

 Jerusalem 5:09; Toronto 6:11

## ISRAEL NEWS

*A collection of the week's news from Israel  
A service of the Bet El Twinning Committee of  
Beth Avraham Yoseph of Toronto Congregation*

### Event...

**Monday, March 22, 8:00 PM**

Bnai Brith presents **Stewart Bell**, author of the new book "**Cold Terror: How Canada nurtures and exports terrorism around the world**", at Beth David.

### Commentary...

**From Madrid to the Gaza Strip** By Evelyn Gordon

If I were a Spaniard, one of the people I would be angriest with right now is Prime Minister Ariel Sharon. Responsibility for last week's terror attack in Madrid obviously lies with the perpetrators. But short of the terrorists themselves, no one has done as much to encourage terrorism in recent months as Sharon has. Prior to Sharon's announcement of his unilateral withdrawal plan in December, terrorism had been racking up an impressive list of failures worldwide. The September 11, 2001 attacks in America, far from causing the US to flee the Middle East, resulted in the toppling of both the Taliban regime in Afghanistan and Saddam Hussein's regime in Iraq, as well as bold attempts to create democratic governments in both countries and an unprecedented American military presence in the region.

A series of vicious terror attacks in Iraq had similarly failed to drive out either the US or any of its coalition allies. Nor had such attacks deterred the Iraqis themselves: Young Iraqis were continuing to enlist in their country's police force, even knowing that this made them terrorist targets, while the Governing Council recently approved a draft constitution that could provide a sound basis for a democratic government. The terrorists' only success had been in frightening away the UN – not exactly a major achievement.

Even in Israel, terrorism appeared to have proven a failure for the Palestinians. After three years of terrorist warfare the Palestinians seemed further than ever from their declared dream of statehood. The Palestinian Authority had essentially collapsed, its leader was being boycotted by the US administration, the Israeli army was operating at will in Palestinian territory, and most Israelis were far less willing to agree to sweeping territorial concessions than they had been three years earlier.

BUT THEN Sharon announced that Israel would unilaterally withdraw from all of Gaza and part of the West Bank, without demanding anything of the Palestinians in exchange. Not surprisingly, this was universally interpreted as a resounding victory for terror – and therefore created a strong incentive for more terror. Muhammad Deif, the Hamas terrorist who has topped Israel's wanted list for years, declared last week that "Hamas actions are what made Ariel Sharon decide on a retreat from Gaza. In the past he promised security and said that Netzarim was like Tel Aviv, and now he is ready to leave Gaza unconditionally.

"God willing, we will see victory and the liberation of our lands with our own eyes." (It is worth recalling here that to Hamas, "our lands" include all of Israel, not just the West Bank and Gaza.) Muhammad Dahlan, the former PA security minister whom both Israel and the US deem a leading moderate, had an identical take on the issue. He labeled the proposed withdrawal the greatest achievement of the intifada – the Palestinian term for their terrorist war – and declared that the common denominator between himself and Hamas was much greater than the differences between them.

A similar assessment was offered by IDF Chief of Staff Lt.-Gen. Moshe Ya'alon and OC Intelligence Maj.-Gen. Aharon Ze'evi (Farkash). Both warned that the pullout would encourage Palestinian terror, with Ya'alon predicting last week that "it will take more than a division to repair the damage caused by withdrawing from a single settlement under fire." Surprisingly, even the country's leading doves concurred. Yossi Beilin, in a column published in the International Herald Tribune last month, declared that Sharon's plan "proves those extremists right who argued that there was no point in talking to Israel all along; not because Israel would never budge, but because it eventually will without even exacting a price."

Finally, the Bush administration has also joined the chorus. According to a Haaretz report, the three American envoys who discussed the plan with Sharon

last weekend said that Washington's chief concern was that the withdrawal could be perceived as a victory for terrorism. President Bush, they said, has laid down a policy of defeating terror, not surrendering to it, and this rule applies in Gaza no less than in the rest of the world. One could justly note that Spain – even before the Madrid bombing's stunning success in granting an upset victory to the candidate who pledged to flee Iraq – was also no slouch in the pandering to

terror department, given that the European Union in general, and Spain in particular, have for years feted Palestinian terrorists as statesmen and urged that Israel not only negotiate with them but capitulate to their demands.

Indeed, Spain is a leading member of the camp that "understands" terrorism against Israel: Its foreign minister, Ana Palacio, still refuses to call Hizbullah a terrorist organization, despite the fact that Hizbullah has continued attacking Israelis even after Israel's UN-certified withdrawal from every inch of Lebanese territory, and even though the group has financed many Palestinian terror attacks. Nevertheless, even the EU never suggested a unilateral withdrawal from Gaza under fire. Nor was there any pressure for such a move from either the US or the Israeli public. Indeed, it was only a year ago that Israelis elected Sharon in a landslide on a promise not to withdraw under fire, while handing Labor, which ran on a platform of unilateral withdrawal from Gaza, the worst defeat in its history.

The unilateral withdrawal was entirely Sharon's idea – and by adopting it, he proved decisively that terrorism does eventually pay if the terrorists just keep up the pressure long enough. That message has now been reinforced by the Spanish election victory, but it is Sharon who holds the copyright. And the result can only be to encourage more terror, both in Israel and abroad. (Jerusalem Post Mar 16)

**Child Sacrifice** Jerusalem Post Editorial

Israel was shaken Monday. It wasn't because of a terrorist atrocity actually perpetrated, but because of one thankfully preempted. Front pages were dominated by the story of 11-year-old Abdullah Quran, who carried a powerful bomb in his schoolbag, replete with a load of metal pellets and other assorted bits of hardware calculated to rip through human flesh. When they opened the bag, soldiers found, alongside the explosives, the boy's Spiderman doll.

Abdullah wasn't merely a courier. He was, unknowingly, a guided missile. A cellphone connected to the 10-kilo bomb he lugged was primed to detonate the bomb by remote control, if his dispatcher considered it expedient.

The boy told the border policewoman whose suspicions he aroused that someone promised him "lots of money" if he took the heavy backpack through the IDF checkpoint outside of Nablus. Had the precocious smuggler succeeded, the contraband would have been set off in an Israeli bus or similar crowded civilian target.

However, the plan called for detonating the charge on the boy, if he were stopped. Indeed, as sappers handled his bag's contents, someone dialed the cellphone trigger. A technical failure prevented the death of the child and many of those around.

This is not "just" child abuse, but child sacrifice. It is almost as if Palestinian terrorists are trying to reach new depths of war crimes, matched only by previous uses of ambulances and pregnant women to carry out terrorist attacks. Bombs have been transported in Palestinian ambulances, at times under stretchers bearing children apparently writhing in pain or women ostensibly in labor. Only recently did a weeping Gaza woman, claiming to have a prosthetic leg, blow herself up, killing the very soldiers who helped her when her bomb set off a metal detector.

Incredibly, Abdullah's misadventure went largely unreported by the world's media, further underscoring the double standard against Israel. One might think the story of this child would evoke a modicum of human interest from a world that claims to care about Palestinian children. Is no one interested when Palestinian children are systematically indoctrinated by official media into a cult of suicide and murder, and if that doesn't work, they are employed as unknowing cannon fodder? Such indifference seems somewhat selective. When Muhammad al-Dura was shot in October 2000, he was immediately transformed into an icon of Israeli inhumanity. Subsequent credible studies proving that the child was killed by Palestinian

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fire, such as that of James Fallows in *The Atlantic*, were largely ignored.

By contrast, the Palestinian manipulation of children is as pervasive and transparent as Hitler's "Children's Army" at the end of World War II. It's a flagrant violation of Article 38 of the 1989 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, which censures "the recruitment and involvement of children under 15 in hostilities and armed conflicts." Yet it's an entrenched Arab practice in this country. Already back in the 19th century, women and children were frequently deployed in the front-lines of disturbances and riots. They functioned as human shields and generated particular volatility.

This tradition has been monstrously upgraded with the advent of suicide bombings. In the past three years, 29 suicide-bombings were perpetrated by youths under 18. Another 22 were killed while attacking Israelis. Forty other teens were arrested while trying to do likewise.

Ascribing these statistics to occupation-engendered despair is intellectually indolent or demagogic. Palestinian youngsters are incessantly subjected to brainwashing in the media and classroom. Hate is inculcated in them. Even preschoolers are taught to aspire to martyr status. They grow in a culture that, rather than consecrating life, glorifies violent "sacrificial" death.

The PA's Jerusalem mufti, Ikram Sabri, once said in a newspaper interview that "the younger the shahid [martyr], the more he's admired... That's why mothers cry with joy upon hearing of his death... The shahid is envied, because the angels in heaven usher him to his wedding."

Journalist Huda al-Hussein, asked in the London-based *Sharq al-Awsat* already three years ago: "What kind of independence is built on the blood of children, while the leaders, including their own kids and grandkids, remain safe?" Good question. (Jerusalem Post Mar 17)

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### **The Lessons of Ashdod** By Michael Freund

It didn't take long after Sunday's suicide bombing in Ashdod for the Israeli media to begin looking for someone to blame.

Even as the wounded were still being evacuated to local hospitals, the police and the port's administrators were busy giving interviews, ducking responsibility and pointing fingers at each other for the lapse in security that enabled terrorists to hit the site.

Unnamed police sources said they had warned the port's management that security was lax, while port officials asserted they had done everything the police had asked.

It was, quite frankly, a sorry sight to behold, as so much energy and effort was being devoted to covering, rather than saving, people's behinds.

The Hebrew papers, of course, had a field day, devoting page after page to the question of who fouled up and why. Did the police really take the threat of a "strategic attack" seriously, they wondered. And why was the port protected by a simple metal fence, rather than an electronic one, they demanded to know.

But for all the attention which Israel's media devoted to the matter, they nevertheless failed to identify the gravest blunder of all – namely that of the government itself, which not only has allowed the terrorists to operate with impunity, but which now dangles before them the prize of a withdrawal from Gaza.

Indeed, in recent weeks, nearly the entire military and security establishment has made clear that Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's talk of a unilateral retreat would embolden the terror organizations and invite further attacks.

As Maj.-Gen. Aharon Ze'evi, the head of Military Intelligence, recently said, groups such as Hamas and Fatah will do their utmost to ensure that an Israeli withdrawal be perceived as a retreat under fire, hence they would surely try to intensify their attacks as a result of Sharon's plan.

And so, we have a situation where the experts were all but unanimous, with everyone from the IDF Chief of Staff to the head of the General Security Services saying that a unilateral pullback would buoy the terrorists and increase their motivation to kill Jews.

And that is precisely what occurred. Ten innocent Israelis lost their lives in Sunday's attack, the first victims of the Prime Minister's dubious plan. Their deaths were effectively foretold in advance, but Sharon refused to listen.

The warnings and admonitions, the advice and the counsel, all of it was brushed aside and ignored by an arrogant and tired premier, one unwilling even to listen to his own generals.

Even in the aftermath of the attack, Sharon has not learned his lesson. Less than 24 hours later, he stood before the podium in the Knesset, insisting that Israel had no choice but to move forward by moving backward and fleeing Gaza for good.

But running away from a problem is no way to solve it. If anything, Sunday's attack should serve as a compelling, if unpleasant, reminder of precisely what Israel is up against.

Just meters away from where the terrorists detonated themselves in Ashdod's port were storage tanks containing dangerous chemicals, such as bromide, ammonia and fuel. Had one of the containers caught fire and exploded, it might very well have caused hundreds, or possibly even thousands, of casualties in the nearby area.

This was, quite simply, a Palestinian attempt at mass murder on a scale equivalent to that of America's September 11, and Spain's March 11, with the only difference being that Fatah and Hamas aren't as "proficient" as their Al-Qaeda colleagues.

This is not the first time that the Palestinians have attempted to carry out such a "mega-attack". In April 2002, Israel thwarted a planned assault by Palestinian terrorists against the Azrieli Towers in Tel Aviv, which they had hoped to bring down along the lines of the World Trade Center.

One month later, terrorists set off an explosive device hidden under a truck at the Pi Gliot fuel depot outside of Tel Aviv. Miraculously, the complex did not go up in flames, which could have endangered untold thousands of people.

Such attacks have nothing to do with a Jewish presence in Gaza, but they have everything to do with a Jewish presence in the Middle East. By attempting to carry out a mass attack that could have murdered thousands of Jews, the Palestinians have made clear that they are willing to resort to genocidal tactics to achieve their goals.

Sadly, if it is a battle for survival which the Palestinians are after, then Israel has no choice but to fight it. But in order to prevail, the government must first recognize that no amount of wishful thinking, or shortsighted withdrawals, will appease a foe bent on our destruction.

Building fences and uprooting Jews from their homes is hardly the way to fight such terror. Only by reasserting complete and permanent military control over the territories, and by dismantling the Palestinian Authority and the terrorist infrastructure, can Israel hope to achieve a modicum of security for its citizens. There is simply no alternative to the IDF being there physically, militarily, and running the show.

The fact of the matter is that the only way to eliminate terrorism is to eliminate the terrorists, and not to run away when the going gets tough.

Israel did not start this war, nor did we ask for it. But we sure know how to end it. And after the Ashdod attack, that is what Ariel Sharon must finally now do. (Jerusalem Post Mar 17)

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### **On Being a 'Traitor'** By Amnon Lord

I felt forced to make a choice between my social milieu and my country

In the mid-1990s, after the wave of massacres began, I understood that the path I believed in for many years as a leftist was wrong and led to the opposite results of what is called "peace." Dozens of mangled bodies on Dizengoff Boulevard were not my idea of historic reconciliation and peace. Standing in line with friends to donate blood after mass terror attacks contradicted the many pictures of ceremonies of the days of Oslo I and II.

I expected the Left to respond to those events of the Rabin and Peres era with critical thinking about the various moves. Of course, that didn't happen. Then, ahead of the May 1996 elections, I felt I had to make a choice: between loyalty to my immediate social milieu and the political organizations to which I felt a blind affinity, and loyalty to Israeli society and the existential interests of the State of Israel and democracy.

Word got around that I was going to vote for Binyamin Netanyahu and the Likud. This shocked the people who knew me as a foot soldier at Peace Now rallies or as an editor and reporter at the *Hadashot* newspaper during the 1980s and early 1990s.

Ha'ir sent Aviv Lavie to interview me. Until that interview I could toy with the idea of voting however I wanted without making a big deal about it. I decided to cooperate with the interview because I thought the 1996 elections were critical and that maybe if I said I was going with the Right and voting no-confidence in Shimon Peres's leadership, it would help. Peres seemed dangerous to me at the time. I remember telling Aviv Lavie that actually leaving the Left was not so much a matter of choice: I felt suffocated as if I were inside an intellectual gas chamber, I told him, and I just ran for my life. I couldn't survive inside.

WHAT MADE things worse for me was that Netanyahu won. A childhood friend from my kibbutz left a strange letter with my mother: First of all, why did you go get interviewed by Aviv Lavie?! It's one thing if you want to vote for Netanyahu. Go ahead. But why talk about it?

The atmosphere on the Left towards such a move was documented in the huge collection of letters sent to the *Haaretz* supplement after the long and sympathetic piece by Ari Shavit when Netanyahu was in office for one year. He called it "the year of hatred."

The very fact that Shavit described certain aspects of Netanyahu in a positive light were enough to define him as a "defector" and "traitor." In leftist parlor talk, the phenomenon was called "the Amnon Lord syndrome." That is, anyone doubting the all-embracing totality of leftist rectitude.

After I started studying the nature of the Israeli "Left," its roots, its history, its patterns of action and its ideology, I concluded that a leftist's loyalty is almost completely to a political organization, to a movement. It has been said about European social-democratic parties that they do not recognize the sovereignty of the state, only the sovereignty of the party. That is true of the Israeli Left, too.

The word "treason" is unsuitable in the context of various figures on the Left and their actions. It is an issue of an entire elite class turning its back on its nation and country. Yossi Beilin and his people's Geneva agreement expresses that moral collapse in the most poignant way. It includes a willingness to collaborate with PLO propaganda against Israel, a surrender of matters of principle such as Jerusalem and refugees, and especially a waiving of Jewish sovereignty in Israel along with a waiver of our ability to

defend ourselves.

Anyone who remembers how in the years after losing the 1977 elections the Labor Party's economic leaders, headed by Ya'acov Levinson, tried to transfer large parts of the Histadrut's financial and business assets abroad, should not be surprised by today's moral capitulation. Since then, the Left has cultivated the myth of the collective murder of Yitzhak Rabin, of which the whole Right is to blame. The Right is the enemy, and if the Right happens to be the Israeli people, then too bad, but there is no choice. There is no doubt that a person like Yossi Beilin is closer to Yasser Abed Rabbo or Joschka Fischer than he is even to his party colleague Ran Cohen.

This process, signs of which were seen throughout the 1990s, was incredibly and most surprisingly accelerated, particularly in the last three and a half years of terrorist warfare.

In the first year of the Palestinian terror campaign I had the feeling that many on the Left were reaching the conclusion I had reached five or six years earlier. But today it is clear that not only did the Left undergo a process of radicalization and emotional and political separation from the people, but it also managed to recapture the public agenda.

The Israeli public is assaulted not only by exploding terrorists but also by a demoralizing media that depresses the public's spirit. The Palestinians must not be called "the enemy"; the enemy is the IDF, the air force, and the settlers. We have reached the point where anyone identified in any way with the "Right" cannot participate in a public debate. The very definition of his person or position as "rightist" automatically puts his arguments outside the limits of public discourse. A strange situation in a country where just a year and a half ago the rightist parties won an overwhelming majority such as they had never seen before. (Jerusalem Post Mar 11)

*The writer is the author of The Israeli Left, from Socialism to Nihilism and a columnist with Makor Rishon.*

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### **The New Face of Anti-Semitism** By Robert Wistrich

*The ways Zionism is attacked are identical to anti-semitism of the nazi era*

Anti-Zionism and anti-Semitism were initially two distinct ideologies that over time (especially since 1967) have tended to converge.

The more radical forms of anti-Zionism that have emerged with renewed force in recent years display some striking analogies to fascist and racist anti-Semitism preceding the Holocaust. There is, for example, the call for a scientific, cultural and economic boycott of Israel, which arouses grim associations and memories among Jews of the Nazi boycott that began in 1933.

To this, we might add the ways in which Zionism and the Jewish people have been demonized in recent years that are virtually identical to the methods, arguments and techniques of Nazi anti-Semitism. Even though the current banner might be "anti-racist" and the defamation is being carried out in the name of human rights, the same desire to stigmatize and defame the Jewish collectivity is in evidence.

"Anti-Zionists" who insist on comparing Zionism and the Jews with Hitler and the Third Reich, are de-facto anti-Semites, even if they vehemently deny the fact. For if Zionists are Nazis and Sharon really is Hitler, then it becomes a moral obligation to eliminate Israel. That is the bottom line of much contemporary anti-Zionism.

The exhibit in Stockholm in which an Islamic Jihad bomber is idealized as Snow White sailing on a pool of blood has nothing to do with "preventing genocide." It is an invitation to perpetrate another massacre of Jews, whatever the artist might claim.

Israel is the only state on the face of this planet that such a large number of disparate nations, political groups and individuals (including self-hating Jews) wish to see disappear - a chilling reminder of Nazi propaganda in the 1930s.

The most virulent expressions of this exterminationist anti-Zionism come from the Arab-Muslim world, the historical heir of earlier 20th century forms of totalitarian anti-Semitism in Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union. It is echoed even by "moderate" Muslim statesmen like Mahathir Mohammad who publicly repeat the classic anti-Semitic myth that "Jews rule the world" without eliciting any objections in the Islamic world.

The more radical Islamists from Al-Qa'ida to the Palestinian Hamas fuse indiscriminate terror, suicide bombings and a Protocols-of-Zion-style of anti-Semitism with the ideology of jihad. They embrace a total demonization of the "Jewish other" as the "enemy of mankind." The same demonizing stereotypes can be found in "moderate, pro-Western" Egypt (home to the anti-Semitic soap opera Rider without a Horse) secular Baathist Syria, conservative Wahhabite Saudi Arabia and Shiite fundamentalist Iran. This is an ideological anti-Zionism that seeks both the annihilation of Israel and a world "liberated from the Jews" - the ultimate final solution.

The danger has become especially grave because such annihilationalist anti-Zionism is spreading under the mask of anti-Israelism and hatred of Ariel Sharon to Western Europe, America and parts of the Third World. It has found grassroots support in the Muslim diaspora among radicalized youth and strong echoes among anti-globalists, Trotskyists, and far-right groups not to mention parts of the mainstream Western media.

The mobilizing power of anti-Zionism derives primarily from its link to the Palestinian cause. Since the 1960s, the PLO has worked hard to delegitimize Zionism and this policy has largely succeeded. Palestinian anti-Zionism involves

a negation of Jewish nationhood and any legitimate Jewish sovereignty in Eretz Israel; a denial of any historic link between Judaism and Zion, or of the very existence of two Jewish temples in Jerusalem. No wonder Israel has never existed on any Palestinian maps even during the Oslo peace process. Nor should it be forgotten that the Palestinian Authority has frequently combined anti-Semitic motifs - including Holocaust denial, updated blood libels and Jewish conspiracy themes - with a more general incitement to jihadist violence.

Palestinian anti-Zionism has helped to infect Europe with an old-new version of anti-Semitism in which Jews are turned into rapacious, blood sucking colonialists. They are depicted as alien, rootless and imperialist invaders who conquered Palestine by brute force. Zionists are modern crusaders with no legitimate rights to the soil - an alien transplant in the region, which cleverly manipulated Britain and then America to achieve its goals. This is an Arab anti-Semitic narrative of which Hitler might have approved.

The popularity of the Protocols is one of the most telling symptoms in the Middle East of the complete merger between anti-Semitism and anti-Zionism. Zionism is also vilified in some mainstream Western media as being criminal in essence as well as in its behaviour - another classic anti-Semitic stereotype. This flows from the left-wing mantra branding Zionism as a racist, colonialist and imperialist movement - the only empire in history whose waistline is about 10 miles wide.

Israel's military actions offer Europeans the tantalizing temptation of saying that "the victims of yesterday have become the Nazi perpetrators of today," and the opportunity to present Zionism as heir to the darkest pages of Western colonial history - i.e. Algeria, Vietnam, South Africa.

Such comparisons are not always anti-Semitic in intention however false they are in practice. But through endless repetition they become an ideological rationalization for dismantling Israel. This is a major aim of "progressive" anti-Zionism that insists on its moral purity yet turns a blind eye to so-called suicide bombings that are literally crimes against humanity.

Such anti-Zionism is fundamentally discriminatory in negating even the possibility of a legitimate Jewish nationalism while idealizing the violent nihilism of the Palestinian national movement. The anti-globalist crusaders against Zion regularly justify the terrorism, jihadism and anti-Jewish stereotypes to be found in Islamic fundamentalism. For most of the Western left, Palestinians can only be victims. Hamas bombers are militants engaged in legitimate resistance. They are never perpetrators of any crimes or responsible for their actions. Only Israel is to blame.

On the far left as well as the far right, contemporary anti-Zionism freely exploits stereotypes about the "Jewish/Zionist lobby, Jewish criminality and Israeli warmongering" that are deeply anti-Semitic. This world-view has penetrated the mainstream debate to the point where 60 per cent of Europeans regard tiny Israel as the greatest threat today to world peace.

Anti-Zionism is not only the historic heir of earlier forms of anti-Semitism. It is also the lowest common denominator between anti-thetical political trends in Europe and the Middle East - the only point on which they can agree. It is a bridge between the left, the right and the militant Muslims; between the elites, including the media, and the masses; between the church and the mosque; between an increasingly anti-American Europe and an endemically anti-Western Arab-Muslim Middle East; a point of convergence between right-wing conservatives and left-wing radicals and a connecting link between the generations.

Anti-Zionism is no longer an exotic collection of radical chic slogans that somehow survived the debacle of late 1960s counter-culture. It has become an exterminationist, pseudo-redemptive ideology in the Middle East which has been re-exported to Europe with devastating effect. (Montreal Gazette Mar 14)

*The writer is director of the Vidal Sassoon International Centre for the Study of Anti-Semitism at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.*

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### **History Repeats Itself, with Canada's Help** By Alastair Gordon

In 1939, when the Nazi program to kill the Jews of Europe was well underway, 907 desperate German Jews aboard the S.S. St. Louis requested sanctuary in Canada. The Liberal prime minister of the day, Mackenzie King -- who had previously flirted with Adolf Hitler and declared him to be "one who truly loves his fellow-men" -- refused their request. Most died in the death camps of Europe. In 1942, 1,000 Jewish children in a French refugee camp were denied entry to Canada and were liquidated by the Nazis. Of Jewish immigration to Canada, Mackenzie King's immigration minister declared, "None is too many!"

Of course today, we mourn these murdered refugees. We mourn the friends, neighbours, doctors, business people, teachers, writers, engineers, cab drivers, philanthropists and scoundrels who would never be part of the Canadian fabric, because our Liberal government was indifferent to their fate and sympathetic to their persecutors. With such a weight on our collective conscience, we will never again side with the killers of Jews.

Or will we?

When a Canadian Jew, Yechezkel Goldberg, along with 10 other innocents, was massacred recently by a Palestinian terrorist on a bus in

Jerusalem, the Canadian ambassador to Israel, Donald Sinclair, was ordered not to visit his grieving family because they lived in the West Bank, a place that official Canadian policy, as well as the suicide bomber and his handlers, believed should be Judenrein (Jew-free). By this order, Canada validated the racist grievance of the Jew-killers.

How much has changed when Israel, the only democracy in the Middle East, is also the only country targeted for condemnation by United Nations resolutions? Since 1996, there have been 113 resolutions condemning Israel. Canada's vote was 78 yes, 35 abstain and 0 no. Canada's support for the vilification of Israel and the fact that precisely zero resolutions have been tabled criticizing the Palestinian Authority tells us that this is an exercise in global bullying, not even-handed moral suasion.

If our Liberal government was guided by a moral compass that reflected Canadian respect for life and freedom, we would have voted 'no' on every anti-Israel resolution. But what if Israel really is guilty of some imperfection that deserves censure? Until UN resolutions are applied even-handedly in the Middle East -- against suicide bombing, against slavery in the Sudan, against Syria's illegal occupation of Lebanon, against Saudi Arabia for nurturing the mass murderers of 9/11, against the Palestinian Authority for its bloodstained brainwashing of children, against Muslim nations for their misogynistic treatment of women -- then these resolutions have nothing to do with Canadian values, and everything to do with justifying genocide.

But, hold on, the real reason for terrorism is the illegal Jewish occupation of Palestinian land. Our Liberals reinforce, rather than debunk, this mythology, a failure that leaves our government open to accusations of pandering rather than leading. For more than 2,000 years, Jews lived and contributed throughout the entire Middle East, until anti-Semitism and physical threat drove the Jews from every Arab country. Today, the Middle East is 99.8% Jew-free and no Jew can safely live as a citizen except in a miniscule 0.2% known as Israel. This sliver of land -- Israel -- is all that Jews have left.

Today, six million people live in a land without oil or other natural resources, and have created the only democracy in the entire region, the only country with world-class universities, hospitals, technology, freedom of speech, freedom of religion, and rights for women, gays and minorities. In fact, Israel is the only country in the Middle East where Arabs can vote for their representatives in free elections. Amazingly, Arabs are full members of the Israeli Knesset (parliament) and sit as judges in the Israeli judiciary. The deputy speaker of the Knesset is Abdulmalik Dehamshe, an Arab representative. Both Israeli Arabs and Palestinians have free access to the Israeli Supreme Court, and have won cases against the Israeli government.

Yet Canada's voting record at the UN says that Israel is the only country deserving of condemnation. Our government sides with the killers of Jews hoping that, by joining the mob, "Damascus will return our phone calls," to quote a prominent Liberal MP.

As Walid Shoebat -- former Fatah terrorist turned Christian -- said recently in Toronto, "The only illegal occupation in the Middle East is the illegal occupation of Palestinian minds by hatred."

He also observed, "The Holocaust never ended. The only difference is that today the Jews have a country and an army." And so the Holocaust continues, and our Liberal government chooses to condemn its victims and appease its perpetrators. Can someone please tell me what's changed since 1939?

*The writer is communications director for the Canadian Coalition for Democracies. (National Post Mar 14)*

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### **A Small Town in Holland** By Arnold Roth

Court proceedings fascinate me. Nearly forty years ago as a teenager on holidays in an Australian country town, I sat spellbound through the first day of a murder trial, the first I had ever seen. I walked out convinced of the need to become a lawyer.

From my home in Jerusalem, I traveled to the Netherlands last week to take part in a hearing of a different kind. The two decades I spent practicing law left me considerably less awestruck this time by what I saw.

Israel is building a long and expensive security fence. The UN General Assembly voted to ask the International Court of Justice in The Hague to consider the legal implications of "illegal Israeli actions". I wondered, when I first read these words in the court papers, how some of those UN delegates managed to vote without giggling.

Malki, my daughter, was murdered in a Palestinian Arab terror attack in August 2001. She was fifteen. Since then, my wife Frimet and I have grown more and more involved in writing and speaking publicly.

I joined a group of Israelis who, like us, are experiencing murder by terrorism (the use of the present-continuous tense is appropriate) and went to The Hague, not to participate in the ICJ hearings but to speak to the media gathered there.

Even before our El Al flight rolls to its gate on the Amsterdam tarmac, the ritual pulling of Israeli mobile phones from pockets is in process. Everyone on board knows within seconds of still more Egged bus passengers incinerated and shrapnelled to death in Jerusalem while we have been crossing the Mediterranean. Our children are safe and well, thank heavens, but eight passengers on that bus will never reach any destination again. A teenage girl who lived on our street until her family moved to one of the newer Jerusalem neighborhoods is among the injured. For Israelis, it's always close.

There is no time to unpack or wash up. We go straight to the communications center set up for the week by one of the Dutch pro-Israel organizations, located in the centre of The Hague a few minutes walk from the elaborate structure that will host the next day's hearing. A quick huddle of the eighteen members of our group as we prepare to get off the bus, and I'm appointed the group spokesperson to tell the press why we're here.

We walk into the hall -- and encounter a show-stopper. A vast montage of photographic portraits has been fixed to the wall. The faces of 927 Israelis murdered in the thirty-some months of this ghastly Arafat war are arranged in no apparent sequence, a tremendous number of them teenagers, children and infants.

Every one of us climbs onto the dais and begins searching for a child, a wife, a brother, sister, boyfriend. For some of our group, this takes a little longer since they need to locate every member of what had once been a living, loving family. Avi finds his two little sons and their mother, killed at point-blank range by a machine-gun-toting 'activist' who broke into their kibbutz home. Rachel takes longer; her husband's picture is at one end of the display; those of her only two sons are at the other. Meir needs to find his father, his mother, his two sisters and his baby brother. This takes some minutes.

Someone adds eight fresh blank squares to the display. None of us needs to hear the explanation. A few minutes later, the ambassador, taking a cell phone call, looks shaken as he announces to us that his commercial attache's brother-in-law was killed on that Egged bus.

If you set aside what binds us - the murder of people we loved - our group is diverse. Most are Jewish, but we include Druze and Christians. We speak French, Dutch, German, Spanish, Arabic, Italian, Russian and English. We include managers, professionals, shop-keepers, students, unemployed and a retired senior IDF officer (he happens to be a Druze). I don't know about our politics because we don't discuss it among ourselves. We rarely speak about the security fence or our ideas for how peace can happen. Basically, we're your idiosyncratic Israeli cross-section, in The Hague to speak about terrorism and little else. We are united around the idea that no matter how you try to justify it, there's no possible argument in favor of terror - and everything is justified in stopping it.

The media are present in large numbers over the next two days. Most of us have multiple opportunities to stand in front of cameras and reporters and say what we came to say. The questions we're asked by BBC, New York Times, Associated Press, Al-Jazeera, tend to be superficial and repetitive. It's hard to keep track of how many. I lost count after my twenty-fifth interview.

All the members of our delegation give testimony to a silent, overcrowded hall - an 'alternative hearing' of three hours, the answer of Israel's friends to the proceedings across the way in the Peace Palace.

The demands of being on the front line of the media's attention meant we didn't come to cry in public. But there were intense and difficult private moments when the tears forced their way through. I shared breakfast with a woman whose only child, a beautiful teenager slightly older than my Malki, was blown apart in a discotheque. Even with her non-native English, her quiet dignity and understated manner made her a more eloquent and powerful speaker than the politicians elbowing their way onto Dutch television and into the papers.

While there's a consensus today among Israelis that the security fence is, on balance, a necessary thing, criticisms are not hard to find. The internal debate in Israel, as on most issues, is a vigorous one. I found it constructive to mention to journalists that Israeli society at all its levels is sensitive to the problems created by the new construction. The ongoing flexibility and accommodation shown by Israel's official arms, including its military and the courts, are not well known or understood outside of Israel. They gain Israel very few points in the battle for public opinion. This hurts. Israelis, it seems, are again being held to a standard that's neither fair nor logical.

In the week before The Hague hearings, I was interviewed twice by television journalists at the security fence. I was taken to Jerusalem's Abu Dis neighborhood close to where a wailing Palestinian Arab woman had been widely photographed a few days before, arms reaching skywards, despair evident in her body language. Standing there myself, I could see that the wall comes to a complete stop some meters away. It's not finished. It locks no one in. You can walk around it. The locations of gates and cross-overs are still being determined; the path has been moved and will be moved again. The Israeli courts are busy hearing objections and appeals. We have a legal system that provides real recourse for Palestinians and Israelis. It's not easy to learn these things from media reports and published images.

No one in Israel pretends the security fence is a perfect guarantee against terrorism. To paraphrase Churchill on democracy, the fence is the worst form of protection - except for those others that have already been tried.

These ICJ proceedings will produce neither an answer to terror nor an end to the deaths of children. No solution to the conflict between Israel and its neighbors is going to be found in The Hague.

But for the first time in a long while, the voices of the Israeli victims are being heard. (Australian Jewish News Mar 11)

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