

Events...

Tuesday May 6, 7:15pm

**Yom Ha'Zikaron Commemoration
and Yom Ha'Atzmaut Celebration at Shaarei Shomayim, sponsored by
Mizrachi, etc.**

Wednesday May 7, 6:15-8:15pm

**Yom Ha'Atzmaut Procession and Celebration from the Bathurst JCC to Earl
Bales Park. For more information Call 416-635-2883 ext. 137.**

May 18-26

**One Israel Mission; visits throughout Yesha; \$2495; For info call Raizie at
905-764-1818 ext. 228.**

Thursday May 22, 8:00pm

**State of Israel Bonds presents Naomi Ragen at Adath Israel. For tickets, \$25,
call 416-781-3351, ext. 126.**

From the PA Media...

PA TV: Kill Jews of the Disputed Areas By Itamar Marcus

Official Palestinian Authority [PA] TV has repeatedly this week broadcast a music video calling for the murder of Jews in the disputed areas, even showing scenes of Jewish teenage girls and a Jewish couple, who are among those targeted for death by PA TV. The music video shows scenes of masked gunman firing automatic rifles, aerial views of Jewish towns, and as mentioned, Jews who are targeted for murder: a man walking his wife, a group of teenage girls, and a soldier. The words that repeat throughout the music video:

"From the mountain of fire [Nablus] came the rebels...

Everywhere there are settlements.

Oh brave Nablus, keep the cauldron ablaze

Pour over the settlements great flames

Foreigners have no place on this land

Foreigners have no place where Shahids [Died for Allah] were killed."

(Palestinian Media Watch Apr 30)

A Mother's Lament...

A Farewell to Daniel By Cheryl Mandel

Fifteen and a half years ago, we brought our family to Israel from Canada, because we believed and still do believe that this is the place where Jews should live. We brought our family here because it is our homeland.

We accepted that this is a young country where there were difficulties and we were willing to stand up to the challenges before us. When our eldest son Jonah went into the Army, we felt he was serving his country in the best way he could, and that since his work was dangerous, there might be a price. When our son Daniel went into the Army, we knew and we accepted that there might be a price. Unfortunately, like many other parents of soldiers, we have now paid the price for the security of our nation.

Our son Daniel was a lieutenant in an elite Army unit. He was dedicated to his soldiers, his staff and his Army service, all of which he truly loved. Daniel served in the Army for four years, and was even thinking of staying longer. Maybe I was na'ive. I was happy for Daniel when he was accepted into Palsar Nachal, an elite reconnaissance unit. I was happy for him when he was accepted to become an officer. I was so proud of him just a few weeks ago, when we attended the ceremony for the completion of his soldiers' training, and I was so proud to see how he had developed as a person, as a man, as a leader.

At the ceremony for Daniel's soldiers, the soldiers themselves and their parents spoke to us so beautifully about Daniel. They appreciated his caring and strong leadership, his commitment to his country.

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*

ת"סג

Then on April 15, thirty six hours before the Passover Seder, the impossible to believe happened to our family. Daniel and his unit were sent to Shechem to capture wanted terrorists. Their mission was a success, but Daniel, the commander of that operation, was killed. In fact, yesterday, Daniel's unit was given a Commendation of Excellence for their handling of the entire mission, even after their commander fell.

The mission gave me a greater appreciation of our army, the Israel Defense Forces, and how they deal with the myriad of emergencies that face our nation. Soldiers know what they're doing. Soldiers know the rules of the game. Daniel had a bulletproof vest, and a bulletproof helmet. He had the right equipment, the right training for this mission. Yet, despite it all, a sniper's bullet pierced a small unprotected area above his vest and under his arm. He died a hero.

We had always thought of Daniel as lucky. He won a trip to EuroDisney, and a set of books that he donated to his yeshiva. But in Shechem before Pesach, his luck had run out.

Daniel was a wonderful son, a wonderful brother. Wherever he went, the sun shone and there was laughter. His positive attitude teaches us that when bad things happen, you can make sure something positive comes out of the tragedy. When bad things happen, people can go up or down. We were determined to go "up" and make a difference for others.

Our family was determined to be strong, to build ourselves, and help others. Daniel had wonderful friends, wonderful rabbis, wonderful soldiers and a wonderful family. They have been very supportive to our family throughout this entire tragedy. Daniel had been such an important part of their lives, and they said they would always continue in his footsteps.

We all feel that Daniel will always be here with us. And we're going to be strong for him.

Over the past two years, I have been part of a company of women, called the Raise Your Spirits Summer Stock Company - first performing in "JOSEPH and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat," and most recently in "ESTHER and the Secrets in the King's Court". I was the show's comic relief. Being in JOSEPH and then in ESTHER prepared me to face the challenges that I now face. Our Raise Your Spirits Company was set up so that the women of Gush Etzion could support one another, help one another, cry together and laugh together.

We have spent the past two years raising the spirits of others who have been hit by tragedy, and now we must do it for ourselves. We will.

The writer is the manager of the Etzion Judaica Center. Her and her family made Aliyah from Toronto in 1987. On April 15, 2003 her son, Lt. Daniel Mandel, hy'd, was killed in action during a military operation in Shechem.

(Voices of Gush Etzion Apr 29)

Commentary...

The Next Wave of Terror By Naomi Ragen

I have been biding my time in discussing the whole Abu Mazen, new Palestinian leadership, now let's publish the road-map nonsense....

But today's suicide bombing in Kfar Saba that killed a 23 year-old security guard, and injured 14 by Arafat's Fatah is the last straw. This comes only hours after the so-called Egyptian-engineered "compromise" that supposedly "bent" Arafat to the American will to see a "moderate" take control of the Palestinian government-to-be and has made it impossible for me to ignore this line of propaganda any longer.

Abu Mazen wrote a doctorate denying the Holocaust. As Arafat told a cheering crowd of Palestinian well-wishers aired on the Israeli news tonight: "I am the one who picked Abu Mazen."

Yes, Arafat's hand-picked successor is now going to fight terror. Hello? Is this the same Abu Mazen who made it clear that killing Jews over the Green Line was perfectly legitimate? Is this the same Abu Mazen who picked as his Chief Head of Security Muhammad Dahlan? As Dr. Aaron Lerner points out: "...despite his" moderate" rhetoric, the Preventive Security Service under Dahlan's leadership played a key role in the manufacture of illegal weapons and coordinated and initiated terrorist attacks by the various terror groups. Dahlan himself ordered the bombing of the bus of children in Kfar Darom on the 20th of November 2000.

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In an ideal world, the former Gazan chief of the Preventive Security Service would be sitting (once again) in an Israeli prison. But Israelis hope that Muhammad Dahlan's designation as the state minister for security affairs will help stem Palestinian terrorism."

This kind of delusional thinking on the part of Israeli leadership almost got my family killed last year. So this year, I am far less willing to sit back and be a good girl.

The problem, as I see it, is not the fact that Arafat, the discredited terrorist who should be hung for mass murder, is instead "president" and hand-picking people to head an American-supported Palestinian State ten miles from the heart of Israel's population centers. The problem is the Palestinian people, who supported Saddam Hussein, who are in favor of terror, who are anti-Semitic, who never cease their incitement to terror, and who have shown at every opportunity that they do not want a State, but the destruction of Israel and the continuation of terrorist attacks.

We cannot allow coalition victors to create a new set of rules for fighting terror that they themselves wouldn't dream of swallowing, but are willing to force-feed Israel. Rules that allow terrorist leaders who supported Saddam Hussein to pick their successors. That allow former terrorists to "fight terror." That allow people to continue to incite to terror and violence (below you will find the latest information on this incitement). Now is the time to fight this attempt, to expose it for what it is: a cheap way of appeasing Arab "pride" after their resounding defeat at American and British hands.

I am not going to let them take risks again with my life, and my children's so some wrong-headed, doomed theory can again be proven wrong-headed and doomed (how many will have to die to prove the Road Map won't work? A hundred? A thousand?). Mr. Blair is allowed to say the IRA's answers to three questions concerning their renunciation of terror were "conditional and uncertain." When is the Israeli government going to have the guts to say the same about Abu Mazen as Prime Minister, and Muhammad Dahlan as chief of security?

There is only one plan that can create what is necessary for peace in our region, and this is it:

Collect all weapons, and deport anyone found with illegal weapons.

End all incitement to terror and hatred. Close down radio, television, schools, mosques that incite hatred.

Begin a reeducation program for children and adults that will take five to seven years.

At the end of that time, begin to create a new leadership from those WHO WERE NEVER FRIENDS WITH ARAFAT, AND WERE NEVER INVOLVED IN TERRORISM.

In the interim, Israel security forces are the only security forces in the region. Period.

We may not be able to stop the war against us. But at least we don't have to put down our arms and tie our hands behind our back. We don't have to walk over the cliffs like lemmings. Not this time. This time, I'm not going quietly, no matter what my elected leadership and their good friends abroad say. (NaomiRagen.com Apr 24)

Deluding Ourselves About the Palestinian 'Security Ace'

By Michael Freund

Passover may be behind us, but there is one plague that continues to haunt much of the region: that of wishful thinking. And, if the past decade is any guide, it is an affliction that can prove just as deadly as those described in the story of the Exodus.

Take, for example, the media's inexplicable romance with Muhammad Dahlan, the new Palestinian minister for state security. The New York Times this week labeled Dahlan the "Palestinian security ace", as though he were a beloved hero from an action film. The Miami Herald called him a "moderate", while the Associated Press said he is "urbane" and "carefully coifed".

Of course, what the guardians of the public's right to know neglected to mention is that Dahlan has a nasty habit of trying to blow up schoolbuses full of Jewish children. On at least three separate occasions in the past six years, Dahlan has reportedly been linked to such attacks.

His first attempt came on April 1, 1997, when Palestinian suicide bombers blew themselves up outside Netzarim and Kfar Darom in Gaza in an attempt to hit two Israeli schoolbuses packed full of students. In both cases, miraculously, no Israelis were hurt.

The Chief of General Staff at the time, Lt.-Gen. Amnon Lipkin-Shahak, said the bombers were wearing Palestinian police uniforms and that at least one, and possibly both, belonged to Dahlan's Palestinian Preventive Security Service (The Jerusalem Post, April 2, 1997).

Undeterred by his first failed attempt to kill Jewish kids, the "moderate" and "urbane" Dahlan tried again. On October 18, 2000, a busload of 40 Israeli women and children was attacked by gunfire and a bomb west of the Gush Katif junction in Gaza as it passed near a Palestinian police station. In this attack, too, no one was injured, but it was certainly not for lack of trying.

Two days later, Israeli intelligence concluded that Dahlan himself was behind the assault (Israel Radio, October 20, 2000).

Less than a month later, though, Dahlan finally got his wish when, at last, an Israeli schoolbus was consumed by flames. On November 20, 2000, a roadside

bomb outside Kfar Darom blew up as a schoolbus drove by. Two adults on the bus were killed, and nine other Israelis were injured, including five children.

Among them were Tehilla, Yisrael and Orit Cohen, three beautiful young people who each had to have limbs amputated as a result of the blast.

Within days, Israeli intelligence had cracked the case and the trail once again led straight back to Dahlan. His second-in-command, Rashid Abu Shabak, is said to have personally supervised the preparation of the bomb, and other people under him were also involved in the planning and implementation of the attack (Ha'aretz, November 23, 2000).

Still another of Dahlan's men, Baha Said, was involved in an attack on November 18, 2000 in which two Israeli soldiers were shot to death in Kfar Darom. Rather than denouncing Said's actions, Dahlan reportedly eulogized him at his funeral, praising his actions and posthumously promoting him for killing Jews. (The Jerusalem Post, December 20, 2000).

In retaliation for Dahlan's involvement in the two November attacks, then-Prime Minister Ehud Barak ordered the airforce to take out one of Dahlan's command posts in Gaza, which it promptly did.

The evidence against Dahlan was so compelling that the families of his victims took the bold step of filing civil suits against him one in the United States District Court in Washington, DC, and a second in the Jerusalem District Court.

In addition to his involvement in terror, Dahlan has also sheltered other terrorists from justice, chief among them Muhammad Dief, the number one terrorist on Israel's most-wanted list. Dief, widely considered to be the mastermind behind Hamas' suicide bombings and other terror attacks in recent years, is a close friend of Dahlan, and Dahlan is said to have helped him hide in Gaza (The Jerusalem Post, September 27, 2002).

Moreover, Dahlan has not hesitated to threaten Israel publicly with violence. Less than two months before the outbreak of the current intifada, Dahlan told a London-based Arabic newspaper that clashes with Israel were possible.

"The Palestinian people... knows how to defend itself", he said rather ominously. "The potential for resistance and steadfastness is now much greater... Now we have the necessary mechanisms and institutions in place... We also have the ability and the will to resist" (Al-Quds Al-Araby, August 4, 2000).

By now, it should be fairly obvious that Dahlan is no "security ace", he is not urbane, and he is most definitely not a "moderate". He is just another thug with plenty of Jewish blood on his hands, and it is simply appalling to watch how the media, and many Israelis, are falling all over each other to convince themselves, and the public, that he will bring us the much-longed for peace and security that we all desire.

Then again, after their recent love affair with the Holocaust-denying, "Zionism is Nazism" advocate Abu Mazen, it is hardly surprising that the media would be taken in by the dapper Dahlan. After all, he dresses smartly, speaks English and Hebrew, and never seems to have a bad hair day. The fact that he has spent much of his career overseeing the Palestinian version of Murder, Inc. apparently does not faze them one whit.

But hoping and longing for someone to be a moderate does not make them so, as all the wishful thinking since 1993 about Yasser Arafat has painfully demonstrated. Deluding ourselves about the true nature of our enemies is not only foolish. It is dangerous, too.

Dahlan remains the ruthless terrorist he always was. And all the newspaper ink in the world can never change that. (Jerusalem Post April 30) *The writer served as Deputy Director of Communications & Policy Planning in the Prime Minister's Office.*

So Silly of Us By Yisrael Medad

Israel is now being requested, gently or less so, to proceed along a path intended to resolve the conflict with the Arabs who term themselves "Palestinians". The United States and the United Kingdom have prepared a "road map" which is to provide directions and a timetable for this path that Israel is to take. After decades of diplomacy, terror and economic boycott, Israel and the Palestinian Authority, formerly the Palestine Liberation Organization, may be forced to face the core issues that have, until now, proved nigh insolvable.

In the almost 39 years since Israel assumed the administration of territories alternatively termed "disputed" or "occupied", but, nevertheless, portions of the Jewish people's historical homeland, the great debate has raged within Israel what is to be the principled policy on the issue. Of those 39 years, representatives of the nationalist camp have served as prime ministers for 19 of them, just over half. Their basic platform (and Ariel Sharon is still an unknown) could be summarized as no Palestinian state west of the Jordan River and uninhibited Jewish residency in the area. Without analyzing the specific political ramifications of such a position - whether Israeli sovereignty, autonomy or condominium - this approach is now being challenged by the "road map".

In addition to Likud prime ministers (Begin, Shamir, Netanyahu and Sharon), Israel's Foreign Ministry has been in Likud hands. If there is one major failing, it has been in the ability and capability of these Foreign

Ministers to adequately present Israel's case in the information and diplomatic fields. We are now reaping the stunted growth of the inactivity and the lack of influence on the permanent civil service personnel who vigorously opposed the Likud philosophy.

Official spokespersons, from Directors-General to ambassadors, from consuls-general to plenipotentiaries, as well as officially sanctioned academics and researchers, at the UN and over a hundred countries, have done their best to undermine such a philosophy. The subject was avoided at the social talk sessions of conferences and delegations, not enough printed or published and many sought simply to avoid the issue. Israel voluntarily gave up most of the weapons it could have employed in this battle, or, when they were available, the permanent staff belittled the matter and the materials. Residents of the Jewish communities in Judea, Samaria and Gaza were stymied in their own efforts, while offers of help and appearances were kept to the barest of minimums.

Much of the criticism, from without and from within, to the nationalist camp ideology centered on the fact that we offered no alternative to what the nations of the world accepted. Basically, they thought that it was all so silly of Israel to campaign and struggle in the arena of world opinion on behalf of such a policy.

Yet, already 80 years ago, it was a British statesman who stood up to local Arabs and their supporters.

That statesman's message was predicated on the obvious: national rights to a national home in what was called "Palestine" were viewed as belonging to the Jews from a historical, religious, legal and cultural sense, and to the Jews only. We were the one and only 'national grouping'. The Arabs had national rights in other places. In March 1921, Winston Churchill visited the Palestine Mandate (during which, on his famous "Sunday walk", he created TransJordan and plunked down Abdullah as Emir in Rabat-Ammon). He was presented with a memorandum from various delegations of Arabs. To one from Haifa, which was particularly strongly worded, he replied:

"It is manifestly right that the Jews, who are scattered all over the world, should have a national centre and a national home where some of them may be reunited. And where else could that be but in this land of Palestine, with which for more than 3,000 years they have been intimately and profoundly associated? We think it will be good for the world, good for the Jews and good for the British Empire. But we also think it will be good for the Arabs who dwell in Palestine... I would draw your attention to the second part of the Balfour Declaration which solemnly and explicitly promises to the inhabitants of Palestine the fullest protection of their civil and political rights."

This message of Churchill is as relevant today as it was then. Ariel Sharon himself could learn a thing or two about the true importance of Shiloh and Bet El.

True, this message meets with ridicule. That self-destructive ridicule originates with Zionist groupings on the left, spreads to Jews of the Diaspora, finds a willing audience among non-Jewish radical organizations and becomes the bon mot of the "liberal" and "progressive" camp. Nevertheless, after a decade of the Oslo Process, with its dreams and visions of a "New Middle East", of inculcating democracy and its institutions, of defusing religious Islamist fanaticism and halting incitement, is this message any less potent? And if there has been insurmountable difficulty in applying the values behind Churchill's message, why should the values of peace and security be any more relevant to the Palestinian nationalist agenda?

Too many times, supporters of Israel remaining in Judea, Samaria and Gaza (Yesha) and retaining the overall responsibility for the region have been charged with failing to understand the realpolitik that is involved in defending such a view. Yet, to many, the Rogers Plan, the Jarring Plan and so on and so forth, through to Oslo and now the Road Map, are themselves victims of incomprehensibility and unrealities.

No one, except the Jewish residents of the Yesha communities, have challenged the conception that the Arabs are willing to compromise, that they are willing to co-exist and that they are multi-culturalists. The experience of the Jews of Yesha, as much as it has been negative in these regards, is also no different from Jews on the western divide of the 1967 'Green Line'. The Arabs make no distinction between Yesha and elsewhere in Israel, something too many people are willing to ignore.

The Road Map plan will lead nowhere but tragedy. How silly.

The writer is an activist on behalf of the Jewish communities of Judea, Samaria and Gaza (Yesha) and was part of the independent Yesha delegation to the 1991 Madrid Conference. (IsraelNationalNews.com Apr 20)

Abbas's Burden of Proof By Caroline Glick

There was a distinct feeling of *deja vu* from 1994 in the air this week. Back then, Egypt's President Hosni Mubarak saved the international community from embarrassment by physically forcing Yasser Arafat to sign the Gaza-Jericho agreement on live television. This week, Mubarak sent the commander of his intelligence service to repeat the performance. General Omar Sulieman came to Ramallah on Tuesday and literally forced Arafat to meet with his deputy, Dr. Mahmoud Abbas, and accept Abbas's cabinet.

As in 1994, the US and Europe heaved a collective sigh of relief at Egypt's manhandling of Arafat. The question is whether Arafat's seeming capitulation now will prove as fraudulent as his behavior then.

When last June US President George W. Bush called on the Palestinian people to reject the regime of PLO chief Arafat and to elect leaders "not compromised

by terror," he underscored the necessity of a complete overhaul of the way the Palestinians perceive their national identity. No longer could the Palestinians conceive of their nationalisms as something that must necessarily supplant Jewish nationalism in order to reach fruition. Rather, a new group of leaders was called on to rise up who would understand that the realization of Palestinian aspirations can come about only after the Palestinians accept Israel's right to exist as the Jewish state.

Today, responding to British pressure, the Bush administration stands poised to preside over new talks between the Israeli government and the PLO under the nascent leadership of Abbas, Arafat's deputy of four decades. The announced aim of these talks is the speedy establishment of a Palestinian state.

But before any such talks begin it is vital that all concerned parties, but especially Israel, pause a moment and consider the reason for Oslo's abject failure.

The Oslo process was predicated on a set of false assumptions. The primary assumption was that the PLO, an organization founded with the expressed aim of destroying Israel, no longer sought our liquidation. Instead, what we found with Arafat's rejection of Ehud Barak's offer at Camp David is that the PLO had not changed. Not only would Arafat not yield the Palestinians' so-called "right of return," he also denied that the Jewish people have any historic and legal claims to Jerusalem.

And for this stand he received a hero's welcome by the Palestinians upon his return to Gaza.

The Oslo process also posited that the PLO had forsworn its armed struggle for the destruction of the State of Israel. Yet Arafat himself formed the Aksa Martyr's Brigades, which as Thursday's suicide bombing shows, is still actively conducting terrorist operations against Israelis. Then, too, even before the Palestinian Authority launched its terrorist war against Israel in September 2000, its security services never made any sustained effort to destroy Hamas or Islamic Jihad terror infrastructures. To the contrary, PA military commanders like Col. Muhammad Dahlan embraced Hamas leaders like Muhammad Deif. Already back in September 1996, Arafat showed that he had no compunction about using the weapons Israel had given him to fight terrorism to kill Israelis.

Finally, the Oslo agreement wrongly assumed that the PLO could be trusted to abide by its signed commitments to Israel. It could not. From allowing the free flow of sewage into riverbeds streaming into Israel to amassing arsenals of prohibited armaments to registering tens of thousands of vehicles stolen from Israelis, the Palestinian Authority breached every single commitment it made to Israel at the negotiating table.

Now we are told that all of this is pass, because under the Abbas's leadership the Palestinian Authority is reformed. We are told that Arafat, who this week was feted by the entire international community in an effort to have him accept Abbas's proposed cabinet a cabinet that looks almost exactly like Arafat's cabinet no longer holds influence over what happens in the Palestinian Authority.

Yet even if we accept the dubious assertion that Arafat is now neutralized, we still must ask ourselves the question, why would Abbas be any different? Abbas received his doctorate in 1983 from Moscow's Oriental University. There his dissertation topic was "The Secret Relationship between Nazism and Zionism." In his dissertation, which was adapted into a book published in Jordan in 1984, Abbas argued that, as opposed to what is commonly believed, "even fewer than a million Jews" were murdered by the Nazis.

He further argued that the gas chambers were not used to kill people but rather to disinfect them and to burn bodies to prevent the flow of disease. Abbas claimed that Hitler did not decide to kill the Jews until David Ben-Gurion provoked him into doing so by "declaring war on the Nazis" in 1942. It was the Zionist conspirators, Abbas explains, who created the myth of six million murdered Jews in order to force the world to accept the establishment of Israel.

To date, neither the Israeli government nor Abbas's main champion, German Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer, have asked him to retract his statements of Holocaust denial.

Then too, the US plan to base new rounds of negotiations with an Abbas-led PA on the Quartet's "road map" has never taken into account Abbas's expressed agreement with the maximalist Palestinian demands set out by Arafat at the Camp David summit. In an interview with Kul al Arab radio in August 2000, Abbas said of the Palestinian demand for the "right of return," "It is only natural that each refugee return to his home." In the same interview he also directly threatened Israel, stating that if Israel does not accept the Palestinian demands, "We will open up the records of the past and demand the country in which they live" that is, pre-1967 Israel. He also stated that he does not believe that Solomon's Temple ever existed in Jerusalem.

A year later, in an interview with the PA's Al-Ayyam newspaper, Abbas explained why any flexibility in the Palestinian demands toward Israel is unacceptable. "When a Palestinian says that we have missed an opportunity or a tempting or a beneficial offer [by rejecting Barak's offers at Camp David and Taba] it weakens the Palestinian position since [consequently] the Americans and Israelis say, 'Here is a Palestinian who agrees with our position.' Such things, unfortunately hurt the Palestinian position."

So much, then, for Abbas's alleged moderation. Then there are the claims that Abbas, unlike the rest of the PA, is untainted by corruption. Yet both Abbas and his Security Minister-designate Dahlan are some of the Palestinians most associated with PA corruption. Both men made a fortune from kick-backs from the cement monopolies in Gaza. For years, photographers were prohibited from taking pictures of the multi-million dollar villas in Gaza both men financed by bilking the public trough.

Abbas has also shown that his Soviet education rubbed off on him. Speaking of reforms in May 2002, Abbas explained that the reforms need to take economic power away from Palestinian civilians and transfer all power to the Palestinian Authority. Abbas argued then that a necessary reform would involve preventing international NGOs from distributing monies directly to Palestinian NGOs. All those funds, he argued, must be transferred to the PA, the sole organization responsible for deciding how it should be apportioned.

It is true that in some recent statements, Abbas has argued that the PA's terror war against Israel did not serve the national aspirations of the Palestinian people. But these sort of statements, while encouraging, should be seen for what they are: an argument about tactics, not strategy, certainly not morality. They are not denunciations of terrorism per se, only of terrorism that doesn't work. Together with his record of as anti-Semitic ideologue of the Palestinian "revolution," it ought to be enough to dampen anyone's enthusiasm for Abbas as an improvement over Arafat.

Learning the lessons of the Oslo means placing the full burden of proof on the Palestinians. Abbas, not Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, must be challenged to show that he wishes to make concessions for peace. He must be challenged to recant his denials of the Holocaust. He must be called to accept that Israel's right to exist as a Jewish state. He must forswear his insistence on the "right of return." He must be called on to accept publicly the existence of the Jewish people whose national, spiritual and political roots are in Jerusalem.

None of this is meant to humiliate Abbas. After all, no one believes that Sharon is humiliating himself when he says he will accept the establishment of a Palestinian state. Rather, all of this is necessary to ensure that not only will a peace deal be reached, but that the peace will hold. If we learned anything from the past three years it must be this: Unless the Palestinian Authority under Abbas is actually willing to abide by the commitments taken on by the PLO a decade ago, there is no point in cheering his rise, no reason to negotiate anything with him, and certainly no reason to sigh in relief that Arafat again has done Mubarak's bidding. (Jerusalem Post Apr 25)

Pick Your Illusion By Martin Sherman

The image of a new false prophet is rising above the wreckage of shattered hopes and abandoned dreams that litter the desolate political landscape of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. This latest illusion comes in shape of Abu Mazen.

For the fanatical adherents of peace (or rather, of withdrawal), the newly elected Palestinian PM is the last gleam of hope for resuscitating the embers of their Oslovian vision (or rather, fantasy).

However, the chances of this seductive apparition providing the yearned for tranquility are slim. There are sound reasons for this starkly pessimistic prognosis. For there are only two alternatives regarding the nature of any prospective solution for the violent conflict between Israel and the Palestinians: Either (a) the solution is person-specific, with its success depending on the character of the incumbent Palestinian leader; or (b) it is not person-specific, with its success depending on more profound processes in Palestinian society, its nature and its structure.

Now, if on the one hand, the latter version is correct, the replacement of the current leader with another will have little effect. For the radical elements, such as Hamas and the Islamic Jihad, who enjoy wide public support, will be most unlikely to defer to the will of the new leadership. In fact, this is precisely the claim that Arafat's apologists raise in his defense, namely that he is unable to rein in the extremists, even though he would like to do so.

Moreover, apart from stiff opposition from hardened rivals, bolstered popular sentiment, any alternative leader will have to contend with the ingrained hatred that years of incitement by the Palestinian media have bred, creating burning enmity towards Israel in the hearts of many.

Consequently, in order to restrain the various elements determined to attack Israel and Israelis, any prospective Palestinian leader would have to undertake measures so wide-ranging and so severe that they would virtually constitute a civil war. It is difficult to imagine any Palestinian candidate who would be either willing and/or able to implement such a policy.

Indeed, although it seems highly plausible that blows inflicted on the extremist factions should strengthen the moderates and their leaders, the targeted killing earlier this month of Said Arabid a senior Hamas member in Gaza was condemned as measure that weakened Abu Mazen the man expected to wage an uncompromising war against groupss like Hamas.

This raises a very troubling question: Given the fact that moral suasion is unlikely to work as an instrument of restraint, just how is any Palestinian leader supposed to wage an effective campaign against the extremist elements if the removal of those heading these elements are seen as acts that weaken him?

If on the other hand, the first version is correct, and any solution of the conflict is dependent on the personality of the Palestinian leader, the implications for Israel are even more serious.

For if far-reaching Israeli concessions are made on the basis of the traits of a given Palestinian leader such as Abu Mazen, what will be the fate of the agreement if the tenure of that leader is terminated whether as a result of illness, assassination or rebellion and the concessions fall to a radical and hostile successor.

Indeed, Israel has had bitter experience involving the installment of favorably disposed Arab leaders as exemplified by the 1982 assassination of Bashir Jemayel in Lebanon.

Of course one might protest that this is the nature of international agreements and that if concern about the character of future regimes is reason enough to prevent reaching agreement, no agreements would ever be concluded. However, in the case of an Israeli-Palestinian accord, any conceivable agreement will differ greatly in terms of its significance for Israel from a routine treaty made in the usual conduct of international affairs.

For Israel, the concessions called for in order to conclude an agreement with the Palestinians, have crucial, long-term ramifications that impinge on its very strategic ability to survive. These include the loss of control of vital hydro-strategic resources; the creation of a long and tortuous frontier, on the very fringes of major population centers along the seaboard metropolis; total topographic inferiority for a coastal plain a narrow sliver of land, barely 20 km wide and 100 km long in which 80% of the country's population and 80% of its economic activity are located, and which will be left completely exposed and vulnerable to those holding hill tops of Judea and Samaria, immediately adjacent to it in the east.

Accordingly, the nature of the future regime likely to succeed that of Abu Mazen is of vital significance for Israel. After all, agreements can be signed in an instant, but the concessions made in them along with the perilous vulnerability that they create will continue long after the fanfare and ceremony have died down.

It would be most prudent, therefore, to refrain from any false hope that the deceptive illusion of new Abu Mazen regime may instill in the Israeli public. The disappointment and despair that it is likely leave in its wake will be even more acute than those of today. (Jerusalem Post Apr 24)

The writer lectures in Political Science at Tel Aviv University.

Mr. Bronfman: Why Are You Are Trying to Get My Children Killed?

By Naomi Ragen

Sometimes, when I think about Oslo, I feel I understand the driving force behind the people who supported it, despite the incredible risks they took in entrusting our security to a terrorist.

They took a chance. They didn't know.

However, if a person plays Russian roulette, shoots themselves in the head, and then when they find themselves miraculously alive, do it again, that's unforgivable. And if the people who are pointing the gun are pointing it not at their own heads, but at the heads of others, that's criminal.

According to a Washington Post article By Alan Cooperman, published on Wednesday, April 30, 2003, entitled: Jewish Leaders Back 'Road Map' the following Jewish "philanthropists" have "broken" with Jewish leadership, sending a letter to Congress to "express our concern over recent efforts to sidetrack implementation of the 'Road Map.'" While the plan is "neither perfect nor a panacea," they wrote, "as passionate supporters of Israel, we also know that the Jewish state needs this kind of energetic American diplomacy."

Besides Edgar Bronfman, those signing the letter included Stanley Chesley (Ohio), Lester Crown (Illinois), Irwin Field (California), Alex Grass (Pennsylvania), Mimi Haas (California), Arlene I. Kaufman (Maryland), Marvin Lender (Connecticut), Judith Stern Peck (New York), Karen A. Shapira (Pittsburgh), Alan Solomont (Massachusetts), Joel Tauber (Michigan), and Peggy Tishman and Larry Zicklin (New York).

In contrast, eighty-seven senators and 297 House members have signed letters, backed by AIPAC and other Jewish groups, urging Bush to stick to the principles he elaborated last June. Bush said then Palestinians must change their leaders, renounce violence and undertake institutional reforms before the establishment of a state.

"We want to see a process begin that has a real chance to succeed. We think the principles enunciated by the president in his June 24 speech would do that, and there are elements in the road map that contradict that," Malcolm Hoenlein, executive director of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, said yesterday. God bless you Malcolm Hoenlein.

I'd like to say this to dear Mr. Bronfman: Keep your money. You don't have enough to pay for trying to make it easier for Yassir and Company to kill my children, and other Israelis. Take your money, Mr. Bronfman, Ms. Peck, Ms. Shapira, et al and shove it. You are betraying us in Israel. Maybe because I'm not a politician, and I don't look for handouts and I don't care I can tell you this publicly. Your recent statement makes me sick, and can in no way be viewed as a friendly or helpful gesture to Israel or Israelis. However, I'm sure Mr. Arafat will send you a thank you note. (NaomiRagen.com Apr 30)