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ISRAEL NEWS

*A collection of the week's news from Israel
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Commentary...

Israel Has Every Right to Expand Settlements by Michael Freund

Don't tell this to Secretary of State Colin Powell, but a friend of mine in a West Bank Jewish settlement is thinking of adding an extra bathroom to his home.

Normally, the lavatory layout in a private Jewish household outside of Jerusalem would hardly be a matter of international diplomatic concern. With the war on terror in its early stages, and America gearing up for battle against Saddam, one would assume that the US foreign policy establishment has more important things to worry about than how many flush options will be available to my friend and his family.

That assumption, however, has proven to be wrong.

In a series of recent statements, Powell has repeatedly insisted that Israel should halt all construction in Jewish settlements throughout the West Bank and Gaza. Speaking on NBC's Meet the Press on May 5, Powell said, "Something has to be done about the problem of the settlements, the settlements continue to grow and continue to expand."

To which I can not help but respond: What is wrong with that?

Down the road from my friend's community lies an Arab village, where building proceeds apace, unrestricted and unhindered. No one has gone on the Sunday talk shows to denounce such activity, for the simple reason that it isn't anyone's business what a person decides to do in his own home. Why, then, does construction become an international issue simply because the person involved is a Jew?

Indeed, there is something very troubling about the fact that a US Secretary of State would object to the erection of a house based on the religious or ethnic identity of its owner. In the olden days, we had a word for such views - it was called racism. And segregation.

To deny people the right to live in a certain area because they are Jews is no different from denying African-Americans or Hispanics or any other ethnic group the right to live where they please. And to suggest that the exercise of that right is somehow an "obstacle to peace" and must be halted is to capitulate to the haters and allow them to dictate who may live where. We can not allow that to happen.

The fact of the matter is that Jews choosing to live in the West Bank and Gaza are pioneers. They are returning to live in the heartland of Israel, the place which served as the cradle of Western civilization and religion.

These areas - which we in Israel refer to by their original names of Judea, Samaria and Gaza - were the scene of much of the drama described in the Bible. It is the place where King David walked and where the prophets of Israel gave the world a vision of peace and brotherhood. Ancient synagogues and archaeological sites attest to the long-standing Jewish presence in the region, a presence that is once again flourishing despite Arab opposition and terror.

Moreover, Israel did not "occupy" these territories, as the Palestinians and others would have you believe. In the 1967 Six-Day War, Arab armies massed on Israel's narrow borders, vowing to destroy the Jewish state. In a war of self-defense, Israel succeeded in overcoming its enemies, in the process taking control over Judea, Samaria and Gaza. Under international law, territories are considered "occupied" only when they are taken in an act of aggression - something which clearly does not apply to Israel's case.

It was 35 years ago this month that Israel prevailed in the 1967 war, returning to places such as Hebron and Shilo. For two thousand uninterrupted years, Jews had lived in the ancient Jewish quarter of Hebron, near the Tomb of the Patriarchs where Abraham, Isaac and Jacob are buried. Only in 1929, when local Arabs massacred them, was the Jewish community forced to flee the city. What could be more historically just than to rebuild the Jewish presence there?

Jews have a moral, legal, historical and Biblical right to settle the territories. And despite the threat posed by Palestinian terrorism, that is precisely what they continue to do. The number of Jews living Judea, Samaria and Gaza has more than doubled in the past decade, with over 200,000 people now living in some 150 communities. They work and play and hope and dream just like the rest of us. And their desire for peace is just

Events..

Sunday May 26, 10:00am

Chaim Silberstein, Executive Vice President, Uvneh Yerushalayim / Beit Orot (and advisor to Benny Alon, MK) will be speaking about land reclamation in historic East Jerusalem (including an audio visual presentation) at the BAYT in the Ohr Somayach Bet Midresh .

News From Our Twin Community of Bet El...

Bet El Officer Receives Hero's Welcome

A knife-wielding 22-year-old Arab, who infiltrated the community of Bet El last Friday night, was shot and killed minutes later by the town's security officer, Yehuda Dana. The Arab managed to stab Dana in the shoulder-neck area, but Dana spun around and killed him with several shots to the stomach and chest. Dana was taken to a Jerusalem hospital where he underwent surgery, and was given a hero's welcome by hundreds of townspeople and schoolchildren this afternoon when he arrived home. The Arab, who came from the nearby village of Dura al-Kara, managed to cut through the community's security fence. He went to the first house he saw - the town's northern-most building, home of Rabbi T., head of Bnei Tzvi Yeshiva High School in Beit El - and turned off its water supply. Although this was an apparent attempt to draw the residents out, the terrorist for some reason did not wait around, and "missed" the chance to stab the father of the household, who in fact came out, turned on the water, returned to his home, and locked the door once more. Only a few seconds later, when he heard wild knocking first on one door, then on another, and then Arab-accented Hebrew demanding "Open the door!" did Rabbi T. connect the water turn-off with the terrorist attack he realized was now in progress. While his wife gathered the children into an inside room and notified the town's security services, Rabbi T. tried to scare the terrorist away by shooting through the front door. Security Chief Dana soon arrived on the scene and encountered the terrorist, whose last act on earth was to moderately wound Dana with a knife wound. Within seconds the terrorist was dead, and very shortly afterwards Dana was in an ambulance on his way to Jerusalem. Beit El residents, who were told only that a terrorist had infiltrated, were asked to remain in their homes with lights off until security personnel combed the area and ascertained that the dead terrorist was in fact the only one. At a spontaneously joyous welcoming ceremony for Yehuda Dana Sunday afternoon, Rabbi T. spoke and said, "The terrorist tried to get into our house for over ten minutes, yet was unable to. Another miracle was that he did not try to get into other homes nearby, which were [less well-protected]. And a third miracle was that Yehuda was not seriously hurt when he was attacked, but managed to kill the terrorist instead. Now I will ask all the children here: Do you know what merit helped us deserve these kindnesses?" Many of the children called out, "Torah study," and Rabbi T. agreed: "It was in the merit of the Torah study of [the recent holiday of] Shavuot [when many people stay up all night to study], and the Torah study all year round of all the children and adults, and all the self-sacrifice in many other areas..." After Yehuda Dana then spoke and told his friends and neighbors exactly what happened, he emotionally recited the HaGomel blessing, thanking G-d for the chain of events that enabled him to escape death and to kill the terrorist. Beit El's Rabbi Zalman Baruch Melamed then addressed the crowd and said that in addition to the prayers of thanks we must offer, "we must also build a new neighborhood so that Rabbi T. will no longer live at the edge of the community. However, we are not sure if we should name it after Yehuda or after the T. family - so we'll have to build two!" (IsraelNationalNews.com May 19)

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as strong as anyone else's. After all, increased violence only makes their lives more difficult, not less.

Israel's settlements matter, then, because they are at the forefront of righting a historical wrong, one in which Jews were previously barred from living in their ancestral homeland due to Arab rejectionism and hatred. But as the aftermath of September 11 so clearly demonstrated, the best response to one's mortal foes is to go right on living. And building. And that is what the Jews of Israel will undoubtedly continue to do. (Chicago Sun-Times, May 15)
The writer served as Deputy Director of Policy Planning & Communications under former Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. He is currently an Editorial Writer and Syndicated Columnist for The Jerusalem Post.

The Saudi-Terror Subsidy by David Tell, for the Editors of the Weekly Standard

AT 7:53 A.M. local time on August 21, 1995, a Number 26 bus filled with Monday morning commuters slowed to a stop in front of Rene Kassem High School in the northern Ramat Eshkol suburb of Jerusalem. Rene Kassem just happened to be out of session that day; its students owe their lives to a fluke of the academic calendar. But passengers on the Number 26 were not so lucky, for sitting with them was Sufian Jabarin, a recent Hamas recruit, who chose that moment to blow himself up. The force of the explosion was enough to set adjacent traffic on fire and blow in windows hundreds of feet away. Witnesses reported seeing two small girls walk away from the immediate wreckage, covered in blood but without their clothes or hair and crying for their mother. Few of their fellow passengers could walk at all, however. One body was left suspended from a shard of metal on what had been the bus's roof. Others remained in their seats - mutilated, blackened by the flames, at least one of them decapitated.

Among the dead was 47-year-old schoolteacher Joan Davenny, an American from Woodbridge, Connecticut, who had just begun a fellowship sabbatical at Hebrew University. Today, almost seven years later, our State Department's Diplomatic Security Service still offers a reward of up to \$5 million dollars for "information" leading to the arrest or conviction of "those persons responsible" for Davenny's murder.

Which is rather peculiar, since "information" is not what's needed to close the case. The bomber himself, Sufian Jabarin, is dead, of course. The mastermind of Jabarin's Hamas cell, Yahya Ayyash, the infamous "Engineer," was assassinated in January 1996. The man who gave Jabarin his explosives, Muhhi a-Din Sharif, killed himself by accident with another such device in 1998. Abdel Nasser Issa, who manufactured Jabarin's bomb, and Abd al-Majid Dudin, who trained him in the art of "martyrdom," are both in Israeli prisons. Only Muhammad Dief, the Hamas commander who authorized the attack that killed Joan Davenny, is still alive and free.

And where is Dief, exactly? The Weekly Standard has "learned" - because it has been a publicly acknowledged fact for years and years already; the State Department can keep its \$5 million - that Yasser Arafat has him. Denying news reports that he has actually set the man loose on the sly, Yasser Arafat insists that Muhammad Dief remains in Palestinian Authority custody, at an undisclosed location, so as to protect him from arrest by the Israelis. In other words: Yasser Arafat, who the American government officially pretends is "indispensable to Middle East peace," is shielding a fugitive wanted in connection with the murder of a U.S. citizen. In fact, Yasser Arafat, who pretended to condemn that murder at the time, later threw a full state funeral for the murderer, suicide bomber Sufian Jabarin, after his body was returned by the Israelis in June of 2000. As thousands of Palestinians watched and cheered, Arafat's personal guard detail gave Jabarin a 21-gun hero's salute.

Arafat must think we Americans are fools.

And then there is the governing royal family of Saudi Arabia, which provides a handsome financial bounty to the surviving relatives of "martyrs" like Jabarin. Oh, sure, the Saudis reject the accusation. Just last week, responding to Israel's latest and best-yet effort to document the practice, Prince Bandar bin Sultan, the kingdom's ambassador to the United States, denounced as "baseless" any suggestion that Saudi money "goes to evildoers." The Israelis, Prince Bandar complained, are engaged in a "shameful and counterproductive" attempt to discredit his family, "which has been a leading voice for peace." Any charge "that Saudi Arabia is paying suicide bombers," he reiterated, is "totally false."

The ambassador was lying. And he has so far gotten away with it. Nearly a week has gone by and still no major American newspaper has noticed - just as the hapless Saudi functionaries who posted Bandar's indignant statement on their Washington embassy website apparently failed to notice - that the very same website's archives contain some quite elaborate and extensive boasting, helpfully translated into English, about exactly what the prince now denies is true. An embassy press release from January 2001 describes how the "Saudi Committee for Support of the Al-Quds Intifada," chaired and administered by Prince Nayef bin Abdulaziz, the kingdom's interior minister, has distributed \$33 million to "deserving Palestinians," including "the families of 2,281 prisoners and 358 martyrs." An embassy press release from March 2001 quotes Saudi finance minister Ibrahim al-Assaf reporting on the kingdom's \$50 million contribution to

an international, pan-Arab fund designed "to educate the sons of martyrs and rehabilitate the injured" - this in addition to Prince Nayef's separate support committee, which has "pledged a sum of SR 20,000 (\$5,333) to each family that has suffered from martyrdom." An embassy press release from April 2001 announces that "Prince Sultan Affirms [the] Kingdom's Support" for the Palestinian intifada, to the tune of \$40 million already disbursed "to the families of those martyred" and other worthies.

As it happens, all this talk of "martyrs" and "martyrdom" is not at all uncommon in Saudi Arabia. Less than a month ago, for example, the government-controlled daily Al-Jazirah published a hymn of praise to two recent Palestinian "martyrs" - both suicide bombers, one of them a 16-year-old girl: "May Allah have mercy on you, oh beloved of the Arab nation . . . you restored life that had begun to expire," et cetera. So, then: If suicide bombers are martyrs, and the Saudi royal family is proudly distributing cash to the relatives of martyrs, an ordinary person would conclude - would he not? - that the Saudi royal family is proudly distributing cash to the relatives of suicide bombers. But that is a logic the United States and other Western governments, desperate to preserve their "friendship" with the "moderate" House of Saud, have so far refused to accept. Instead, they have wished the evidence away: "troubling," they've mumbled, but "unconfirmed" and therefore "inconclusive."

Yes, well. Now the evidence is such that none of those terms even remotely applies, not even "troubling" - appalling being much the better word for it.

Three months ago, you see, on February 18, an outfit called the "Psychological and Social Research Center for the Wounded Palestinian" ran a notice in Ramallah's Al Hayyat Al Jedida newspaper addressed to "families of the fatalities" scheduled to receive contributions from the "tenth payment cycle" of the Saudi Committee for Support of the Al-Quds Intifada. Those families, the notice advised, should "apply to the Arab Bank branch near their residence" to receive payments of \$5,216.06 apiece - "in accordance with the instructions of the Emir Nayef bin Abdulaziz, Minister of the Interior and General Supervisor of the Committee."

And early last week, Israel made public a cache of documents, lately captured by its soldiers during Operation Defensive Shield, that clarify exactly what the emir's instructions entail and who those "families of the fatalities" might be. According to Saudi government spreadsheets bearing the logo of the Saudi Committee for Support of the Al-Quds Intifada, that committee's aforementioned "tenth payment cycle" included among its beneficiaries the relatives of eight Palestinian terrorist bombers, all of them specifically and explicitly singled out by Saudi bookkeepers for their participation in *amaliah istishadiah*: "suicide operations."

Oh, and one other thing: The Israelis have also captured and now made public similar Saudi spreadsheets exhaustively chronicling an earlier, "third payment cycle" of the Interior Ministry's intifada "charity." During which payment cycle, these documents establish in deadpan bureaucratese, that slush fund provided one of its standard rewards - again, for their martyred loved one's performance of *amaliah istishadiah* - to the family of . . . Sufian Jabarin, the man who blew up the Number 26 bus in Jerusalem on August 21, 1995, killing Joan Davenny.

There you have it. The Saudi royal family, according to its own internal records, has just recently paid a hefty cash prize for the murder of a U.S. citizen.

Neither the New York Times nor the Washington Post has bothered to report this astonishing little detail. And no U.S. government official has managed to utter a peep of complaint about it.

The Saudis, too, must think we Americans are fools. Surely it would behoove our president to disabuse them of this notion? (Weekly Standard May 20)

Raising the Bar for Self-Determination By Avi Davis

The world we know today began at the Paris Peace Conference in 1919. There both victors and vanquished of World War I declared that self-determination would be the governing principle of a new world order. In the years that have elapsed since, the world has witnessed the creation of many independent states - most of whom could claim no prior existence.

This was particularly true in the Arab world. Scraped out of the ruins of the Ottoman Empire, such countries as Libya, Sudan, Syria and Iraq were little more than artificial constructs, slapped together with little concern for the willingness of their leaders to promote peaceful coexistence with their neighbors and no regard for their viability.

Eighty-three years later, this experiment, begun with the profoundest faith in human progress, has ended in bitter disappointment. Many of the same nations who once squabbled and fought tenaciously for their independence, transformed into agents of repression themselves, and became threats to their neighbors and to the maintenance of international order.

Instead of a comity of nations dedicated to the advancement of their people, these countries have mostly devolved into abject dictatorships, unconcerned with either human rights or individual liberties.

Now the issue of self determination is once again rearing its head - this time with demands for the creation of a Palestinian state. But anyone who has observed the development of the Palestinian Authority over the past nine years and the PLO over the past 40, knows exactly what kind of state Palestine would become. Instead of freedom, the people of Palestine can look forward to only repression; instead of peace, Palestinians will be urged to constant jihad against neighboring countries; instead of prosperity - corruption, nepotism and venality will squander much needed resources and result in even further poverty.

In reviewing the failures of the past century, shouldn't we then be reassessing the standard for statehood? Rather than operating as an automatic right, statehood should be qualified by the following three-part test: Are the subject peoples capable of governing themselves by building solid institutions that promote freedom, peace and prosperity? Will the creation of a state engender less danger for neighboring states? How much better off will the subject population be with a native government? If the responses are not affirmative, statehood is not the answer.

There is a better solution. After the First World War, the Paris Peace Conference also recognized that the populations of certain regions were not ready, by reason of internal discord or an absence of leadership, for statehood. Thus Palestine (incorporating Trans-Jordan) and Lebanon became wards of the British Empire and the Third French Republic respectively. The mandates these nations were awarded carried specific instructions to nurture the regions into political maturity.

The mandates were fraught with problems and neither Britain nor France always acted responsibly in carrying out their directives. Yet the inter-war years produced promising results. General prosperity, the development of representative institutions, and the institution of secular law, set a tone that left a lasting memory. Middle East scholar Bernard Lewis has described the mandates as "an interlude of freedom that was too long, and its effects too profound, to be forgotten." The Arab population in the West Bank and Gaza could benefit from a similar mandatory system. Supervised by the United States and negotiated in advance with Israel and Jordan, Palestinian towns and villages could be nurtured with representative institutions, allowing Palestinians a say in their own administration, even if short of sovereignty. The US mandate would facilitate the development of an education system and an economy that is focused on peaceful co-existence and not violence. Security will remain jointly in the hands of Israel, Jordan and the United States. After many years of instilling an appreciation for the benefits of democracy and attaching that understanding to general prosperity, the Palestinian people may well be ready for statehood.

The imposition of such a mandate, however, requires one vital preliminary step.

The Palestinian terrorist infrastructure must be crushed and its leaders expelled. The Palestinian Authority, as presently constituted, represents the greatest threat to peace in the region and to the welfare of the Palestinian people, having become a mere cipher for terror. In the Palestinian Authority's place there will eventually rise a tier of middle class merchants and intellectuals who appreciate the enduring effects of an American presence and the viability of a state founded on the principles of democracy and a respect for human rights.

No one should pretend that such a concept will obtain immediate acceptance. But as the Bush Administration prepares to dismantle another self-determined terrorist regime in the same region, it is certainly an appropriate time to consider alternatives. (Jerusalem Post May 19)

The writer is the senior fellow of the Freeman Center for Strategic Studies.

Charlie Brown's Middle East Peace Policy By Bruce S. Thornton

Remember this running gag in the old Peanuts comic strip? Lucy would bait Charlie Brown into trying to kick a football that she always yanked away at the last minute, sending the hapless chump flying. No matter how many times she tricked Charlie, no matter how certain he was that she would gull him again, he couldn't resist trying to kick the ball.

Yasser Arafat is the Lucy of the Middle East, and we Westerners have been playing Charlie Brown for years. No matter how many times Arafat snatches away a chance at peace and we land flat on our backs, we still can't resist trying to score that mother of all Middle Eastern goals, peace between Israel and the Arabs. And here we are again, eyeing the latest so-called "peace proposal" and promises of "reform," all the while trying to kid ourselves that at the last minute Arafat won't once more pull back and find some excuse for not building a state that can coexist with Israel.

Part of the problem is we seem incapable of distinguishing between strategy and tactics. We assume that Arafat's strategic goal is a Palestinian state. Of course, to believe that we have to forget that before 1967 a Palestinian state couldn't have been the reason for the Arab world's repeated assaults on Israel, since the so-called "occupied territories" were in Jordan's and Egypt's hands. We have to overlook too the pitiful lack of any attempt to build a viable state since

Oslo, as evidenced by the complete absence of democratic political institutions and procedures in the areas controlled by the Palestinian Authority. And we shouldn't even ask what has happened to the billions in aid given to the PA by Europe and the United States, money we now know was spent on weapons and explosives and the consolidation of a corrupt regime.

But why would we expect anything different? Arafat rules pretty much the way every Arab leader rules--as an autocrat, a capo de tutti capi whose primary motivation is the survival and enrichment of himself and his ruling clique. That, rather than a Palestinian state, is Arafat's most immediate strategic goal. If a state had been his real goal, he would have accepted Barak's deal two years ago and made that agreement the starting point for building genuine political and economic institutions that could have weaned the Palestinians from Western welfare payments. And once those institutions were up and running, and once the incessant terrorist attacks against Israel ceased, then there could have been a basis for negotiating the outstanding issues such as settlements and refugees.

But we all know what happened--Arafat interpreted Barak's concessions as a sign of weakness and unleashed the terrorists. It then became clear what the Western money pouring into the PA had been used for--not building a state, but arming those who murdered Israelis.

And this brings us to the second, long-range strategic goal: the destruction of Israel. Everything we hear from the state-run presses in the Middle East, from the intellectual and academic stooges in Arab universities, and from the preachers in the mosques centers on one theme--eliminating the festering humiliation inflicted on the Arab psyche by Israel's success in creating an economically thriving democracy light-years ahead of the dysfunctional Arab states whose combined armies could not defeat Israel. Yet despite decades of such evidence, politicians in Europe and America snatch like pigeons at the crumbs of Palestinian "national aspirations" and "self-determination," without stopping to ask just what Arafat and the PA have actually done since Oslo to create this nation to which they presumably aspire so passionately.

In fact, the rhetoric of a Palestinian state reflects not a strategic goal but a tactic, just as terrorist attacks and homicide bombers are tactics in the service of both long and short-term strategic goals.

Now that Israel has acted decisively to punish and deter terrorists and has exposed Arafat's collusion with terrorism, the wily "chairman" shifts tactics and dangles once more the promise of negotiations and agreements and settlements. And with an eye on the West, he issues "orders" to terrorists--in Arabic, no less!--to stop slaughtering innocent Israelis, orders he knows will be ignored, either because he cannot enforce them or, more likely, because every terrorist knows Arafat means them only as a tactic. Either way, Arafat is completely useless for resolving the conflict.

Yet here we are again, getting ready once more to take the bait. Fifty years of bad faith are forgotten, as are the endless "Big Lies," the most recent of which is the Jenin "massacre" that of course never took place. Virulent anti-Semitism is explained away, even when we see it used as a recruiting tool, as in the videotape of Danny Pearl's murder. Double-dealing by various Arab functionaries is ignored, as are their published paeans to homicide-bombers. And the historical record of relentless assaults on tiny Israel's existence is rewritten into some two-bit, anti-imperialist melodrama.

But there's something more at stake here than just the discomfort of Western politicians. When the next round of "peace negotiations" fail, as they surely will, American and European leaders will perhaps lose some face in the polls and maybe take some hits on Election Day. But there are Israelis alive today who will die later because we in the West cannot summon up the strength and the will to stop playing Arafat's game. (FrontPageMagazine.com May 17)

The writer is a professor of Classics at Cal State Fresno and author of Bonfire of the Humanities (ISI Books) and Greek Ways (Encounter).

Belated Backlash By Yosef Goell

Last week the official backlash to the growing radicalization among Israeli Arabs came to a head. The Knesset adopted legislation against incitement to violence and terrorism, and a law disqualifying lists and individual Knesset candidates who support belligerent acts against Israel by enemy states or terror organizations. It is important to note that the latter law was passed by a near-unprecedented majority of 78 to 17, with the majority including most Labor MKs.

Interior Minister Eli Yishai obtained government approval for his policy to freeze family unification requests involving Palestinian spouses from the PA territories pending the adoption of new legislation, based on the American model, for tightening up immigration laws. It is estimated that many thousands of Palestinians have fraudulently obtained Israeli residency, citizenship, and economic privileges under the hitherto lax implementation of these policies.

It was also announced last week that the General Security Services had detained two sets of sisters from the central Galilee villages of Sahnin and Arrabeh on suspicion of having colluded with prospective suicide bombers from the territories. Their detention brought the total of Israeli Arabs detained on suspicion of collusion with Palestinian terrorists - since the outbreak of the uprising in the territories in September 2000 - to well over two score. Last September, an Israeli Arab from the Galilee village of Abu Sna'an was the first Israeli Arab to conduct a suicide bombing - killing 3 at the Nahariya train station. The perpetrator of a similar suicide bombing in the Matza restaurant in Haifa was an Israeli citizen, the son of an Israeli Arab woman who had married a Palestinian man from Jenin.

In addition, mainline politicians, such as Transport Minister Ephraim Sneh (Labor), have expressed support for giving over entire Israeli Arab populations to a future Palestinian state. The village most often mentioned is Islamic Movement-dominated Umm el-Fahm, which would be traded for blocs of Israeli settlements in a final status agreement.

The extremist talk of the forced transfer of Arabs from the territories and from Israel proper that is currently featuring in the power struggle in the tiny Moledet party and in the National Religious Party should not be taken too seriously. But the idea of the marginal redrawing of Israel's borders to exclude over 100,000 Israeli Arabs should be taken very seriously indeed.

Sneh's remarks should be taken as a clear sign that official Israel has come around to viewing significant elements within the Arab community as potentially subversive threats. That change should ring urgent alarm bells within the Arab community, regarding its immediate and long-term relationship with Israel and its Jewish majority.

The present official Israeli backlash to the radicalization of Israeli Arabs is an overdue response to a tragically misguided reading of the realities of the majority-minority relationship by most of the current generation of Israeli Arab leaders. There is no doubt that the Israeli Arabs are the victims of decades-old discrimination. But, despite being a minority, they are better off politically and economically than the Arab majorities in surrounding nations.

Judging from minority struggles in other democratic countries, it would seem that success in reversing that discrimination and in achieving greater equality of opportunity for Israeli Arabs would require coopting large numbers of well-intentioned Israeli Jews in that struggle. Part of that was happening well into the 1990s; but it has all been wiped out by the demonstrative support of the radical Arab-Israeli leadership and their misguided followers for the anti-Israel violence of their Palestinian kin in the territories.

As sensitive as majorities in true democracies may be to minority rights, none tolerates minority support for an external enemy or a challenge - symbolic or real - to its own continued majority status. This is why the direction Israeli Arab leaders have been taking can only lead to heartache and catastrophe for their own community.

What is urgently needed is a pact between the Jewish majority and the Arab minority spelling out the main lines of progress towards greater equality, and dangerous red lines which should not be crossed. Jewish leaders should take the initiative in calling for such a pact. But just as peace cannot be achieved with Arafat as the leader of the Palestinians, neither can a pact succeed with the likes of Ahmed Tibi, Azmi Bishara, Abdel Wahad Dehamshe and their ilk. It is essential that well before the next elections a new generation of pragmatic Israeli Arab leaders arise to break the stranglehold of the present band of anti-Israel radicals on the Arab electorate. (Jerusalem Post May 20)

The writer is a retired lecturer in political science and a veteran journalist.

Good Fight By Martin Peretz

It may surprise some readers to learn that I strongly support a U.N. investigation into the violence in Jenin. Just not an investigation into what the Israeli Defense Forces did in Jenin. Rather, what the United Nations needs is an *internal* investigation: What role did the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA)--which for years has presided over Palestinian refugee camps in Jenin and elsewhere--play in allowing those camps to turn into terrorist havens complete with militias and weapons factories? When relief agencies allowed the refugee camps in eastern Congo to be taken over by the Hutu militias that had carried out the 1994 genocide in Rwanda, human rights types were outraged. But in Jenin the U.N.'s complicity with terrorism seems not to bother anyone at all. And that complicity is of more than theoretical interest. After all, surely the Palestinians didn't think they could go on making and exploding bombs indefinitely. If the United Nations had policed its own turf, Ariel Sharon might not have had to.

In the May 12 edition of *The New York Times Magazine*, the respected war correspondent Scott Anderson (see David Rieff's review of his *The Man Who Tried to Save the World*, TNR, September 13 & 20, 1999) offers a gorgeously written account of his week with the Palsar Tzanhanim--an elite unit of Israeli paratrooper reconnaissance commandos, mostly reservists. In search of Palestinian terrorists, the unit was stationed in the West Bank village of Atil. The platoon commandeered a house with a view of the surrounding terrain. "Within

minutes of their arrival, they roll up the family's better carpets, moving them, along with various breakable objects, to one corner of the upstairs sitting room. There are chickens in the small backyard, and one soldier is given the task of making sure they are regularly fed and watered. By longstanding policy, nothing of the family's is to be used--not the onions sitting on the kitchen sill or the soap in the bathroom--and on the day [they] leave, a cleanup crew will give the house a quick scrubbing, perhaps even leave behind a bit of money to the compensate the family for the inconvenience. Such are the tactics and considerations of this peculiar war." At least, these are the tactics of the Israelis in this peculiar war.

Anderson relates two especially eerie episodes. In one, the commandos take over a Palestinian house in which they suspect a certain terrorist is hiding. They rouse the father and instruct him to bring everyone outside, and he returns with eight or nine individuals, mostly children. The terrorist is not among them. "You understand that if we find anyone else inside we're going to shoot them," [Yaron] Ishai, the deputy commander, explains. The man nods, "Everyone is out." But it turns out that not everyone is out. Searching the house, "Ishai suddenly spots a figure moving in the dark ... but then hesitates for a fraction of a second. It is long enough for him to realize that the figure is not a gunman, but a young child," an eight- or nine-year-old boy.

In the second anecdote, a thirty-something Palestinian openly approaches the house the unit has adopted as its base. He is easily spotted but does not obey orders shouted at him in Arabic. Is he a suicide bomber? Bait for an ambush? Waiting yields no evidence of anything. Finally a soldier, his movements followed by trained rifles inside, "walks toward the man ... and quickly lifts him off the ground and body-slams him to the street." Anderson concludes, "Most any other army in the world, faced with the very real threat of suicide bombers, would probably have simply shot the man in the street--just as most any other army would have shot the boy in the house the night before--but even in the heat of the moment the Palsars hesitated."

Just about 20 years ago I wrote, to some ridicule, about the Israeli--actually, early Zionist--military doctrine called *tohar haneshek*, rendered literally in English as "purity of arms" ("Lebanon Eyewitness," TNR, August 2, 1982). It is a doctrine of self-constraint: Everything reasonable must be done to avoid harming civilians, even if that entails additional risks to Israeli soldiers. The doctrine still holds. A few weeks ago I spoke at a conference on war crimes and just wars sponsored by The New School. The panel was asked about Jenin, and Richard Holbrooke, who knows about these things, observed that the Israeli military is probably more fastidious about moral constraints than is our own. So it is one of the more Orwellian features of today's world that it is precisely this army (and practically no other) that provokes the ire of Kofi Annan, the Vatican, and the great plenipotentiaries of Europe. And now that fundamentalist Muslim terror is afflicting Europeans as well (witness the bus bombing that killed eleven French citizens on May 8 in Pakistan and the 42 Russians murdered by a terrorist bomb in Kaspisk, Dagestan, one day later), the world will see how scrupulously European armies react to terror against their citizens. Suffice it to say that if Anderson had spent a week with a Russian unit in Chechnya, I suspect he'd have written a very different story.

It was bound to happen: campaigns at a few American universities to divest from companies (like General Electric, IBM, Intel, and Merck) that do business with Israel. It started at Princeton and has now spread to Harvard and MIT. It's not exactly a mass movement: I caught a clip of the joint Harvard-MIT "teach-in" on fox news, and it showed no more than a hundred students. And the signatories (most of whom oppose capitalism itself and are therefore presumably in favor of divestment almost anywhere) tell you just about everything you need to know about this laughable venture. At Princeton the most well known are the manicured, exquisitely tailored Luxembourgish neo-Marxist historian Arno Mayer, whose published preference for Lenin over Wilson and Stalin over Churchill may explain his current affection for Yasir Arafat; the philosopher Peter Singer, who usually cares more for animals than for people (his solicitude for the Palestinians is in that sense a great moral improvement); and the international lawyer Richard Falk, once an enthusiast for the Ayatollah Khomeini and a defender of the Khmer Rouge. At MIT there is, predictably, Noam Chomsky (another old Khmer Rouge fan), plus 14 linguists, and 38 others not known for thinking much about politics at all. The Harvard list is equally uninteresting, sporting one distinguished classicist, one unusually undistinguished political scientist, a physicist who works for oil companies, several Arabists, a few theologians, and the French art historian Henri Zerner--who, I am afraid, can't tell the difference between the Left Bank and the West Bank. But there is one striking exception: Where is Cornel West? Did the famously anti-Israel philosopher of self-promotion decide that Israel wasn't the moral equivalent of apartheid South Africa after all? I doubt it. More likely he couldn't decide whether to sign the Harvard list or the Princeton one. (The New Republic May 27)

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