

Commentary...

A Nation Like Ours: Why Americans stand with Israel By David Gelernter

A Philosopher's Job is to show you what you would otherwise miss because it is right in front of your nose, too close to focus on. In one of Mel Brooks's worst, funniest movies, he played a "stand-up philosopher," and we could use some stand-up philosophy right now.

Have you ever wondered (a stand-up philosopher might ask) why so many Americans feel an instinctive sympathy for Israel that Europeans can't understand? According to such noted experts on U.S. culture as Bishop Desmond Tutu and certain leading French statesmen, this sympathy merely goes to show the power of American Jews in U.S. politics. It's hard to tell whether the bishop and the French elite are against Jews, or merely against Jews' having opinions. In any case, a stand-up philosopher would suggest that they drop it and look at a history book instead. Find out where the United States came from; then look up Israel. It's never too late for world leaders to learn the facts of life. Jews are powerful and influential in this country. But if no Jew had ever set foot in America, the United States and Israel would tend to understand each other nonetheless--because they are two of a kind.

Both are pick-up nations created out of ideas, with populations drawn from all over the globe; they are self-made nations in a world where most nations had nationhood handed to them on a silver platter. A Frenchman or Japanese is so far removed from nation-building that he no longer has any moral stake in it; the energy and struggle that created France or Japan are none of his business. He washes his hands of them. Americans and Israelis still remember that nations do not create themselves.

Proto-Americans arrived here and proto-Israelis over there uninvited, from Europe, and set about making homes for themselves in the large empty spaces between indigenous settlements. They were small minorities at first, far from home and (in many cases) in strikingly unworldly frames of mind. Europeans can't conceive of creating a nation in such a manner.

The indigenous Indians and Palestinians confronted America and Israel with roughly similar moral problems from the start. But American and Israeli settlers had to leave Europe; they felt the pressure at their backs. And once they arrived in their new lands, everywhere they looked they saw empty space, and so they naively assumed that there would be room for everybody. In the years immediately after the First World War, Martin Gilbert writes, "less than 10 percent of the land area of Palestine was under cultivation. The rest, whether stony or fertile, was uncultivated. No Arab cultivator need be dispossessed for the Zionists to make substantial land purchases. The potential of the land, on which fewer than a million people were living on both sides of the Jordan, was regarded as enormous."

Why does the United States belong to Americans? Because we built it. We conceived the idea and put it into practice bit by bit. Why does Israel belong to Israelis? True, Jews have lived there in unbroken succession since the Romans destroyed the Second Temple in the year 70. True, Jews were hounded out of their homes in Europe and the Arab Middle East, had nowhere else to go, and demanded the right to live. But ultimately, the land of Israel belongs to Israelis for the same reason America belongs to Americans: Because Israelis conceived and built it--and what you create is yours.

If you want a homeland, you must create one. You drain swamps, lay out farms, build houses, schools, roads, hospitals, playgrounds, movie theaters, office parks (and don't forget the discount souvenir shops). That's how America got its homeland, and that is why Israel belongs to the Israelis.

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American settlers (the tragic fact is) committed gross crimes against American Indians. We don't lessen the significance of those crimes by noting that Indians committed crimes against the settlers too, and crimes against other Indians. The United States has long since acknowledged and deeply (even bitterly) regretted its own crimes. No killing or exiling of Indians would have been necessary for the settlers to realize

their goal, as they laid it out in a ballad in colonial Virginia: "We hope to plant a nation, where none before hath stood."

Israeli settlers had similar goals. In 1937, a British government commission called on Winston Churchill to address the future of Palestine; would it not be "harsh injustice" to the Arabs, he was asked, if Jews were allowed to enter Palestine at will, become a majority and eventually set up a Jewish state? "Why is there harsh injustice done," Churchill answered, "if people come in and make a livelihood for more, and make the desert into palm groves and orange groves? Why is it injustice because there is more work and wealth for everybody? There is no injustice. The injustice is when those who live in the country leave it to be desert for thousands of years." No analogy between Palestinians and American Indians will fly. The differences are too deep. But in other ways there are remarkable similarities between proto-Israeli and proto-American settlers, especially New Englanders.

In pre-1917 Ottoman-ruled Palestine, as in colonial New England, settlers from Europe built villages in a harsh, beautiful countryside where they had come to be free. Both communities were saturated with Scripture. Both had faith in the redemptive sanctity of labor on the land--the Jews (if anything) even more than the New Englanders, although the New Englanders were probably greater believers in Israel's God. Both communities relied on universal military training for self-defense. Both were dedicated to education, and determined to found universities. The same Hebrew names rushed like brook-water through both societies. Both had a moral seriousness that was fundamentally alien to modern Europe.

They started out with roughly the same peaceful intentions towards the indigenous inhabitants. (Of course in Palestine, some of the indigenous inhabitants were Jews.) In the mid-1600s, William Bradford described the Pilgrims' treaty with the Indians, "which has now continued this twenty-four years." It was based on scrupulous reciprocity and mutual friendship. In the years before the First World War, A.D. Gordon wrote that Jewish settlers must have the "moral courage" to approach the Arabs humanely, "even if the other side is not all that is desired. Indeed, their hostility is all the more reason for our humanity."

In settling America, proto-Americans were venturing forth; proto-Israelis were returning home. Yet the Bible insists that Jews were not the aboriginal inhabitants of the land of Israel. (The Hebrew Bible, with its guileless, tactless, relentless honesty, is the same sort of PR disaster that modern Israel has become.) "God said to Abraham: Venture forth from your land, and from your birthplace, and from your father's house, to the land that I will show you" (Genesis 12:1). New England settlers took this commandment personally. Before the Puritans departed Southampton for America in 1630, the Reverend John Cotton preached them a sermon on II Samuel 7:10--"Moreover I will appoint a place for my people Israel, and I will plant them, that they may dwell in a place of their own and move no more."

Of course, the Jews had to buy the land on which they settled. The Arabs and Turks were hardly likely to give it away, to Jews least of all. At times, the Turks were hard put to see the point of Jews altogether; at Passover 1917, all Jews were expelled from Jaffa and Jerusalem. The Jewish National Fund was established to collect money for land purchases in Palestine. The Rothschilds were definitely a help, but Jews all over the world chipped in. The JNF's sky-blue collection-boxes became fixtures wherever Jews lived.

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They still are.

As the Jewish settlement grew, Jews repeatedly made clear their willingness to share the land with Arabs. After the First World War, Turkish Palestine became the British Mandate. In 1947, the U.N. proposed to partition British Palestine into a Jewish state plus a new Arab state--an Arab Palestine. The U.N.'s finicky, snaking-around partition line created an Israel within which Jews were the majority, but left more than 100,000 Jews out in the cold--Jews who lived in Jerusalem, which was supposed to be internationalized, or in lands assigned to the Arabs. For the Jews this wasn't much of a state, and its borders were laughably indefensible. But they accepted the plan, joyfully. They danced in the streets. Thus Israel's founders and the Israeli people publicly and explicitly endorsed the idea of Jewish and Arab Palestines side by side.

The Arab response had the virtue of simplicity. No one has ever had any trouble understanding "Kill the Jews." Egypt, Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Iraq, and Saudi Arabia attacked the Jewish State at birth. "Pretty soon," the Syrian prime minister is said to have notified a British diplomat, "the Arab armies will teach the Jews a lesson they will never forget." This they did. The Jews never have forgotten, and never will. The Arabs fought savagely--if you were wounded, better die than fall into their hands--and when the war was over, some one percent of the Jewish population was dead. But the Jews had not been thrown into the sea. They had fought their way outward to the "1967 borders."

In 2000 Prime Minister Ehud Barak agreed, once again: two states, side by side. The Arab response was a fresh wave of murder and mayhem.

America pushed its borders out deliberately. Israel won new territory in wars provoked by its enemies. In both cases, newly accessible lands were irresistible to a certain segment of the population.

Israeli settlers are not all alike. Some set out for the territories because of patriotism--to strengthen Israeli security (which, Lord knows, needed strengthening). Some set out to find cheaper, wider-open living spaces. Some set out in obedience to God's will--or, as Americans used to call it, "manifest destiny." Nowadays, enlightened people find the very idea of America's "manifest destiny" too ludicrous even to sneer at. But a stand-up philosopher might ask: What would a nation have to do to prove this absurd thesis, that its emergence represented "God's will"? Perhaps save the world from Nazi and Japanese tyranny, defeat Soviet communism, and serve as an inspiration to freedom-loving peoples everywhere? Would that be a start? Reasonable people will differ about what it all means--but if there were more philosophers on the scene, we would be less apt to reject ideas without thinking about them.

Today it is no accident that America and Israel tend to understand each other--even to empathize with one another--not invariably, but on the whole. To see why, you don't have to be Bishop Tutu or some eminent Frenchman resurrecting tired but ever-popular Nazi theories about the satanically persuasive Jew. There is an easier explanation. The founding settlers of America and of modern Israel were offered victimhood on easy terms, and turned it down cold. They chose to create new nations out of nothing instead.

When Menachem Ussishkin addressed the Paris Peace Conference as a Zionist delegate in 1919, Jews had ample grounds for self-pity. They were more than entitled to all they wanted. The Russian civil war was under way, and "Russian Jewry," Ussishkin noted, "is undergoing fresh torrents of murder and rioting." But he rejected victimhood. He did not want to be rescued; he only wanted Jews to be allowed to rescue themselves.

What we want, he said, is to "renew our own lives and revive the national and cultural tradition which has come down to us from ancient times." David Ben-Gurion, later Israel's first prime minister, welcomed British support for Jewish settlement in Palestine--but the Jewish people themselves, he said, "only they, with body and soul, with their strength and capital, must build their National Home and bring about their national redemption." To Bishop Tutu and the French establishment, such sentiments are no doubt mysterious. But Americans understand them. They share them. They have lived them, as Israel is living them today. (The Weekly Standard May 20)

The writer is a contributing editor to The Weekly Standard.

A New Regime for the Palestinians? *The Sharansky Plan gains traction.*

By Tom Rose

Last week's standoff at Bethlehem's Church of the Nativity and the suicide bombing at Rishon le Zion's Sheffield Pool Hall both made for gripping television. But neither will change the dynamic of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict the way the week's most significant development did.

The week's biggest Middle East story happened not in the region but in Washington. For the first time since the start of the now dead Oslo peace process in 1993, talk of Palestinian regime-change--a subject previously deemed unmentionable by the American and Israeli foreign policy establishments--emerged in the form of open discussion of the need for sweeping reforms of the Palestinian Authority.

The prelude to this turn of events occurred on May 3, when Israeli deputy prime minister Natan Sharansky--long the only voice to demand that Israel and the West insist upon Palestinian democratization--called for the end of the current Palestinian dictatorship in an op-ed in the Jerusalem Post. Under the

multi-point plan Sharansky outlined, Israel, the United States, and moderate Arab states would replace the Arafat regime with a new Palestinian Administrative Authority responsible for ruling the territories currently controlled by the Palestinians. Outside funding for this PAA would be contingent upon the dismantling of terrorist organizations, the "privatization" of the now state-controlled Palestinian media, a crackdown on incitement to terror, and most important, a timetable for free and fair elections. Israel's only power over the new PAA would be its right to "veto" candidates openly endorsing violence against Israelis or directly linked to terrorist organizations or past terrorist actions.

At first, the "Sharansky Plan" generated about as much internal Israeli debate as all his previous calls for Palestinian reform--that is, none. En route to Washington, however, Sharon called Sharansky to say he was pushing to incorporate parts of the plan into the government's proposal to be presented to President Bush. Still, not a single reform-oriented element of the Sharansky Plan made it into any official Israeli document.

Nevertheless, the Sharansky Plan made the rounds in Washington. Two days after its publication in the Jerusalem Post, National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice made headlines when she announced her support for "serious" Palestinian administrative reform.

Arriving in Washington the same day, neither Prime Minister Sharon nor his delegation saw the Rice statement as the dramatic positive development that it was. But this time, Israeli tone-deafness may not matter. What does matter is that what Sharon came to talk about and what Rice claimed to want were two sides of a coin: Both grasped the need to move beyond Arafat. For the first time since Oslo, it is legitimate for a senior member of the United States government to talk about changing the Palestinian regime.

Those unfamiliar with Israel's reliance on dumb luck to bail it out of jam after jam might be excused for thinking this a beautifully coordinated masterstroke. Israel's prime minister arrives in Washington carrying a bulky "briefing book" of more than 100 pages of original documents seized from Arafat's offices in Ramallah, to display "the smoking gun": irrefutable evidence that Arafat was intimately involved in dozens of specific terrorist attacks. At precisely that moment, the president's national security adviser embraces reform.

Sharon arrives to land the knockout blow, while Rice starts creating a positive vision of what should come next. The stage seems set for finally tackling the single greatest impediment to progress in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, Yasser Arafat's regime, and replacing it with a government more tolerant and free. Now, if only more Israelis would join Sharansky in believing that decent government for and by the Palestinians could be achieved. (The Weekly Standard May 20)

The writer is publisher of the Jerusalem Post.

Why Don't I Care About the Palestinians? By John Derbyshire

The options, as I see them.

Why don't I care about the Palestinians? It is, of course, wrong of me not to care. It can't be much fun being a Palestinian. You, or your parents, or your grandparents, ran for their lives in the 1948 war. You - and/or they, plus a couple of generations of uncles, aunts, siblings, and cousins - have been huddled in some squalid refugee camp ever since, living off UNRWA handouts. ("UNRWA," by the way, stands for "U.S. taxpayer." But you knew that!) There is no economy worth participating in. Your leaders won a fragmented, halfway sort of autonomy for you at Oslo; but it didn't work, you're not sure why. Nothing really got any better, and now the Israelis have smashed it all up anyway. The other Arabs all hate you (a little-known factor of Middle East political life, but one attested by my colleague David Pryce-Jones, who knows the Arabs better than anyone). Things look bad, and you are sunk in despair. Shouldn't I feel sorry for you?

Sure, I personally favor Israel in this conflict. That's my right as a freethinking person. I'm a Christian, though, aren't I? Shouldn't I have some Christian compassion to spare for the poor suffering Palestinians? Ask not for whom the bell tolls, etc., etc.

Well, I suppose I should, but to be honest about it, I don't. Why not? Why don't I care about the Palestinians? The answer is *NOT* any of the following.

- I like taking showers with Jews.
- Palestinians have dark skin and I'm a racist.
- My name was originally Derbstein.
- My British blood is boiling with shame over the lost empire.
- I am a lackey of, or am trying to ingratiate myself with, the Jews who run the U.S. media.
- I am a cruel, hard-hearted bigot.

The answer isn't exactly compassion fatigue, either. That's pretty close, though. I *am* aware of a certain level of compassion fatigue in regard to the world at large, and it spills over into the Palestinian issue.

The other day I had the depressing experience of reading, one right after the other, Stephen Kotkin's wonderfully titled "Trashcanistan" in the April

15th *New Republic*, then Helen Epstein's "Mozambique: In Search of the Hidden Cause of AIDS" in the May 9th *New York Review of Books*. The first of these was a long portmanteau review of six books about the fates of various components of the old U.S.S.R. in the years since the thing fell apart. The second tries to discover why a sleepy rural area of Mozambique, populated by courteous folk practicing a traditional way of life, has high levels of AIDS.

Kotkin's account of the ex-Soviet colonies - Ukraine, Moldova, the central Asian and Caucasian republics, etc. - is hair-raising. Principal features of the landscape here are utter economic collapse, "gangland violence among state ministers," rising Islamofascism and the flight of large sectors of the population. (One-third of the able-bodied workforce of Moldova has fled. I have just been reading another report about that wretched country. Sample quote: "Experts estimate that since the fall of the Soviet Union between 200,000 and 400,000 women have been sold into prostitution - perhaps up to 10 percent of the female population.") Kotkin writes beautifully about this appalling situation, which stretches across the entire southern and western marches of the old U.S.S.R., illuminating his account with memorable one-liners like: "Ukraine has gotten its state and is eating it, too."

Helen Epstein's piece on Mozambique tells of a state of affairs just as awful. The fundamental problem, she discovers, is that: "These people are so poor ... that sex has become part of their economy. In some cases, it's practically the only currency they have." The men go away for months on end to work in the South African mines - where, of course, they console themselves with prostitutes. The women left behind survive as best they can, often by becoming the mistresses of the few local men who can actually afford to eat. Why are they all so poor? Because Mozambique has been wrecked by corruption, tribal war and stupid economics.

What a world! You can only read a certain amount of this stuff before you start to avert your eyes. What on earth can anyone hope to do about all this? All the simple explanations for the horrors that stain a large part of our planet have been used up. We now know that it's not the fault of colonialism, or neo-colonialism, or capitalism, or socialism. It's just the way these places are. They can't handle modernity, for some cultural reason we don't understand and can't do anything about.

That's the context in which I see the Palestinians. The Palestinians are Arabs; and the Arabs, whatever their medieval achievements (as best I can understand, they were mainly achievements of transmission - "Arabic" numerals, for example, came from India) are politically hopeless. Who can dispute this? Look at the last 50-odd years, since the colonial powers left. What have the Arabs accomplished? What have they built? Where in the Arab world is there a trace or a spark of democracy? Of constitutionalism? Of laws independent of the ruler's whim? Of free inquiry? Of open public debate? Where in your house is there any article stamped "Made in Syria?" Arabs can be individually very charming and capable, and perform very well in free societies like the U.S.A. There are at least two recent Nobel prizes with Arab names attached. Collectively, though, as nations, the Arabs are no-hopers.

All of this applies to the Palestinians. I spent some of my formative years in Hong Kong, a barren piece of rock with zero natural resources, under foreign occupation, chock-full of refugees from the Mao tyranny. The people there weren't lounging in UNRWA camps or making suicide runs at the governor's mansion. They were trading, building, speculating, manufacturing, *working* - with the result that Hong Kong is now a glittering modern city filled with well-dressed, well-educated, well-fed people, proud of what they have accomplished together, and with a higher standard of living than Britain herself. If, following the Oslo accords - or for that matter, in the 20 years of Jordanian occupation - the Palestinians had taken that route, had set aside their fantasies of revenge and massacre, and concentrated on building up something worth having, I might have respect for them. As it is, I don't.

The only halfway sympathetic thing I can find to say about the Palestinians is that UNRWA has surely been part of the problem. If you go to the UNRWA website, you will see how proud they are of having fed, clothed, sheltered, educated and cared for the Palestinian refugees of 1948... and their children... and their grandchildren. The number of people UNRWA cares for has gone from 600,000 in 1948 to nearly four million today. Now, I understand that the prime impulse of bureaucracies, especially welfare bureaucracies, is the consolidation and expansion of their turf, and a steady increase in the number of their "clients"; but this is ridiculous. The good people of Hong Kong should go down on their knees every night and thank God that there was no UNRWA in the colony in 1949. So, come to think of it, should the German and East European refugees who flooded into Western Europe after WWII. (I have seen the number 14 million somewhere - the Sudeten Germans alone numbered three million. Where are the festering camps? Where are the suicide bombers?)

Even if their lives had not been poisoned by the ministrations of a huge welfare bureaucracy, though, I doubt the Palestinians would have got their act together. None of the other Arabs have. Everywhere you look around the Arab world you see squalor, despotism, cruelty, and hopelessness. The best they have been able to manage, politically speaking, has been the Latin-American style one-party kleptocracies of Egypt and Jordan. Those are the peaks of Arab political achievement under independence, under government by their own people. The

norm is just gangsterism, with thugs like Assad, Qaddafi, or Saddam in charge. It doesn't seem to be anything to do with religion: the secular states (Iraq, Syria) are just as horrible as the religious ones like Saudi Arabia. These people are *hopeless*. We are all supposed to support the notion of a Palestinian state. Why? We know perfectly well what it would be like. Why should we wish for another gangster-satrapy to be added to the Arab roll of shame, busy manufacturing terrorists to come here and slaughter Americans in their offices? I don't want to see a Palestinian state. I think I'd be crazy to want that.

What, actually, are the possible futures for the Palestinians? I think the following list is exhaustive.

1. An independent state, under Arafat or someone just as thuggish.
2. Military occupation by Israel.
3. Re-incorporation into a Jordanian-Palestinian nation.
4. Some sort of U.N. trusteeship.
5. Expulsion from the West Bank and Gaza, those territories then incorporated into Israel.

Number 1 is what we are all supposed to want. As I have already indicated, I don't want it, and I can't see why anyone else would, either. Except Palestinians, I suppose: If they yearn to be ruled by amoral hoodlums (as, according to polls, they apparently do), I suppose they have some theoretical right to see their wishes fulfilled - but why should the rest of us allow it to happen, given the dangers to us? Number 2 might work for a time, but the Israelis would eventually get fed up with it, and then we'd move on to one of the other options. Number 3 would get us back to the pseudo-stability of pre-1967, but is deeply unpopular with Jordanians - and look what happened in 1967! Number 4 undoubtedly has the UNRWA bureaucrats drooling, but as with number 1, it's hard to see what's in it for the rest of us. Aren't we handing over enough of our money in welfare payments to *our own* people?

Which leaves us with number 5: expulsion. I am starting to think that this might be the best option. I'm not the only one, either. Here is Dick Arme, Republican leader in the U.S. House of Representatives, talking to Chris Matthews on *Hardball*:

MATTHEWS: Well, just to repeat, you believe that the Palestinians who are now living on the West Bank should get out of there?

Rep. ARMEY: Yes.

When I say "the best option," I don't mean "best for the Palestinians". I don't think they have any good options. Being Arabs, they are incapable of constructing a rational polity, so their future is probably hopeless whatever happens. Their options are the ones I listed above: to be ruled by gangsters, or Israelis, or Jordanians, or welfare bureaucrats. Or to go live somewhere else, under the gentle rule of their brother Arabs. Would expulsion be hard on the Palestinians? I suppose it would. Would it be any harder than options 1 thru 4? I doubt it. Do I really give a flying falafel one way or the other? No, not really.

The writer is an NR contributing editor. (National Review May 9)

Help the Israeli Victims of Terror By Gil Troy

Last week's lethal suicide bombing at a billiard hall in the working-class Israeli town of Rishon LeTzion once again shifted the focus in the Middle East from peace to war. It should be clear to all Americans, and especially to New Yorkers and Washingtonians, how to respond to this unprecedented wave of serial terror unleashed against the Jewish state. The time has come to set up the Israeli equivalent of a Twin Towers Fund, for all the victims of Palestinian terror. Yes, it is up to political leaders and military experts to develop the most effective way to squelch terrorism. But individuals of good conscience donating time, skill, and money can also help repudiate terrorism as a tactic. The hundreds of millions of dollars that flowed into the various funds established for the Sept. 11 victims did nothing to defeat Osama bin Laden. All the good will in the world could not displace the Taliban from Afghanistan. Still, the massive outpouring of good wishes and money made two powerful statements that resonated throughout the world. The message to the victims was: "You are not alone." The message to the terrorists was: "Your tactics are so barbaric, they obscure -- and damage -- whatever cause you were trying to advance."

The civilized world must deliver two similar messages to the Middle East. Israelis are feeling embattled and abandoned. Over 50 Israelis were murdered during the holiday of Passover itself, 127 were murdered in March, and nearly 500 have been murdered since Yasser Arafat rejected the Camp David offers and chose terrorism rather than negotiations.

Last week's billiard club bombing adds 16 more names to a long and depressing list of innocent lives snuffed out. Nir Lobatin, 29, leaves behind a wife who, after four years of trying, is on pregnancy bed rest expecting twins. Anat Trumporush, 36, had just phoned her 10-, seven-, and five-year old sons to wish them good night. The next day, her husband Danny asked from his hospital bed, "How do I tell my children they don't have a mother?" Shoshana Magmari, 51, was celebrating, on her first night out "with the girls,"

having just successfully completed two years of breast cancer treatment. Pazit and Moshe Korman were out celebrating their fifth wedding anniversary. Pazit, 25, has undergone three surgeries in 36 hours; Moshe is in a coma. As we well know, each name represents a family devastated, a world destroyed. The immediate survivors must know that the world has not abandoned them. The 3,500 innocent bystanders who have been maimed or traumatized, the hundreds of thousands who are living in fear, must know that they are not alone.

Moreover, a world-wide embrace of the Israeli victims would make it clear that bombings of Sbarro pizzerias and Passover seders, of cafés and supermarkets, of restaurants and discos, are illegitimate, no matter what the cause. Support for the victims of these atrocities need not be political. Donating to the Israeli victims' fund does not have to constitute an endorsement of Ariel Sharon nor a rejection of Palestinian nationalism. It is the tactic -- terrorism -- and the idea -- anti-Semitism -- that must be repudiated.

The truth is that a massive infusion of cash would also do a world of good. Americans now understand the deleterious ripple effect catastrophic terrorism has on a society. Widows and orphans often need help making ends meet. Those who "only" were injured often face painful and expensive rehabilitation. Rescue workers themselves are often traumatized and need counseling. Equipment must be replaced.

New ambulances and mobile trauma units could shorten response times and save lives.

Beyond the physical and psychic wounds is tremendous economic damage. Shopkeepers in central Jerusalem are begging the municipality for tax relief, because people are afraid to shop downtown. Some restaurateurs and café owners have started adding security charges, beyond tax and tip, to help pay for the armed guards posted at the door. Beyond that, the loss of tourism, the skittish investors, the distracted workers, all contribute to a recession.

After dithering for too long, the organized Jewish community is beginning to mobilize and raise funds. For months, a small grassroots initiative, the Israel Emergency Solidarity Fund-One Family, has spearheaded the drive to support the victims, raising over \$2.5 million. Last month the United Jewish Communities umbrella group of Jewish federations announced a multimillion dollar campaign to raise money for Israel, including some earmarked for victims.

These Jewish initiatives, while salutary, will lack the universality of a broad-based fund supported by all concerned citizens. To drive home the message as well as raise the money, a prominent figure should take the lead, be it ex-Mayor Rudolph Giuliani, ex-President George H.W. Bush, Gen. Norman Schwarzkopf, or Rev. Billy Graham.

Democracies such as the United States and Israel are particularly vulnerable to terrorism. Terrorists know how to abuse the openness essential to democratic societies, while democratic individualism magnifies the impact of each death, of each casualty. But democracies also have vast resources that can be mobilized in the fight against terror. After Sept. 11, good people throughout the world enveloped grieving Americans in a massive and welcome group hug. It is time for Americans -- and the rest of the world -- to do the same for grieving Israelis. (Wall Street Journal May 13)

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Hooligans Take Their Cue By Evelyn Gordon

The European Union is outraged. Javier Solana, the EU's foreign policy chief, gave a speech last Thursday lambasting the American media for accusing Europe of anti-Semitism. Such accusations, he said, are "deeply unjust," "of striking brutality," and "don't correspond to reality." Two days earlier, the EU's commissioner for external relations, Chris Patten, published a similar diatribe in *The Washington Post*, terming such charges "obscenely offensive rubbish," a "mad and grotesque assault on reasoned debate." And both of them reiterated the standard defenses: Not all criticism of Israel is anti-Semitic; anti-Jewish violence in Europe is "imported" from the Middle East; the government is not responsible for every hooligan who vandalizes a synagogue; European governments always denounce such attacks.

But all of these justifications, though true, fail to explain the one salient fact that Patten and Solana carefully avoided mentioning: While anti-Semitic violence is up sharply in Europe, there has been no similar upsurge in the United States.

Like Europe, the US has a large Muslim community that cares deeply about the Middle East. It also has a very visible Jewish community that would provide an easy target for anti-Semitic attacks. Yet according to the Anti-Defamation League, the US has experienced no increase at all in anti-Semitic incidents over the last 19 months. So why do American Muslims confine themselves to democratic protest - demonstrations, lobbying, articles in the press - while European Muslims add synagogue vandalism and assaults on Jewish schoolchildren to their repertoire? Is it just chance that all the hooligans are in Europe? Discounting this far-fetched thesis, the unavoidable conclusion is that Europe has somehow created a climate conducive to anti-Semitic violence, while the US has not. And if one compares the American media, government, and public to their European counterparts, the "how" is easy to see. The mainstream American media, like its European counterpart, is highly critical of Israel. Nevertheless, there are some key differences. The American press, for instance,

does not inflame its readers with classic anti-Semitic cartoons - like the one in the respected Italian paper *La Stampa*, in which baby Jesus peers up at an Israeli tank and says, "Don't tell me they want to kill me again!"

But perhaps even more importantly, the American media do not obscure such crucial facts as that the IDF operations it so deplores are responses to suicide bombings targeting Israeli civilians. That is not true in Europe - as Jean Daniel, editor of the French weekly, *Le Nouvel Observateur*, observed in a scathing editorial in February. Daniel, incidentally, is hardly an Israel-lover: In December, he rushed to publish an unverified front-page story accusing Israeli soldiers of raping Palestinian women (he later had to retract it). Yet by February, even he was appalled by the French media's "unprofessionalism." The media, he wrote, simply ignore the terror attacks that precede Israel's military actions; day after day, they lead the reader to conclude that Israeli troops are killing Palestinians for no reason at all.

And by portraying Israelis (read "Jews") as people who kill without cause, the media create a climate for anti-Semitic violence. Psychopathic killers do not deserve the protections accorded ordinary human beings.

The broader American public also behaves differently from its European counterpart. There is no lack of support for the Palestinian cause in the US; witness the number of non-Muslims attending pro-Palestinian rallies. But you would never find American trade unionists parading in Hamas garb, as Italy's trade unionists did not long ago. Such actions, again, send the implicit message that violence against Jews is acceptable. Since Hamas is the inventor of suicide bombings against Israeli women and children, if its members are heroes worth emulating, then killing Jews must be right and proper.

And finally, there are the governments. The Bush administration is hardly uncritical of Israel: It is the first American government to speak of a Palestinian state and Israel's "occupation of Palestine," and it regularly urges military restraint. Yet it also acknowledges that governments must defend their citizens against terrorism, and therefore not every Israeli military action is automatically wrong.

Though European governments also pay lip service to Israel's right of self-defense, in 19 months of conflict, there is not a single Israeli tactic that they have not unequivocally condemned. Closures are wrong and roadblocks are wrong, bombings are wrong and ground operations are wrong, even returning fire when shot at is wrong. The underlying message is clear: In reality, Israel has no right to self-defense - the only country in the world so circumscribed.

And if Israel alone has no right to defend its citizens, then attacks on those citizens must be justified. European hooligans have in fact grasped perfectly the real message being broadcast by their governments, publics, and media: that anti-Jewish violence is "understandable." And as long as this is so, no amount of official condemnation of such attacks can absolve Europe of the charge of anti-Semitism. (Jerusalem Post May 14)

The Real American 'Plot' By Shlomo Avineri

At its meeting in Beirut in April, the Arab League endorsed a Saudi proposal for a peace initiative in the Middle East. It was basically the old, and not always very clear or helpful "peace for land" formula. But for all its limitations, this at least signified a declaratory will to move towards peace and reconciliation.

But did it? When the United States, supported by the European Union, Russia, and even the United Nations, recently suggested convening a peace conference sometime this summer, one would have expected the Arab League to endorse this enthusiastically.

Not so. On the eve of the Cairo meeting of Arab foreign ministers, the Secretary General of the Arab League, former Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Moussa, labeled the proposal "an American plot to create a new regional order dominated by Israel." Well, Moussa is an old-style Nasserite anti-Western ideologue, but isn't he going a little bit overboard? An American plot - supported by the Europeans and the United Nations? Do we all live in the same universe?

But perhaps there is more to Moussa's anger than meets the eye. When one takes a closer at the Saudi proposal, one notices that not once did it mention negotiations. What it did was to set forth the Arab pre-conditions for an eventual "normalization" of relations with Israel: full withdrawal, dismantling of all settlements, re-partition of Jerusalem, return of 1948 refugees. What "normalization" meant was never clearly specified.

And now comes the US Secretary of State, fulsomely praising the Saudi initiative, and calling for a conference. This really must be a plot: a plot to bring Israelis and Palestinians together; a plot to initiate negotiations; a plot to look at various modalities leading to a compromise; a plot to get into bargaining and a give and take.

Apparently this is really not what the Saudis had in mind or what the Arab League has endorsed. No wonder Amr Moussa is livid.

We should all thank him for his honesty. Hopefully someone in Washington is taking notice. (Jerusalem Post May 14)
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