid-60s until the late 90s. Criminals wound up using the procedural reforms as get-out-of-jail-free-cards. Over the following three decades, the new rights were slowly trimmed back by the courts, but never completely. In the past few years, the entire thesis has undergone a revival in legal circles, with the classic-comics psychology replaced by new findings in

neuroscience.

The same attitude now serves as a template for the current legal view of domestic terrorists.

The entire campaign against terrorism has been depicted as a vast conspiracy against the public. (Not so incidentally, this has been the most successful campaign of its type ever carried out—not a single successful strike has occurred in America since 9/11. Compare that to Northern Ireland or the campaign against Basque terrorists.) All the failed institutions—the media, academics, Democratic politicians—are in agreement that the public is in jeopardy from the campaign against terror. Federal telephone tapping, in their view, is not designed to track down potential terrorist plots, but to discover who's speaking out against Big Brother. Surveillance of overseas banking is not intended to trace funds that could be used to finance a terrorist strike, but to gather information about the citizenry. Library surveillance isn't meant to track down individuals searching for targeting information or bomb recipes but to compile lists of people reading Cindy Sheehan's books, and so on.

So if the War on Terror is a fraud, no more than a grotesque conspiracy designed to implement some kind of garrison state, what does that make the "terrorists"? What else but victims? Victims suffering horribly amid the abuses of Guantanamo and the rendition prisons. Victims standing alone against the full power of the state, victims deserving all the assistance



Prisoners in Guantanamo

they can get....

And in fact, the rhetoric we're hearing from the bench today closely echoes what was said about criminals during the 60s. Judge Diana Gribbon Motz, in her decision on the Al-Marri case, declares:

"To sanction such presidential authority to order the military to seize and indefinitely detain civilians, even if the president calls them 'enemy combatants,' would have disastrous consequences for the Constitution—and the country."

There we have it—the terrorist as protector of the Constitution. The first line of defense of the Bill of Rights.

These American judges are trapped in their own mentalities. They are prisoners of the legal history of the past fifty years. They can't think of terrorists in any other way than as *Mirandas* and *Escobedos* of slightly different order. They can't conceive of the current terrorism prosecutions as anything other than echoes of those cases. They can't dispose of them in any way other than the way their predecessors dealt with *Miranda* and *Escobedo* and all the others.

Regrettably, it will end badly, as it did in the

last century. Thousands of deaths, tens of thousands of crippled lives, all in the name of an ideology. The price of terrorism remains hidden. We will be very lucky if in the end it is lower than what we paid to let our criminals run wild.

We're beginning to run out of institutions. We have the executive, the military, certain elements of the intelligence community, and, it's true, the higher levels of the judiciary. But that's all. We will learn how well we can do with only that, with virtually every other element of our society either indifferent or actively working to undercut our security. Eventually, of course, the last straw will drop, our defenses will fade like shadows, and we will be left alone in the presence of our enemies.

Those enemies are well aware of all this. How couldn't they be? And they will take advantage of it. Wouldn't you?

J.R. Dunn is consulting editor of the American Thinker. This is an edited version of an article that appeared at AmericanThinker.com on June 26.

The Ship that Changed The Middle East

Victor Sharpe

During World War 1, Winston Churchill was widely blamed for the Gallipoli debacle; the attempt by the British to end the war by striking at Germany's ally, the Ottoman Turkish Empire.

But Churchill's decision to invade the Dardanelles, penetrate Europe's soft underbelly and force an early end to the war was, in large part, born out of frustration at the exploits of two German battle cruisers, the *Goeben* and the *Breslau*. These two ships had been sailing in the Mediterranean since 1912 and were to embark on an amazing

voyage across the Mediterranean once the war began in August, 1914. Indeed, it can be argued that the main reason the Middle East was to change forever was because of the fate of these ships and one in particular, the battle cruiser *Goeben*.

On December 7, 1909, the keel of a powerful new addition to the Imperial German Navy was laid. Named after the German general, August von *Goeben* (1816-1880), a hero of the Franco-Prussian war of 1870, the *Moltke* class capital ship, *Goeben*, was eventually commissioned on July, 1912.

Boasting a main armament of ten 11 inch main guns, mounted two per turret with guns that

could fire to both sides as well as forward, the *Goeben* was to become a thorn in the side of the French and British navies in the Mediterranean. It also became a source of shame for Great Britain, whose fleet failed to

intercept it or bring it to battle, instead allowing the *Goeben* and the *Breslau* to escape through the Dardanelles and reach Constantinople (now Istanbul).

On June 28, 1914, while the *Goeben* was anchored off the coast of Haifa, her Admiral, Wilhelm Souchon, along with the ship's officers were enjoying a reception given to them by the German colony. Word came that Archduke Ferdinand had been assassinated. Admiral Souchon, sensing that war would soon follow, decided to head for the Austro-Hungarian port of Pola in the Adriatic for needed repairs.

He telegraphed for the light cruiser *Breslau* to join him there.

It is interesting to note that on board the *Breslau*, a Sub-Lieutenant, Karl Doenitz, was serving—the same Doenitz who was to command the German World War 2 U-Boat fleets and who took over Germany in 1944 after Hitler committed suicide.

Some 12 hours before war was officially declared, *Goeben* and *Breslau* found themselves flanked by two British cruisers, *Indomitable* and *Indefatigable*, which for political reasons were constrained from taking military action.

Britain, fearing that an alliance would be



formed between Germany and the Ottoman Empire, had earlier sent the battle cruisers, along with the Inflexible, into the Mediterranean to intercept the two German battle cruisers and sink them. But the German ships were able to give them the slip.

Immediately after war had officially been declared on August 3, 1914, the powerful German ships headed west along the North African coast and bombarded the port of Philippeville in French Algeria. Goeben then briefly dueled with the British light cruiser, Gloucester, which was unable to close because of the Goeben's greater firing range. For a brief period, the Goeben and Breslau threatened French troopships bringing French-Algerian forces across the Mediterranean to reinforce the French armies along the fast evolving Western Front.

On August 4, 1914, Berlin ordered both ships to head for the Dardanelles. In the message received by Admiral Souchon, the German Admiralty stated "... alliance with Turkey concluded August 3. Proceed at once to Constantinople."

The German ships were again pursued by the Indomitable and Indefatigable but succeeded in out-running the two British battle cruisers. Both the Goeben and Breslau were eventually tracked to Messina in Sicily where they took on coal. The two British cruisers stood off shore waiting for the German ships to come out of port. Incredibly, the Goeben and Breslau slipped through the waiting British net. This was not the British Navy's finest hour.

On December 10, the German battle cruisers approached the straits separating European and Asian Turkey. Instead of being fired upon by Turkish shore batteries, as Admiral Souchon had feared, the German Mission advising the Turkish army convinced the Turks to permit the Goeben and Breslau safe passage through the Dardanelles.

Everything that had happened up to then led to the eventual diplomatic decision by Germany to hand over the Goeben and Breslau to the Ottoman Empire. Henceforth the Goeben became the Yavuz Sultan Selim, though the German crew remained to work the ship and control the future military sorties it carried out in both the Black Sea and the Mediterranean.

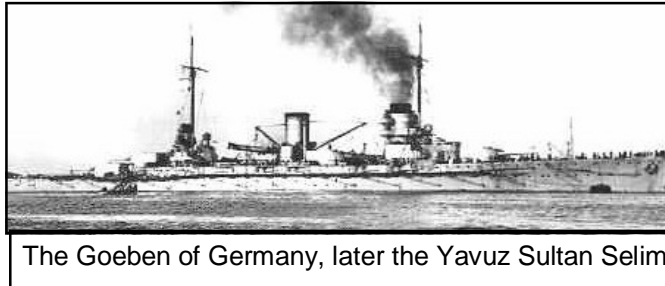
The transfer of both German battle cruisers was a deciding factor in bringing Turkey into the war on the side of Germany and Austria. On November 4, 1914, the Russians, smarting after the German-Turkish ships had shelled Odessa, Sebastopol and Feodosia, declared war on the Ottoman Empire. The following day, the British and French Governments also declared war on Turkey.

During 1915, initial plans were drawn up for the eventual dismemberment of the Ottoman Turkish Empire. In May, 1916, the Sykes-Picot Agreement was discussed by Britain and France with respect to the geographical areas known as Palestine and Syria. The plan was abandoned at the time of the Paris Peace Conference in 1919.

Ultimately, the Turkish Ottoman Empire collapsed as British forces, including those drawn from the immense British Empire, rolled back the Turks throughout the Middle East.

In December 1917, Britain's General Allenby entered Jerusalem at the head of his army. Ottoman possessions throughout the Middle East were subsequently captured and set up as British Mandates. Former Turkish areas that eventually came under French control after the war included Syria and Lebanon.

As a result of Britain's victories over Turkish forces in 1917 and 1918, some ten million Arabs in the Middle East were freed from 400 years of Turkish rule. It is interesting to note that the area set



The Goeben of Germany, later the Yavuz Sultan Selim

aside for Arab rule in the region was 1,184,000 square miles.

Geographical Palestine, the only portion set aside for a Jewish National Home by Great Britain in the Balfour Declaration of November 2, 1917, covered a mere 10,000 square miles. That area was further reduced through subsequent political decisions by the British Colonial Office.

For instance the Golan Heights, in Anglo-French wrangling, was torn away by Britain from Palestine and ceded to France, which made it a part of Syria. And in geographical Palestine, Britain arbitrarily gave the territory east of the River Jordan, comprising two thirds of Palestine, to the Emir Abdullah and renamed it Trans-Jordan. It was immediately closed to Jewish settlement. But that's another story.

The remarkable fact is that all the subsequent internecine conflicts between the artificially created Arab states in the Middle East as well as the continuing Arab war against Israel can be traced back to the voyage of the German battle cruiser, Goeben. Its transfer to Turkey, along with the Breslau, led that nation into war and to a crushing defeat, changing the region's map and transforming the Middle East into what it is today.

The Goeben became the ship that changed the Middle East.

Victor Sharpe writes about Jewish history and the Islamist-Israeli conflict. He is the author of: Politicide-The Attempted Murder of the Jewish State.

(Continued from page 2)

Ehrenfeld Victorious

Rachel Ehrenfeld has scored an important victory for freedom of speech in the face of Moslem attempts to stifle it. Lee Kaplan reports in *Frontpage* (June 14) that the U.S. Second District Court of Appeals in New York has overturned a lower court ruling which had refused to overrule a default judgment for libel against Ehrenfeld obtained by Saudi billionaire Khaled bin Mahfouz in a British court and valid for collection in the United States.

Ehrenfeld's book *Funding Evil* had described Saudi financing of global jihad, including Mahfouz's role. Mahfouz sued in the United Kingdom primarily because he knew Ehrenfeld did not have funds for an international lawsuit. The book was published in the U.S. with the 24 copies sold in the United Kingdom all bought over the internet. Nevertheless the British court gave the Saudi billionaire a \$120,000 default judgment. The U.S. District Court has now ruled this unenforceable in the United States, because it is contrary to the free speech protections of U.S. citizens. As the Court itself noted, the judgment has implications going far beyond this individual case.

The UN Human Wrongs Council

This is Melanie Phillips' apt term for the UN Human Rights Council. To quote Phillips, "In a world where human rights have emerged as the new secular religion of our time, Israel, portrayed as a meta-rights violator, emerged as the new anti-Christ of the international arena. And as if this were not enough, the council has now institutionalized forever the Alice in Wonderland condemnatory process and the corresponding

drumbeats of indictment. It has institutionalized the condemnation of Israel as a standing item on the council agenda and institutionalized the mandate of the special investigator on 'Israeli violations of the principles and bases of international law' in the Palestinian territories—its only indefinite, open-ended and one-sided investigative mandate." Phillips notes that "the systematic malice towards Israel displayed by the UN is only exceeded as a scandal by the silence of the so-called civilized world in the face of it."

Kosovo

Will Gaza prove to be a dress rehearsal for Kosovo? Will Kosovo be riven by militias and warlords, an incubator and exporter of jihadists, its non-Moslem population forced to flee? If President Bush has his way, the answer may well be yes. Although this unilateral decision-making runs contrary to the agreement under terms of which the UN sits in Kosovo, President Bush, visiting Albania in June, announced: "Sooner rather than later you've got to say 'Enough's enough. Kosovo's independent.'"

Why is the Bush administration handing another victory to terrorism, this time the terrorists of the Kosovo Liberation Army? Why does the U.S. want another Moslem state in the Balkans? Michael Djordjevic, president of the Studenica foundation promoting education in Serbia, warns: "Bosnia is a failed state; Albania is simply incapable of democracy and multiculturalism; Kosovo is a foreign policy disaster in waiting. Instead of building a strategic position in this important region of the world around the Serbs and the Greeks...we have in effect traded them for Bosnian, Albanian and Kosovo Muslims." •

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