

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*

Events...

Sunday June 2, 7:00 pm

Rabbi Eliezer Waldman, Founder and Rosh Yeshiva, Yeshivat Nir, Kiryat Arba, Founder & Member, Executive Committee, Gush Emunim, Founder of the Techiya Party, Former Knesset Member, will speak at BAYT.

From the PA Media...

Talking Democracy, Singing Terrorism By Itamar Marcus
Studying a nation's heroes offers insight into its nature, and it is therefore notable to observe how the Palestinian Authority (PA) transforms those who kill the Jews into its new heroes. Since the day Wafaa Idris, the first woman suicide terrorist, blew herself up on Jaffa Road in Jerusalem, the PA has been promoting her as the new heroine and legend for Palestinians to admire. This week, while the world is talking hopefully about a new Arafat and the democratization of the PA, a new song glorifying the terrorist Idris has been broadcast at least twice on official PA TV. At a concert hall, with a full orchestra and a large choir, a beautifully dressed soloist sang to the new Palestinian heroine. The following are some of the lyrics:

Vocalist: "My sister Wafaa, my sister Wafaa,
Oh, the heartbeat of pride.
Oh, blossom who was on the earth, and is now in heaven,
My sister, Wafa." (x 2)

"My voice will sing out (x 4)
'Allah Akbar' oh, Palestine of the Arabs (x 2)
Choir: 'Allah Akbar' oh, Palestine of the Arabs (x 2)
'Allah Akbar' oh Wafaa (x 2)

Vocalist: But you chose Martyrdom
In death you have brought life to our will
But you chose Martyrdom
In death you have brought life to our will and we say 'Long Live the Intifada'

Choir: 'Allah Akbar' oh, Palestine of the Arabs (x 2) (Palestinian Media Watch May 23).

Quote for the Week...

"Should The Weekly Standard remain a going concern for another hundred years, it is almost inconceivable that we will ever again have occasion to publish anything nearly so dishonest as the letter above." - David Tell for the Editors of the Weekly Standard in the introduction to his response to a letter from Paul McCann, Chief, Public Information Office, UNRWA Headquarters in Gaza. (Weekly Standard June 3)

Commentary...

The Message in the Palestinian Maps By Jeff Jacoby

The next time you see a picture of Yasser Arafat, look at his headdress. He wears it in an unusual style, carefully folded so that it comes to a peak at the top, drapes down over his left shoulder, then tapers to a point at the bottom.

Arafat's oddly arranged keffiyeh is meant to resemble the map of "Palestine" - the Arab state whose creation is his all-consuming goal. It is an emphatic symbol:

א"רפ"ט
Arafat conveys to everyone who sees him that Palestine is always on his mind.

But look again. The shape of Arafat's keffiyeh doesn't correspond with Palestine at all - not if Palestine means the West Bank and Gaza. What it resembles is the map of Israel - the whole of Israel, from the northern peak of the Galilee, down along the Mediterranean coast, and from there to the southern tip at Eilat.

In short, the Palestine that is always on Arafat's mind is not an Arab state that coexists with Israel but an Arab state that takes the place of Israel. The message conveyed by his keffiyeh is indeed emphatic: It is a message of war without end.

The notion that Palestine equals all of Israel - and that all of Israel must be "liberated" to create a Palestinian Arab state - is no idiosyncrasy on Arafat's part. It is an axiom of the Palestinian movement, constantly repeated in its basic documents, its domestic rhetoric, its educational curriculum - and its maps.

Visit www.fateh.net, the Web site of Al-Fatah, Arafat's faction of the PLO, and the first image you see is the Fatah emblem: a map of "Palestine" behind crossed guns. But the country depicted is Israel, from the Jordan River to the Mediterranean Sea. (On the same Web site you can read the Fatah constitution, which says the organization's goal is the "complete liberation of Palestine, and eradication of Zionist ... existence.")

Fatah isn't the only PLO faction whose emblem features a map of Palestine that comprises all of Israel. Most of them do, including the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine, the Palestine Liberation Front, Al-Saika, and the PLO itself. (You can see the PFLP logo at www.pflp-palestine.org Most of the others have been gathered at www.iris.org.il/whoswho.htm, the Web site of Information Regarding Israel's Security.)

There is nothing subtle about these symbols or their Palestine-equals-Israel maps. They are calls for Israel's abolition. With the signing of the Oslo peace accords - which began with Arafat's solemn pledge that "the PLO recognizes the right of the State of Israel to exist in peace and security" - all of them should have been scrapped. And it should go without saying that maps depicting all of Israel as Palestine ought to have no place at all in the Palestinian Authority, the civil administration that rules the Palestinian people.

Sadly, they are ubiquitous.

Maps of "Palestine" on the walls of Arafat's offices - occasionally seen in news photos or television footage - are actually maps of Israel. Agencies of the Palestinian Authority use the shape of Israel to denote Palestine in their emblems, stationery, and Web sites. Click on www.mopa.gov.ps - the cyber-home of Arafat's Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs - and a large map of Israel appears. The logo of the Ministry of Industry is a stylized map of Israel drawn in the Palestinian colors (www.industry.gov.ps). And the colorful "Map of Palestine" offered by the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics is, in reality, a colorful map of Israel (see it at www.pcbs.org/english/pal-map.htm).

It would take far more room than I have here to list all of the Palestinian agencies, publications, organizations, and Web sites in which Palestine is shown as encompassing all of Israel. But at this late date, is it really necessary to prove that Arafat's goal, and that of his regime, is the liquidation of the Jewish state?

On the day he signed the first Oslo accord at the White House in 1993, Arafat told an interviewer that the agreement "will be a basis for an independent Palestinian state in accordance with the Palestine National Council resolution issued in 1974." He was referring to the PLO's "phased plan," which was adopted in Cairo on June 9, 1974. It calls for establishing a Palestinian state on any Israeli land that can be acquired through negotiation, then using that territory as a forward base for "liberating" the rest of Israel by force.

Arafat and the Palestinian Authority have never repudiated the phased

Yasher Koach and thank you to our supporters. Thank you also to Continental Press for their ongoing support.
Readers are requested to please mail contributions to: BAYT - re: Israel News, 613 Clark Avenue West, Thornhill, Ontario. L4J 5V3
Annual Rates: Friend - \$36, Supporter - \$50, Benefactor - \$180. Dedications are welcome at \$120/week.
Call (905) 886-3810 for further info. Israel News can be viewed on the internet at www.bayt.org

plan; on the contrary, they have reiterated it time and again. "The Oslo accord was a preface for the Palestinian Authority," one of Arafat's government ministers, Abdul Aziz Shaheen, said in 1998, "and the Palestinian Authority will be a preface for the Palestinian state which, in its turn, will be a preface for the liberation of the entire Palestinian land."

Palestinians and Israelis will never know peace until Arafat and his irredentist vision are expunged from Palestinian life. You will know that has happened when the word "Israel" appears on Palestinian maps. (Boston Globe May 23)

The Deadly 'Political Horizon' By Evelyn Gordon

If there is one thing that almost everybody in the world agrees on today, it is that Israel will never enjoy security unless it gives the Palestinians "a political horizon" and ends "the occupation." You cannot open a newspaper anywhere, including in Israel, without seeing this mantra. You cannot listen to statements by politicians, even in Israel, without hearing it.

There is only one problem with this accepted wisdom. Empirically speaking, it is demonstrably false.

The truth is that Israel enjoyed a very tolerable level of security while it controlled the West Bank and Gaza. It was only following the Oslo Accords, when Israel began withdrawing from these areas, that terrorism rose to levels unprecedented in Israel's history. Within two and a half years after Oslo was signed in 1993, Palestinian terror had claimed as many victims as it had during the entire preceding decade, which included the period of the first intifada. By five years after the accords were signed, the terrorist death toll had surpassed that of the 12 worst years of the pre-Oslo period - the years of Yasser Arafat's mini-state in Lebanon (1970-82), which included such spectacular attacks as the Munich and Ma'alot massacres and the Entebbe hijacking. And all this is before we even get to the 500 Israelis killed in the last 20 months. In total, almost 800 Israelis have been slain by Palestinian terror since September 1993 - nearly five times the 162 deaths of the 1970-82 period.

Furthermore, the worst terrorism occurred precisely during those periods when the "political horizon" - i.e. movement toward a Palestinian state - was most in evidence. In the heady days of Yitzhak Rabin's government, which included recognition of the PLO, withdrawal from Gaza and large chunks of the West Bank and an almost total freeze on settlement construction, the terrorist death toll was more than five times what it was under Benjamin Netanyahu, who resumed settlement construction and virtually halted the withdrawals. And of course, the worst violence of all broke out after Ehud Barak offered a Palestinian state on more than 90% of the West Bank, including evacuation of settlements and east Jerusalem as its capital.

IT IS not difficult to explain this seeming paradox. Should a people so desire, greater independence facilitates terror in several ways. And the Palestinians, quite clearly, so desired.

To start with, it is much easier to stockpile weapons when they can be imported legally than when they have to be smuggled. Under Oslo, the Palestinian Authority brought in 50,000 Kalashnikov rifles with Israel's consent, creating the only "police force" in the world armed with assault weaponry. These rifles have since been used with deadly effect against Israelis. An independent Palestinian state would have even greater freedom to acquire arms.

Second, a state-in-the-making - and even more so an independent state - can raise money for arms and terrorist operations far more easily than a terrorist organization. While certain Arab states always financed Palestinian terrorists, the Palestinian Authority has access to additional funding sources that the PLO could never dream of: the European Union (\$300 million last year), and even, until 20 months ago, Israel (roughly \$400 million a year). This money helped pay for items such as the \$15 million worth of arms seized aboard the *Karine A*. Even today, as the German weekly *Die Welt* reported recently, the PA has no qualms about openly asking the EU for \$20 million with which to purchase arms - a request it prioritized higher than money for health and education - and \$15.5 million for the families of "martyrs" - a Palestinian euphemism for suicide bombers.

Finally, it is much easier for terrorist organizations to perpetrate attacks when they do not have to waste time and energy on eluding capture. When Israel controlled the territories, its security services pursued such organizations relentlessly. But the PA has left them undisturbed except when faced with momentary international pressure, at which point it typically rounds up some low-level activists and then releases them once the pressure dies down. Even the IDF's new tactic of periodic lightning raids - begun after years in which PA territory was completely off-limits - is a poor substitute for full-time presence; these raids disrupt the terrorists for no more than hours at a stretch. But with full independence, even this would be impossible.

The dismal experience of the last nine years proves irrefutably that Israel's security would be far better served by restoring "the occupation" than by ending

it. Right now, nobody in Israel really wants that. But if the only alternative is to continue letting their parents and spouses and children be slaughtered at discos and cafes and bar-mitzvahs and seders, most Israelis will inevitably come to see it as the lesser of two evils. And so far, the Palestinians have not offered any other alternative. (Jerusalem Post May 28)

It Won't Be Okay Jerusalem Post Editorial

According to *The New York Times*, a debate is raging within the Bush administration over "whether to press for the removal of Yasser Arafat" as leader of the Palestinian Authority. At the same time, *The Washington Post* reports that the Pentagon's top brass have persuaded their civilian leaders to put off confronting Saddam Hussein until next year, or perhaps "not to do it all." The two debates, over what to do with Arafat and Saddam, have more in common than meets the eye.

The first commonality is that, broadly speaking, the same people who are squeamish about ousting Saddam also tend to argue against removing Arafat.

In Saddam's case we hear about the lack of a coalition, the weakness of the opposition, and worries about what will come next - a replay of the chorus of voices who predicted doom for the American campaign in Afghanistan.

Regarding Arafat, we hear learned concerns about stability in the Arab world, the need to maintain the non-coalition, and again what will come next.

Those who spend time sifting through the arguments of the anti-regime-change forces will find many sophisticated arguments, some of which seem to make sense and certainly claim to bear the mantle of realism, sobriety, and caution. Indeed, the debate is often couched as one between ideology and pragmatism, or between politics and professionalism. In this view, US President George W. Bush, those hotheads at the Defense Department, and Prime Minister Ariel Sharon are bordering on trigger-happy, while the State Department, our own Foreign Ministry, and European leaders are holding the barbarians (ours, of course) at the gate.

In reality, a more accurate way of viewing the two camps is through the lens of the late Yitzhak Rabin's timeless disdain for Israel's *yihye b'seder* ("it'll be okay") mentality. Rabin, the quintessential sabra, could not abide this most Israeli of traits - the flip of the hand and the belief that the Israelis' legendary powers of improvisation can surmount every obstacle.

This mentality has rightly been blamed for almost every mishap, most recently the Maccabiah footbridge collapse and the Versailles wedding hall disaster.

We are used to thinking of *yihye b'seder* as a peculiarly Israeli malady. Yet a glance at the debates over the future of Arafat and Saddam reveals this mentality on a global scale, masquerading as the height of realpolitik. No one addresses this better than Bush himself, speaking to a special session of the Bundestag on Thursday: "Those who seek missiles and terrible weapons are also familiar with the map of Europe. Like the threats of another era, this threat cannot be appeased or cannot be ignored."

The thousands who protested against Bush's visit, amazingly, were not concerned about these threats, but about his response to them. Bush, however, did not back down: "Wishful thinking might bring comfort, but not security. Call this a strategic challenge; call it, as I do, axis of evil; call it by any name you choose, but let us speak the truth. If we ignore this threat, we invite certain blackmail, and place millions of our citizens in grave danger."

Bush seems rather bogged down at the moment when it comes to meeting this strategic challenge. His generals seem to be overwhelmed by the prospect of taking on a two-bit dictatorship, and his diplomats are grabbing at Arafat's latest reform scam, which is more about staving off real democracy than promoting it.

In response, Bush should trust his instincts, which have proven much more sound than the supposed experts and professionals who are hounding him. The same group that is finding endless reasons not to take on Arafat or Saddam would never have approved his "axis of evil" speech, and would be happier were it never given. They were wrong about Afghanistan, and they are wrong again now. But it is no longer enough for Bush to say the right thing and let such misguided thinking muddle his policy.

"Our generation faces new and grave threats to liberty," Bush told the Bundestag, "to the safety of our people, and to civilization itself. We face an aggressive force that glorifies death, that targets the innocent, and seeks the means to murder on a massive scale."

Bush is right, and opposing him is a crowd whose argument boils down to *yihye b'seder* - or "don't worry, be happy." If the stakes are as high as he says they are, then it is time for Bush to be less respectful of these irresponsible voices and to start overruling them. (Jerusalem Post May 27)

Damning Documents By Ze'ev Schiff

Stored in large crates in a warehouse in a Tel Aviv suburb are hundreds of thousands of documents, tapes, computer discs and other items, all of which were seized by Israeli forces in Operation Defensive Shield in the West Bank. As in other wars, Israeli intelligence collected everything it could get its hands on. The classification and research work was carried out quickly in order to assist with the investigations and the prevention of terrorism, as well as for publicity purposes. So far, the intelligence personnel involved have compiled about 20 volumes of documents on a range of subjects.

This treasure trove has already given rise to a number of conclusions. In its short existence, the Palestinian Authority succeeded in developing a densely complicated bureaucracy. It was supposed to be a state in the making, but in contrast to the situation in Lebanon during the 1970s and the first two years of the '80s, the head of the Palestinian Authority, Yasser Arafat, was also deeply involved in even minor financial affairs. Senior figures had to wait in line even to receive money to pay for a plane ticket when they went abroad. In this way Arafat intensified his control, as though he was running a gang. Inevitably, this way of doing things had the effect of generating bitterness against him.

Israel's major interest, of course, lies in how the infrastructure of terrorism developed. No proof was found that the second-tier senior political level - consisting of Abu Mazen, Abu Ala and Saeb Erekat, among others - was involved in terrorism. Arafat's involvement is at the ideological and financial level, including making out checks to the Al-Aqsa Brigades and the Tanzim militia when it began to carry out suicide attacks. There is also an order issued by General Hajj Ismail to release 27 members of Islamic Jihad from prison.

The leader of the Tanzim, Marwan Barghouti, whose interrogation in Israel is continuing, was directly involved in terrorism. Nevertheless, we should not be unduly surprised if in the future, if and when proper political relations are formed with the Palestinians, Barghouti, like Nelson Mandela or Jomo Kenyatta, becomes involved in the negotiations with Israel, which might perhaps begin while he is in prison. In any event, the documents indicate that the Palestinian Authority has for some time been engaged in a campaign of falsification and fabrication in its relations with Israel.

The captured papers show that the Palestinians' intelligence organizations are highly involved in terrorism - for example, General Intelligence under the leadership of Tawfik Tirawi. On the one hand, documents were found relating to their surveillance activity against Hamas and Islamic Jihad. At the same time, they made sure to warn the two organizations about impending Israeli operations. There is proof of the release of Hamas prisoners by the "revolving door" system. The involvement of the Fatah organization in terrorism through its military arms from a certain stage of the confrontation is supported by the written documents.

The financial assistance for the terrorist infrastructure is a special case. The new element is the fact that funds received from donor countries found their way to terrorist groups such as the Tanzim and the Al-Aqsa Brigades. So an even more powerful stench becomes attached to the moralizing by a few of the donor states about Israel's methods of defending itself against terrorism.

Support from Arab states for terrorism is a matter in its own right. Overall, no proof has yet been found of footsteps leading to Iraq, and the Iranian issue is still under examination. The moves made by Saudi Arabia are clearer. Until the documents were seized, Riyadh made 10 rounds of donations. There were 102 recipients in the 10th group, including the families of eight suicide bombers - some of whom carried out their lethal mission inside Israel, as the document states explicitly. Examples are the families of the terrorist who opened fire at passersby next to the Defense Ministry compound (the Kirya) in Tel Aviv and of the perpetrator of a suicide attack in Afula. Two families of Israeli Arabs (from Umm al-Fahm and Nazareth) also received Saudi funds. If Saudi Arabia is sincerely thinking about a political initiative these days, then it must obviously cease and desist from involvement in salient acts of terrorism. (Haaretz May 24)

End Arafat's Occupation By Michael Freund

It is time for Israel and its supporters to finally muster up the courage to acknowledge the cold, hard truth - the West Bank and Gaza are "occupied territories".

These areas are administered by a cruel and heartless regime, one that has no mercy on its perceived foes, targeting them with derision, humiliation and even military force.

Little concern is shown for the lives of the innocent, as ruthless measures are employed with the aim of driving the residents from their homes, making them so miserable that they will have no choice but to leave.

This occupation is a menace to the entire region, destabilizing it and undermining any chances for a lasting peace between Arabs and Jews. There is no choice but to bring about an end to this colonialist enterprise, and to dismantle

the occupation once for and all.

Or, to put it more simply: Yasser Arafat and his Palestinian Authority have got to go.

For, if there is anyone who should be considered an "occupier" in the territories, it is Arafat and his dictatorial regime.

Over the past nine years, they have transformed large swaths of Judea, Samaria and Gaza into hothouses for terrorism and violence. They have targeted Jews living in these areas, seeking to compel them to leave by shooting at them, firing mortar rounds at their communities, detonating explosive devices as their cars pass by and invading their homes.

The PA has set new standards of corruption, misusing foreign donor money for unsavory purposes and cultivating a culture of death and suicide among their own people. They have thwarted all efforts to end the century-old Arab-Israeli conflict, preferring instead to resort to the rifle.

Under the PA's rule, the Palestinian-occupied territories have become an irritant to the entire Middle East, threatening to plunge it into another round of bloodshed and violence.

Much of the world turns a blind eye to this reality, chalking it all up to that amorphous and highly unpopular phenomenon known as "politics".

But there is a far deeper, and more compelling reason, why the PA should be considered an "occupying power": they have taken control of land that does not belong to them.

Regardless of what the United Nations or others might say, Judea, Samaria and Gaza are the patrimony of the Jewish people. History, quite simply, is on our side.

Hundreds of years before the advent of Islam, the territories were home to vibrant Jewish communities. David, king of Israel, was born and raised in Bethlehem, while the prophet Amos foretold the future in the hills near Tekoa, southeast of Jerusalem.

Ancient synagogues and burial sites dot the landscape, all serving as physical testimony to the Jewish presence in these areas. Politicians may lie, but 2000-year old stones do not.

Visit Shilo, capital of the northern kingdom of Israel, in Samaria. Take a look at the ruins of King Herod's palace at Herodion, in Judea. Stop by the Cave of the Patriarchs in Hebron, and you will see with your own eyes that these areas were Jewish long before the sword of Islam was ever unsheathed.

To suggest that Israel has no right to this land, or that it has taken someone else's territory, is simply an affront to truth and to history. If you do not accept the Bible as proof, then look to the archaeologists, who will gladly point out the evidence to you.

Even after the Second Temple in Jerusalem was destroyed and the people of Israel sent to exile, Jews continued to live in these areas, albeit in smaller numbers. Hebron was home to a continuous Jewish presence up until 1929. Only once their neighbors massacred them were they forced to flee.

Gaza - yes, Gaza - also has a long and rich Jewish history. The Hasmonean king, Yochanan, brother of Judah the Maccabee, took Gaza in 145 BCE, and his brother Shimon sent Jews to settle there. In the fourth century of the common era, Gaza served as the primary port of commerce for the Jews of the Holy Land.

Nearly forty years ago, on the outskirts of Gaza city near the sea, Egyptian archaeologists discovered a mosaic floor from an ancient synagogue. According to the inscription, it had been built in the sixth century, or 1400 years before the establishment of the PLO.

These are hard facts. They can not be denied or argued away. So, when Jews now seek again to live in these areas, they are doing so not as foreign occupiers, but as indigenous residents returning home. They are merely continuing in the paths of their ancestors, walking where they walked so very long ago.

The land is big enough and bountiful enough for Arabs and Jews to live together under Israeli rule. There is no reason why anyone needs to be forced from his home. But there is every reason for Arafat to be sent packing.

So to all those who say "End the Occupation" - I couldn't agree with you more. Let us remove Yasser Arafat and his regime, and return the land to the Jewish people, its original owners, once and for all.

The writer served as Deputy Director of Communications & Policy Planning in the Prime Minister's Office from 1996 to 1999. (Jerusalem Post May 29)

Israeli Victims Don't Count at State By Caroline B. Glick

Americans this week have been swamped with dire pronouncements by their leaders warning that additional terrorist attacks on US soil are a foregone conclusion. From Vice President Richard Cheney to FBI Director Robert Mueller, Americans this week were told it is only a question of time before they will again experience mass murder similar in scale to the September 11

attacks.

Also this week it surfaced that on March 27, the very day the Arab League convened in Beirut to discuss the much touted Saudi "peace plan," a clandestine conference of leading al-Qaida, Hizbullah, and Hamas operatives took place in the Lebanese capital. Given this confluence of discoveries and warnings, one could have reasonably expected that the State Department's annual "Patterns of Global Terrorism" report, released on Tuesday, would be a no-holds barred explication of the threats posed by terrorist organizations and their sponsors against which the US is currently at war.

Secretary of State Colin Powell himself gave cause to believe the report would meet this expectation when, in releasing the document, he announced, "This report, mandated by Congress, is the 22nd such annual report to chronicle in grim detail the lethal threat that terrorism casts over the globe."

Sadly, at least with regards to Palestinian terrorism against Israel, the report is a painful disappointment. Far from detailed, and a football field shy of the truth, it paints a muted, almost apologetic picture of Palestinian terrorism. So far from accurate is the version of events that one is given pause to consider whether the State Department is committed to playing a helpful role in winning the war against terrorism.

An examination of the report must first begin with its reporting on terrorist attacks. Its "Chronology of Significant Terrorist Incidents, 2001" lists all terrorist incidents that occurred worldwide during 2001 that the department deems "significant." According to the report, "An International Terrorist Incident is judged significant if it results in loss of life or serious injury to persons, abduction or kidnapping of persons, major property damage, and/or is an act or attempted act that could reasonably be expected to create the conditions noted."

As Aaron Lerner of Independent Media Review Analysis news service notes, the chronology contains only nine incidents of Palestinian terrorism against Israel in all of 2001. It is far from clear how the State Department chose which attacks to mention. Some of the nine took place within Israel's pre-1967 borders, and others took place outside of them. Some were large-scale massacres, while others were isolated drive-by shootings. The most likely explanation is that the State Department considered significant only attacks in which non-Israelis were killed or wounded, as in all but one of the nine, foreign nationals were among the victims.

While not included in the department's own definition, a determination that the only "significant" terrorist incidents are those which involve harm to non-citizens of the state in which the acts are perpetrated could perhaps be defended if it were applied across the board. But going over the list, it is clear that this is not the case. The State Department provides relatively detailed accounts of 37 terrorist incidents in India, none of which involved any non-Indian victims.

Thankfully, the massacres at the Dolphinarium discotheque and Sbarro restaurant make the list. The Dolphinarium massacre apparently warranted note because among the 21 victims was Sergei Pancheskov of Ukraine. Similarly, Sbarro presumably receives notice because among the 15 dead were two American citizens and five members of the Schijveschuurder family, who held dual Israeli-Dutch citizenship (although the State Department mentions only that they were Dutch). Again this is unclear, because the report fails to mention that another victim of the Sbarro attack was a tourist from Brazil.

The Foreign Ministry, which lists victims murdered in terrorist attacks since the start of the Palestinian terrorist war on its Web site, counts 95 terrorist attacks in 2001 that resulted in 191 fatalities. The total death toll from attacks noted by the State Department is 56.

Among the 86 terrorist attacks and 146 victims the State Department deemed insignificant were the assassination of tourism minister Rehavam Ze'evi on October 17; the massacre of 15 (including one Philippine national) on an Egged bus in Haifa on December 2; the murder of 10 Israelis in an attack on a Dan bus outside of Emmanuel on December 12; the March 26 murder of 10-month-old Shalhevet Pass, gunned down by sniper fire while being wheeled in her baby carriage at a playground in Hebron; or the murder of five and wounding of 100 Israelis blown up by a Palestinian terrorist outside a shopping mall in Netanya on May 18 to name just a few examples.

Then there's the problem of characterizing Palestinian terrorism. Although the Aksa Martyrs Brigades made the list of foreign terrorist organizations, the report claims that sources of external aid to the group are unknown. This even though Israel provided documentary evidence to the State Department proving that Yasser Arafat personally authorized payment to the group; that the brigades are indistinguishable from Tanzim and work closely, if not seamlessly, with Tawfik Tirawi's General Intelligence Service in the West Bank; and that members of Arafat's security forces double as members of the Aksa Brigades.

As regards Tanzim, in the country report concerning Israel and the PA, the State Department claims that Tanzim "is made up of small and loosely organized cells of militants drawn from the street-level membership of Fatah." Here too, the State Department ignores the facts. The fact is that Tanzim itself has claimed that Arafat is the organization's supreme leader and that Marwan Barghouti, the

head of Fatah in the West Bank, is its field commander. Israel, again, has provided documentary evidence proving conclusively that Arafat siphoned funds from the PA budget, to the tune of \$200,000 per month, to each of the Tanzim regional commanders in the West Bank.

When questioned about the documents provided to the US government by Israel, Ambassador Francis Taylor, the State Department's coordinator for counter-terrorism, stated, "We don't have any question about the authenticity of the documents provided by the Israeli government. We are continuing to study those documents and to draw our own conclusions about what they mean."

Clearly, the documents meant nothing for those who wrote and approved the State Department's 2001 report.

The terrorism report also notes and to a certain degree draws conclusions about international links among terrorist organizations and between these organizations and states that support their actions. Yet somehow, when it comes to state support for terrorism against Israel, no conclusions are drawn. For instance, there's the problem with arms smuggling. While the State Department applauds Egypt's actions in combating terrorism, it makes no mention of the rampant arms smuggling taking place along the Egyptian border with the Gaza Strip. Very rarely does a week go by without an IDF announcement about another tunnel for arms smuggling at Rafah being exposed and destroyed. Only this past week, the IDF exposed a massive tunnel, complete with electric lighting and a telephone cable connecting Palestinian Rafah with Egyptian Rafah. The Egyptian government has done nothing to stop this illicit flow of arms, and on several occasions Egyptian soldiers have fired on IDF troops patrolling the international border.

Further, the report contains bizarre accounts of Israel's capture of the Santorini and Karine A weapons ships. Of the Santorini capture, the report states, "In early May, the Damascus based Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command (PFLP-GC) tried to smuggle weapons into Gaza aboard the Santorini." While no doubt an accurate description, the report makes no mention of the fact that the arms were destined for PA forces.

The account of the Karine A capture is even more incomprehensible. Given that the interdiction occurred in January 2002, the State Department was not obliged to make mention of the episode at all, but since it did, one could expect for it to do so accurately. And yet, here too, underplay was the order of the day. According to the report, "In January 2002, Israeli forces boarded the vessel Karine A in the Red Sea and uncovered nearly 50 tons of Iranian arms, including Katyusha missiles, apparently bound for militants in the West Bank and Gaza Strip."

Apparently? The captain of the ship, Omar Achawi, was the deputy commander of the PA's Naval Police. Its crew was Palestinian. The commander received his orders from Arafat directly, and the entire operation was reportedly agreed upon last May when Achawi accompanied Fuad Shubaki and Arafat to Russia and met secretly with Iranians, while Arafat met with President Vladimir Putin.

President George W. Bush himself implicated Arafat directly. Briefing reporters after meeting with Prime Minister Ariel Sharon on February 7, the president said in response to a question about maintaining contact with Arafat, "Mr. Arafat has heard my message... that he must do everything in his power to reduce terrorist attacks on Israel. And that at one point in time, he was indicating to us that he was going to do so, and then all of the sudden a ship loaded with explosives shows up that most of the world believes he was involved with." "Most of the world" apparently does not include the State Department.

Saudi support for Palestinian terrorism is similarly downplayed and distorted. While Saudi Interior Minister Prince Nayaf personally set up a fund paying the families of dead terrorists \$5,333 each after September 11, the State Department limits its characterization of Saudi support for Hamas to funding from "private benefactors in Saudi Arabia."

This past week, terror warnings caused traffic halts on the Brooklyn Bridge, as New Yorkers were forced to wait until police investigated a "suspicious package." New York police officers came over here to learn from the Israel Police how to deal with suicide attacks in population centers. Since September 11, the fact that the forces attacking Israel and the US are one and the same has become obvious. The State Department terrorism report's whitewash of this reality jeopardizes the ability of both nations to destroy this threat to their countries and citizens. (Jerusalem Post May 24)

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*

Whose Land?

Why the Settlements Should Stay By Hillel Halkin

Making the West Bank Judenrein is no way to bring peace.

The settlements! If only they didn't exist! If only Israel understood the folly of them! They have been a ruinous drain on its resources, a flagrant violation of international law, a systematic effort to dispossess the Palestinians, an intolerable presence on Palestinian soil, and, in short, "the greatest Israeli obstacle to peace," as the New York Times recently put it in hardly its first editorial on the subject. For the sake of peace, they will have to be uprooted.

Such, today, is the conventional wisdom even among most of Israel's friends, even among many Israelis. Like all wisdom of its kind, it is self-perpetuating. And like all wisdom of its kind, it needs a second look.

Such a look might begin with the word *settlement* itself, which implies a small and easily removable community. Most people, when they imagine the Palestinian West Bank, in which are to be found close to three-quarters of the roughly 175 Jewish settlements built on territory occupied by Israel in 1967, and 90% of their total population of 250,000, see a series of isolated outposts surrounded by hostile Arab towns and villages. Such outposts, numbering several hundred inhabitants or fewer, do exist, from the Hebron hills in the southern West Bank, traditionally known to Jews and Christians as Judea, to the fringes of Jenin in the northern West Bank or Samaria. Most of them, however, are surrounded by empty space rather than by Arab towns and villages.

But other settlements, as the Times noted in the same editorial, are the size of large towns, and some are approaching small cities. Ma'aleh Adumim, in the Judean desert east of Jerusalem, has a population of 28,000; Ariel, in the foothills east of Tel Aviv, 18,000; Betar Illit, an ultra-Orthodox community south of Jerusalem, has passed 15,000. Standing in the center of such places, one has a view not of hostile Palestinians but of Jewish houses, streets, parks, shops and businesses as far as the eye can see.

If the settlements were a bad idea, they were indeed a great waste of public funds. Huge amounts have been invested in them by Israeli governments for construction and infrastructure, only a part of which has been recovered through the sale of housing, real-estate and commercial taxes, and other revenue. And yet, apart from this construction having been an important source of income to those engaged in it, especially to many thousands of Palestinian workers, evacuating the settlements today would be far more expensive than building them.

Assuming, for instance, 7,000 dwelling units in Ma'aleh Adumim, a suburb populated largely by young families coming from and working in Jerusalem, and modestly estimating the price of equivalent housing in Jerusalem at \$250,000 per family unit, the cost of relocating Ma'aleh Adumim's residents, and of paying compensation to its shop owners and other businesses, would come to over \$2 billion. The total cost of evacuating all the settlements could easily--talk of ruinous!--exceed \$20 billion.

We are assured that Israel will not have to pay for this. The international community, it is said, will be glad to finance peace by footing the bill and resettling Palestinian refugees in the evacuated homes, thus helping to solve two problems at once. This, however, remains to be seen. Meanwhile, \$20 billion is not in evidence. Nor is there likely to be much enthusiasm for writing a check in that amount on the part of taxpayers in America, Europe and Japan, who have been hearing for the past 35 years that the settlements are illegal. Why pay the price of Israel's crimes?

That the settlements *are* illegal, the conventional wisdom says, is obvious. But it is far from obvious--even if, like many a commonplace, it has been remarked upon so often that it has attained the status of a universally acknowledged truth.

The case for the illegality of the Jewish settlements in the West Bank rests largely on a single source: article 49(6) in the fourth Geneva Convention of 1949. This article states that an occupying military power "shall not deport or transfer part of its own civilian population into the territory it occupies." Yet, as several

international jurists have pointed out, not only has Israel "deported" or "transferred" no one to the settlements, whose inhabitants are there of their own free will, it is by no means clear that Israel was ever, legally, in the position of being an occupying power.

This is because, in 1967, Israel had as good a claim as anyone to the West Bank, which in effect belonged to no government. The Jordanian annexation

of the area, while acquiesced in by the same Palestinian leadership that had rejected the 1947 U.N. partition resolution, was unrecognized by most of the world, and Jordan itself had refused to make peace with Israel or to consider their joint border more than a temporary cease-fire line. A reasonable case could thus be made that, as the sole sovereign state to have emerged from British-mandated Palestine, Israel had not only the right but the duty to act as the West Bank's civil administrator pending determination of the area's status.

The conventional wisdom is also wrong in asserting--a frequently made claim--that continued settlement activity on the part of Israel is a violation of the 1993 Oslo accords. The plain fact of the matter is that nowhere in that agreement was there any reference to the settlements, apart from a single paragraph stating that--along with Jerusalem, refugees, and "other issues of common interest"--their fate was to be settled in final-status negotiations. This was hardly an oversight. The Palestinians wanted a settlement freeze and fought for one at Oslo; if they did not get it, this is only because in the end they accepted the Israeli refusal to agree to one. In repeatedly demanding one anyway over the ensuing years, it is they, not the Israelis, who have gone back on the document they signed.

And yet whatever the legality of the settlements, the debate over it is incapable of adjudication, since international law, especially with regard to disputes between countries, remains in large measure a fiction lacking courts to interpret it impartially. Nor, it must be admitted, did questions of legality especially exercise Israel when it established the settlements in the first place. It is therefore worth recalling why, when, and where it did establish them.

Even though settling Jews on available land was a Zionist reflex, if not the supreme imperative of Jewish policy in the historic land of Israel from the late 19th century on, the immediate reaction of the Labor Party government of Prime Minister Levi Eshkol to Israel's stunning victory in the Six Day War of June 1967 was to *bar* Jewish settlement in the West Bank. Caught by surprise both by the war and by the extent of the Arab defeat, the Eshkol government adopted this position in the expectation that peace talks with Jordan would soon commence and lead to the return of most of the area to King Hussein.

Apart from annexing East Jerusalem, Israel undertook no settlement activity at all in the first months after the fighting, during which the government countenanced, at most, several privately initiated ventures on the Golan Heights and in the Etsion Bloc southwest of Jerusalem--where, in 1948, a cluster of kibbutzim had been destroyed by the Arab Legion after fierce resistance. (Both areas had great emotional resonance for the Israeli public, the Golan because of long years of Syrian shelling from it, the "Bloc" as a symbol of Jewish heroism and loss in the War of Independence.) Similarly, when, in April 1968, 10 months after the Six-Day war, a group of religious Jews moved into and refused to leave a hotel in the Judean city of Hebron, in which an ancient Jewish community had existed until driven out by a pogrom in 1929, no action was taken to evict them.

But by the spring of 1968, Israel's situation had changed. The "three no's"--to peace with Israel, to recognition of Israel, and to negotiations with Israel--of the pan-Arab conference in Khartoum that ended in September 1967, plus the passage of U.N. Security Council Resolution 242 in November, deliberately phrased to call for Israeli withdrawal to "secure and recognized borders" from "occupied" rather than from *the* occupied territories, had convinced Israel of two things: that peace talks were not imminent, and that, were they to become so, the world would agree to Israeli retention of a minimum of territory needed for its security. The result was the "Allon Plan," named for Deputy Prime Minister Yigal Allon. Israel's first formulation of a coherent West Bank strategy, it called for Jewish settlements surrounding Jerusalem, in the foothills of Samaria just east of the

1967 border, and in the sparsely inhabited Jordan Valley--and nowhere else. Eighty percent of the West Bank, including its most heavily populated regions, would remain out of bounds to Jews.

The Allon Plan, though it came under heavy domestic criticism as a British-Mandate-style "White Paper" banning Jews from living in their own homeland, determined settlement policy until 1974. Then, shortly after the Yom Kippur War, which ended with a battered and disillusioned Israel seemingly further away from peace than ever, a first wedge was driven in it. Demanding that the government of Yitzhak Rabin recognize the right of Jews to settle anywhere in Judea and Samaria, a militant group named Gush Emunim staged a "live-in" at Sebastia, the site of the biblical city of Shomron. The Rabin government, though at first inclined to evict the squatters, was persuaded by Defense Minister Shimon Peres to negotiate with them, leading to the founding of the settlement of Kedumim in the heart of Samaria. Subsequently, the Allon Plan's restrictions on Jewish settlement began to crumble.

Nevertheless, at the time of the momentous defeat of Labor in the elections of 1977 by Menachem Begin's Likud party, there were barely 10,000 Jews living in the West Bank. Soon after these elections, Egypt's President Anwar Sadat came to Jerusalem on his peace overture. Had there been at this time the slightest willingness on the part of Jordanians or Palestinians to join the Egyptian-Israeli peace talks, these few settlers would have been an obstacle to nothing. (Their number was indeed only slightly greater than the number of Israelis in the Sinai who would be evacuated by the Begin government in 1981.) But the Jordanians stood aloof from the proposal for West Bank autonomy made by Begin to Sadat; the Palestine Liberation Organization assailed it; and more and more settlers, encouraged by Likud policy, began moving into the West Bank.

Were they an obstacle to peace with the Palestinians? The historical record shows that, at least up to the Oslo Agreement of 1993, they were the opposite: not an obstacle but an impetus to peace.

This can be confirmed, first of all, empirically. From 1977 on, as West Bank settlement grew by leaps and bounds, passing the 100,000 mark in 1990, Arab and Palestinian attitudes toward Israel became steadily more flexible. The year 1979 marked the signing of the Israeli-Egyptian peace treaty. In 1985 the PLO, which had hitherto called for the destruction of Israel and the establishment of a "secular, democratic" (i.e., non-Jewish) state in all of Palestine, suggested forming a joint delegation with Jordan to negotiate the return of the West Bank and Gaza Strip alone; in 1988, it announced its acceptance of Resolution 242 and its willingness to recognize Israel; in 1992, it went to Oslo with the Rabin government.

Of course, there were other reasons for this, too. They included the peace between Israel and Egypt; the defeat of the PLO in Lebanon in 1982; the PLO's financial and political debacle in the Gulf War; the waning of the first *intifada*, which broke out in 1987 and had begun to subside by the early 1990s; and the growing popularity in the occupied territories of Islamic groups challenging PLO supremacy. But of all these factors, it may be that nothing convinced the PLO that time was against it so much as the growth of the settlements. As long as the number of people in them was negligible, they did not seem likely to prevent Israel from ever surrendering control of the West Bank. Now that they were expanding by 10,000 inhabitants a year, the PLO feared the approach of a point of no return. This fear was, in the 1980s and early '90s, a factor working for, not against, peace.

One might consider a counterfactual proposition. Suppose that every Israeli government, from 1967 until the present, had done what the conventional wisdom says it should have done. Suppose it had declared, "Not a single Jew will be allowed to live in the West Bank until there is peace, and we intend to hold the area in escrow for the Palestinians for as long as this takes. Let it be 10 years. Let it be 20. Let it be 50 or 100. The Arab world can rest assured that, whenever it is tired of fighting, it will get this territory back as we received it, free of Jews."

Would *this* have hastened peace talks or moderated the PLO? Why should it have? Common sense dictates that the Palestinian and Arab reaction would have been, "Well, then, there's no need to hurry. We have all the time in the world. First, let us go on trying to destroy Israel. If we succeed, so much the better. If we fail, we will have lost nothing."

In point of fact, however, Israel could never have kept such a promise even had it made it. As the months after the June 1967 victory lengthened into years, no Israeli government would have lasted if it told its people: "No matter how long the Arabs refuse to make peace with us, you are forever barred from living in any part of the land of Israel beyond the 1967 borders that the Arabs refuse to recognize." The Allon Plan was initially acceptable to most Israelis because, while pragmatic, it did not in principle deny the right of Jews to live beyond

those borders. A policy of declaring the West Bank entirely *Judenrein* would have toppled Labor and brought the Likud to power well before 1977.

There is indeed something unacceptable about telling Jews that although they may live anywhere they wish, in New York and London, in Moscow and Buenos Aires, there is one part of the world they may not live in--namely, Judea and Samaria, those regions of the land of Israel most intimately connected with the Bible, with the Second Temple period, and with Jewish historical memory, and most longed-for by the Jewish people over the ages.

It is a matter of historical irony that, when Israel's 1948 War of Independence ended, it found the Jews heavily concentrated in the narrow lowland of Palestine's coastal strip, where the biblical Philistines once lived, and the Arabs mainly in the hill country of the interior, where the ancient Jews once lived. Yet this is also a matter of historical consistency. All over the world, and throughout time, more technologically advanced peoples have ended up occupying the plains and valleys, where a high degree of agricultural, political, and military organization is most effective, leaving the hills to their less-advanced rivals. In biblical times, the hill people of Palestine were the Israelites. In 1948, they were the Palestinians.

Be that as it may, Jordan, Israel's main military adversary in 1948, saw to it that the West Bank it annexed had not a Jew in it. It was thus inevitable, following the 1967 victory, that there should have been widespread sentiment in Israel for opening Judea and Samaria to Jewish settlement. The ensuing debate had not two sides but three, which might be labeled the "pros," the "cons," and the "halfways." In simplified form, combining arguments that received different degrees of prominence at different times and in different circumstances, the debate went like this:

Pros: "Jews have an absolute right to live anywhere in their historic homeland. For a Jewish government to deny this right would be monstrous."

Cons: "There is a difference between a right and its implementation. In theory, the Palestinian refugees also have the right to return to the homes they fled in 1948, but in practice there are good grounds for opposing this. The same can be said of Jews and the West Bank. Jewish settlements there will take away more land from a Palestinian people that already lost most of its territory in 1948. They will create resentment and anger among this people and inflame anti-Israel feeling. And they will make it impossible to exchange the West Bank for peace, thus precluding a political solution. Israel can exist without Judea and Samaria. For the Palestinians, this is all they have left. Keeping it for them is both the prudent and the moral thing to do."

Pros: "Israel *cannot* exist without Jews in Judea and Samaria. This is so physically, because a return to the 1967 borders, which at their narrowest left the country six miles wide between the West Bank and the sea, will render it militarily indefensible. And it is so psychologically, because, while you can divide the land of Israel on a map, you cannot divide it as a concept. Either it belongs to the Jewish people or it does not. The Arabs say it does not. If Jews concede today that they have no place in Judea and Samaria, they will concede tomorrow that they have none in Haifa and Tel Aviv."

Cons: "That is absurd. Jews *are* in Haifa and Tel Aviv. They need no historical justification for being there. And there are other ways of making Israel defensible. A Palestinian state can be demilitarized. Modern technology permits early-warning systems and military responses that make distances on the ground irrelevant."

Pros: "Demilitarization will be a farce if Israel does not control the Palestinian border with the Arab world in the Jordan Valley. So will any early-warning system. Arab tanks could enter a Palestinian state through that valley and cut Israel in half literally overnight."

Halfways: "That is why there is a need to compromise on something like the Allon Plan. It is the optimal solution."

Cons: "It is no solution at all. Neither the Palestinians nor any Arab country will accept the Allon Plan, or anything less than a full withdrawal to the 1967 lines. No settlements at all--that is the only game in town."

Pros: "You've just given the best reason for settlements everywhere. Why forbid Jews to live in their own land if a defensible Israel will not result from a full withdrawal in any case?"

Halfways: "You're forgetting demography. There are two million Arabs living in the West Bank. Adding them to the population of Israel would be the end of Israel as a Jewish state."

Pros: "You don't have to add them. They can be citizens of Jordan or of Palestine."

Cons: "You mean Arab Bantus in an Israeli Bantustan."

Pros: "We mean Israelis and Palestinians living together. If they can do so

on the old Israeli side of the 1967 border, why can't they do so on the old Jordanian side?"

Cons: "There is no analogy. The Palestinians in Israel were there before the Jews. The Israelis on the West Bank are intruders. They have robbed the West Bankers of their property. They constitute an insufferable provocation. They deprive the Palestinians--permit me to quote from a New York Times editorial--'of prime land and water, break up Palestinian geographic continuity, are hard to defend against Palestinian attack, and complicate the establishment of a clear, secure Israeli border.' How can you argue with that?"

Perhaps by beginning with the Palestinians' own statistics, supplied by Jad Ishak, director of the Palestinian-run Applied Research Institute in Jerusalem, who has served as an adviser on the settlements to the Palestinian Authority:

Jewish settlers in the West Bank number, as I have said, some 225,000 people--or about a tenth of the area's total population. (By comparison, the one million Palestinians now living in Israel form close to a fifth of *its* population.) According to Palestinian figures, the built-up area currently occupied by the settlements constitutes 2% of the West Bank. Another 2.2% has been set apart by the Israeli government for future expansion, and an additional 1.5% has been used for 190 miles of roads leading to, or connecting, the settlements. All in all, the Jewish tenth of the West Bank's population lives on 1/50th of its area, has title to another 1/50th, and travels on a special 1/65th.

Whatever the percentages, the Palestinians claim that all land used by the settlements has been stolen from them and must be relinquished. Israel, for its part, contends that this land has been acquired legally. Both sides agree that its transfer to Jewish ownership has been conducted by three basic mechanisms.

One has been direct sales by Palestinian owners to Israeli buyers. (Many of these, the Palestinians say, were fraudulent or performed under duress.) A second has been the allotment, by Israel to the settlers, of unowned or former Jordanian state-owned land. (The Palestinians insist that Israel had no proprietary rights to either.) A third has been the confiscation of private Palestinian land for "public purposes." (Which, the Palestinians contend, has consistently meant only Jewish purposes.) Although neither Palestinian nor Israeli sources offer a breakdown by category, the last-named--confiscations--probably comprises the smallest of the three.

The Palestinians also point out that the settlements occupy far more land per capita than do Palestinian towns and cities, whose built-up area, for a population 10 times greater, is less than twice as large--a disparity in population density that is due partly to larger Palestinian families' living in more crowded quarters and partly to the settlements' having more extensive private and public spaces. Still, the 5.7% of the West Bank apportioned to settlement activity now and in the future, while not insignificant, hardly constitutes a major takeover of what the Times calls "prime Palestinian land."

The same holds true for water. Although many Palestinian localities do suffer acute water shortages during the dry summer months, the settlements, despite their far greater per capita domestic consumption of water, are not directly to blame. Unlike the Palestinians, the settlers are for the most part linked to the central Israeli water grid and do not pump their water from local wells, and Israeli restrictions on Palestinian pumping, however onerous, have been aimed at protecting Israeli aquifers in general rather than at diverting water specifically to the settlements. If the Jewish inhabitants of the settlements were all moved to the coastal plain tomorrow, they would be drawing the same amount of water from these aquifers as today.

On the other hand, the settlements do, as the Times says, "break up Palestinian geographic continuity," since no part of the West Bank is without them. The Times is right, too, that many of them, because small and reached by vulnerable roads, "are hard to defend against Palestinian attack." It has been the need to protect them against such attack that has led to the proliferation of Israeli army patrols and military checkpoints that Palestinian drivers and their passengers, often held up several times in the course of short journeys, have found particularly harassing and humiliating. Certainly, a permanent situation in which this continued would be incompatible with Palestinian sovereignty in any meaningful sense. No Palestinian state could allow the Israeli army to be everywhere in its territory (as opposed to in limited bases in the Jordan Valley).

The Times is also right that the settlements, in their present locations, "complicate the establishment of a clear, secure Israeli border." In fact, if such a border had to include all the settlements within it, it would be impossible to draw. Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's current "interim agreement" proposal, which calls for keeping all the settlements under Israeli control while giving only 40% of the West Bank to the Palestinians, illustrates the dilemma. The border would have to take in large amounts of land not belonging to the settlements in order to

encompass them all. The noncontiguous cantons thereby left to the Palestinians would indeed be the equivalent of Bantustans, and there is no conceivable reason why the Palestinians should accept them.

To sum up: The great majority of the Israeli settlements in the West Bank are not there because of Israel's original post-1967 policy and would not have been built at all had the Arabs been prepared to negotiate a peace treaty in the aftermath of the 1967 war. They are not necessarily illegal, and they have probably, over the years, furthered peace more than they have hindered it. Relocating their inhabitants would cost enormous sums. Moreover, they express a deep Jewish imperative that cannot be challenged without calling into question the Jewish historical attachment to Palestine that validates the state of Israel. And although many of them are built on land taken from the Palestinians against their will, their physical dimension is not intolerable from a Palestinian point of view.

What is intolerable is both the discriminatory asymmetry behind the settlements--that is, the assumption that, whereas Jews have a right to live in all of the historic land of Israel, Palestinian refugees do not have a right to live in all of historic Palestine--and the practical consequences of Palestinian hostility to them. If not for such hostility, no Israeli army would be needed to defend them, and if no Israeli army were needed to defend them, they could exist in a Palestinian state.

Over a year and a half into the cruelest fighting that the Jewish-Arab conflict in Palestine has known, and in which the settlers have been a main target of Palestinian violence, the notion that they could live in a Palestinian state may seem laughably quixotic.

This may be what it is. But if it is, so is the notion of a genuine Israeli-Palestinian peace (as opposed to either a permanently ongoing conflict or a tense state of nonbelligerency with closed borders and no economic or other relationships). Is it possible, after all, to imagine a Palestine and Israel with friendly relations and open borders, tourism and trade, Palestinian workers coming every day to earn their livelihood in Israel, Israeli and Palestinian products being exchanged back and forth, and over a million Palestinian citizens of Israel regularly hosting and visiting friends and families in a Palestinian West Bank in which no Jews are allowed to live?

It has been suggested that, although Jews might indeed live in a Palestinian state some day, the currently inflamed emotions on both sides, and the extreme antisettler sentiments of the Palestinians, make speaking of this at the present moment an instance of placing the cart before the horse. First, the two peoples must be separated, with Israelis on one side of a recognized border and Palestinians on the other. Then, as the old passions subside and the wounds of enmity are healed, they can begin to mix again.

Good fences, in other words, will make good neighbors. And yet the idea that the best way of enabling Jews to live in Judea and Samaria is to begin by removing 225,000 of them from there is not only curiously Rube Goldbergish, it will not even lead to the desired separation, since there will still be over a million Palestinians, most of them identified with the Palestinian state, living in Israel. If the purpose of evacuating Jewish settlers to the Israeli side of the border is an amicable divorce, this should logically be accompanied by moving Israel's Arabs to the Palestinian side. Those who attack the asymmetrical injustice of granting Jewish settlers a historical right denied to Palestinian refugees overlook the similar injustice of relocating the settlers alone.

Perfect symmetry between Israelis and Palestinians is no longer attainable. It was proposed in 1947 by the United Nations, which voted to divide Mandate Palestine in half, and rejected then by the Arabs. But without some symmetry, an Israeli-Palestinian reconciliation is unattainable, too. One element in achieving it might therefore be to let the 225,000 settlers remain in a Palestinian state while allowing a similar number of Palestinian refugees to return to Israel and fairly compensating all those who cannot. (This might also be a far better use of \$20 billion.) To prevent the returnees from adversely affecting Israel's demographic balance, it would then be necessary to create another symmetry: Just as the Jewish settlers and their offspring in a Palestinian state could live there as permanent residents while remaining Israeli citizens and voting in Israeli elections, so returning Palestinian refugees resettled in Israel would remain citizens of Palestine.

Is it conceivable, after the events of the last year and a half, that Jewish settlers would be prepared to risk their lives in a Palestinian state? That would depend on many things, most of all on whether this state could guarantee their safety and enable them to live normally. As a collective body, the settlers have, over the years, exhibited a remarkable courage and

attachment to their homes, which suggests that many of them would be prepared to try braving such an arrangement.

Amid the nasty demonization of the settlers that has taken place in the world media, the astounding fact has gone largely unnoticed that their population in the West Bank, even over the past 18 months, during which they have been shot at daily on the roads and lived in perpetual insecurity, has grown faster than the population of Israel in general, increasing in 2001 by 5%. Although, needless to say, they would prefer the protection of the Israeli army to the protection of the Palestinian police, they will not necessarily cut and run if, as part of a larger resolution, the army pulls out.

A bigger question is the Palestinians themselves. While there will always be militants among them who will want the settlers out under any circumstances (and the Jews out of Tel Aviv and Haifa), these may be controllable if a clear majority of Palestinians desire--as they do not today--to let the settlers live in peace. To do so, they would have to be convinced that this is fair and beneficial to themselves.

Fairness is a matter of the right symmetries. But the benefits of open borders, with Jews and Arabs living on both sides of them, would be much greater for Palestinians than for Israelis. Israel can prosper without Palestine. A Palestinian state without Israel to employ its labor force and buy its agricultural products will continue to be an economic basket case. And a Palestinian state separated from a Jewish state by a wall, literal or figurative, will mean a Palestinian people walled off from itself.

Ultimately, though, the benefit would be great for both sides. It would enable each to live in its own state and under its own government while together inhabiting one country that is an indivisible geographical and historical unit and inalienable to the memories of both. What matters most to Jews is not that they rule over an undivided land of Israel, but that they be allowed to be freely at home in it. What matters most to Arabs in Palestine, one trusts, is the same thing.

Of course, this may be a utopian fantasy. Whether or not to explore it represents a crossroads that Palestinian and Israeli negotiators will have to come to. It is noteworthy that, thus far, official Israeli and Palestinian positions have simply ignored the possibility of Jewish settlers living under Palestinian sovereignty, which may be taken either as an indication that neither side rules it out or as an indication that neither side thinks it remotely feasible.

It would also, if it came to that, represent a crossroads for the Israeli public. Since the inception of the Zionist project, two alternative models have competed for adoption, often confusingly and without a sufficiently clear sense of their mutual contradictoriness: that of Jewish-Arab separation and that of Jewish-Arab integration. It may well be the case--as it has given every sign of being so far--that the latter idea consists of too much romance and too little realism. What needs to be asked is whether it could be given one last, comprehensive chance.

One thing should be clear. A West Bank without Jews means a Palestine and Israel without a normal relationship. If *this* is what it comes to, Israel will have to ask many or most of the settlers to pack their bags and will then withdraw to a defensive line of its own choosing, which will not be that of 1967 and will not meet Palestinian demands. After that, the fences will go up. They will not make good neighbors. (Commentary June 2002, Wall Street Journal May 29))

The writer is author of "Across the Sabbath River: In Search of a Lost Tribe of Israel," forthcoming in August from Houghton Mifflin.

Europe and the Muslim War Against the Jews By Robert S. Wistrich

The rising tide of anti-Semitic vitriol across Europe - with synagogues burning in Paris, London and Marseilles, and the old pogromist cry of "Death to the Jews!" once more echoing from Brussels to Kiev - has shocked many in Israel and the Diaspora. Such hostility has not been seen since the end of World War II and has exposed the dormant genocidal demons still lurking beneath the civilized veneer of Europe, as well as the hollowness of its pretensions to moral superiority. Much less attention has been paid, however, to the massive Muslim contribution to this wave of anti-Semitism which in Europe and the West has found its most enthusiastic supporters among recent Arab and Muslim immigrants. Since October 2000, there has been an alarming rise in the number of anti-Semitic assaults on Jewish communities around the world for which young Muslims have been responsible - and nowhere is this more apparent than in France. These new immigrants carry with them anti-Semitic baggage from their mother countries and Islamic culture.

Their hatred is further reinforced by the malevolently Judeophobic sermons heard in their local mosques or the scenes of "martyrdom" continually relayed by

satellite TV programs from the Middle East. This highly explosive cocktail of fanatical religious passion, Jew-hatred, and warlike zeal - sentiments perfectly encapsulated in the concept of Jihad (Holy War) - has been still further inflamed by the violently anti-Israel coverage of the Palestinian intifada in most of the French and European media.

Not only that, but the Muslim war against the Jews, especially in Europe, is also fuelled by their feelings of alienation, exclusion, and marginalization - largely the product of an unsuccessful integration into the majority culture. Many Muslims see themselves as victims of European racism and displace their rage against the far more successful Jews whose influence they tend to exaggerate. Their frustrations and resentment have led to an intense though vicarious identification with the Palestinian victims of "Israeli aggression." Meanwhile, the Jews - particularly in France with the growing spectre of Le Pen adding fuel to the flames - find themselves caught between the new Islamic Judeophobia, the anti-Arab xenophobia (anti-Semiticly tinged) of the Front National, and the Israelophobia of much of the European mass media.

ONE OF the paradoxes of the present situation is that only with the electoral success of Le Pen have the Western media begun to acknowledge (though somewhat grudgingly) that anti-Semitism is indeed a problem, though wherever possible it is subordinated to the wider issue of racism and anti-racism. But when it comes to Muslim anti-Semitism, the West inexplicably looks the other way. The ubiquity of Muslim incitement against Jews from Cairo to Damascus, Baghdad, Teheran, and Lahore is barely commented upon. Its direct connection to the terrorist war of the Islamists against Israel and the West is underplayed, if it is mentioned at all. Even the deluge of venomous Judeophobia widely available in Arab and Muslim bookshops and on video cassettes in Europe itself, is rarely investigated though it clearly amounts to a culture of incitement. Holocaust denial material, when sponsored, promoted, or disseminated by Muslims, arouses only a small ripple of interest yet the same phenomenon when it can be linked to neo-Nazis or neo-fascists is most extensively covered by the Western media.

Another virtually taboo subject is the close resemblance between Nazi and Islamic anti-Semitism. This is apparent in the visual imagery of the Arab press which endlessly indulges in hideous stereotypes of Jews reminiscent of the classic Nazi propaganda rag, *Der Stuermer*. Muslims have largely taken over the Nazi conspiratorial view of world Jewry as a giant octopus controlling the world's wealth and mass media, manipulating the US, fomenting wars and revolutions, and seeking to dominate the planet by subverting all rivals - especially Islam. Israel, in particular, is portrayed as the incarnation of evil, populated by criminal racists and Shylocks in military uniform, whose policies include spreading drugs, vice, prostitution, AIDs, and the cultural poisons of modernity into Muslim society. From there it is but a small leap to embracing the idea that all the Jews of Israel should be eliminated. Hence the widespread glorification among Palestinians, Arabs, and millions of Muslims of the suicide bombers who deliberately target innocent Israeli civilians. But to discuss these causes and effects would, it appears, be most inconvenient to the good conscience of many self-righteous Europeans. After all, only 60 years ago the unquenchable hatred we are now seeing on the Muslim street was also rampant among the peoples of Europe whose complicity and in many cases active collaboration made the Nazi extermination of Jews possible.

But the impeccably "anti-racist" and humanist Europeans of today prefer not to recognize their handiwork in the perverted and genocidal ideology of Islamist anti-Semitism, for which historically they bear considerable guilt.

Instead they stand by almost silently when they are not actively denying the existence of Muslim Jew-baiting or trying to excuse it as a purely political act of "resisting the (Israeli) occupation." This trivializing response to the Muslim war against the Jews (which has its counterparts in Israel and the Diaspora) reminds me of the failure of the West to effectively counter Nazi anti-Semitism. It smacks of appeasement, cowardice, and a failure to confront Europe's inner demons - which have instead been projected with almost hysterical fury against the alleged sins of the Jewish State. But the "original sin" of European racism will not be so easily exorcised, and deflecting it against Israel is likely to prove as suicidal as the exploding bombers who are wrecking the Palestinian cause. (Jerusalem Post May 28)

The writer is Professor of European History at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and a senior research associate at the Shalem Center.
