

 Jerusalem 7:05; Toronto 8:41

Events...

Sunday June 15, 9am

Moshe Eyal of the Yeshiva High School of the Binyamin Region, will speak on "Operating a school under threat of terror, 400 metres from Ramallah", at Clanton Park Synagogue.

Commentary...

The Bomb in Jerusalem on Wednesday

Repeat after me: It wasn't retaliation for Rantisi. Repeat after me: It wasn't retaliation for Rantisi. Repeat after me: It wasn't retaliation for Rantisi.

The bus bombing in Jerusalem today that killed upwards of 15 people was not Hamas retaliation for Israel's attempt to eliminate Abdul Aziz Rantisi, the financial, political and religious instigator of terrorism against Jews. Whether or not the attack had happened yesterday and whether or not it had been successful, the bombing would have occurred today because today is one of the days Israel's defenses against terrorism failed.

According to Israeli experts, a homicide bombing takes nearly two weeks to plan and execute. Since the Aqaba summit, Israel has stopped more than 50 planned attacks, including yesterday a 15-year-old boy with explosives, planning to blow himself up. Every day, Israeli forces seek out and find those who would kill Jews. Every day, Israeli forces stop something from happening. Hundreds and hundreds of times since the Palestinian war against Israel entered its current phase in September 2000. But some days, they fail.

It wasn't retaliation for Rantisi. It wasn't part of a "cycle of violence."

Those, including the President, who said yesterday that Israel's operation against Rantisi would hurt the Road Map or "damage the peace process" miss the point of violence against Jews. The "map" and the "process" are not goals; a secure, legitimate, Jewish Israel living, if need be, alongside a peaceful, democratic Palestinian state is a goal. The others are only tools, and only for parties ascribing to their principles. Israel, certainly; Abu Mazen, maybe. But Hamas is an enemy engaged in war against the Jewish state. Parties interested in war should get war. And yes, the elimination of war parties and war processes IS the obligation of the PA under the terms of the Road Map. But since Abu Mazen publicly abdicated, preferring, he said, "negotiations" for a "truce," it falls to Israel, as ever, to defend its people.

We believe the President knows this. In his 20 September speech he said: "We will direct every resource at our command -- every means of diplomacy, every tool of intelligence, every instrument of law enforcement, every financial influence, and every necessary weapon of war. We will starve terrorists of funding, turn them one against another, drive them from place to place, until there is no refuge or no rest. And we will pursue nations that provide aid or safe haven to terrorism. Every nation, in every region, now has a decision to make. Either you are with us, or you are with the terrorists."

Rantisi is a terrorist and deserved a terrorist's fate. The bombing today was part of his ongoing war against Israel. They are related by philosophy, not by timing. Today and every day, Israel should have our full support in engaging and eliminating its enemies. (JINSA June 11)

We, Too, Are Deeply Troubled Jerusalem Post Editorial

After sentencing al-Qaidashoe-bomber Richard Reid last January, US District Court Judge William Young turned to Reid and said, "You are not an enemy combatant. You are a terrorist. We do not negotiate with terrorists. We do not sign documents with terrorists. We hunt them down one by one and bring them to justice."

Abdel Aziz Rantisi is a terrorist. As one of the senior leaders of Hamas, he is a senior terrorist. He has for years been involved in all aspects of Hamas's terrorist infrastructure. Rantisi incites Muslims to become suicide bombers. He raises funds for weapons. He mobilizes operatives to strike. And after each successful bombing he acts as a terrorist spokesman and apologist.

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*

According to a **ט"ו**

statement released yesterday by the Defense Ministry, Rantisi has personally overseen Hamas terror operations for the past several months – stepping in after Salah Shehada was killed and Muhammad Deif was taken out of action by IDF strikes. We have no reason to doubt the veracity of this statement.

We also do not doubt the Defense Ministry's statement that Rantisi shares the criminal responsibility for

the murder of 227 Israelis and the wounding of 1,393 others since the beginning of the Palestinian terrorist war three years ago.

As one of the heads of Hamas, Rantisi, like Hamas spiritual leader Sheikh Ahmed Yassin, is culpable for the actions of their organization regardless of whether they personally issued every specific kill order. Rantisi and Yassin are the brains of Hamas. At their direction, the organization murders. With their guidance, the organization grows and increases its public support. They, together with other terrorists like Yasser Arafat, are responsible for the indoctrination of large swathes of Palestinian society to believe that the murder of Jews is moral and just.

Following the air force's unsuccessful attempt to kill Rantisi yesterday, White House spokesman Ari Fleischer was quick to say that US President George W. Bush is "deeply troubled" by the IDF's action. The president apparently believes that, by taking out Rantisi, the government is somehow harming the chances for peace.

To this we can only comment that we were unaware the US believes that Hamas is an organization worthy of protecting. We would also point out that Rantisi is an enemy of the US. Ahead of the US operation to destroy Saddam Hussein's regime, Rantisi called on the Iraqis to carry out suicide bombings against US forces in Iraq.

In an article published on Hamas's Web site in late December, translated by MEMRI, Rantisi wrote: "In order to defend the homeland from the terrorist Crusader [i.e. US] attack, there is a need for people who yearn for Paradise, and the shortest way to Paradise is death for [the sake of] Allah. Some of us should see the joyful and satisfied faces of the mothers in Iraq when they part from the fruit of their loins, who go off to the realms of honor, the realms of martyrdom. This is so that the enemy of the nation knows that safeguarding honor and the homeland is dearer than life, and that our mothers in Iraq, like our mothers in Palestine, [are willing] to sacrifice the fruit of their loins but not their honor."

Then, too, in a debate among Islamic scholars in 2001 on the question of whether Islam permits suicide bombers, Rantisi cited a 1996 fatwa by one Sheikh Qardawi who extolled the Islamic virtue of suicide bombers. Qardawi is one of the heads of the Muslim Brotherhood the Egyptian jihadist movement that spawned Hamas, the Palestinian Islamic Jihad, and al-Gama'at al-Islamiyaa sister organization of al-Qaida. So Rantisi and Osama bin Laden share the same preacher.

All of this of course brings us to the blatant hypocrisy of the US when considering Palestinian terrorists. While it is clear that anyone in any way related to al-Qaida is a terrorist, we are told that there is a distinction between "political" and "military" wings of the terrorist organizations that are mainly dedicated to killing Israelis. The only thing "political" about a killer like Rantisi is that he orders others to do the dirty work for him.

While the US can take out anyone related to al-Qaida, it expects Israel to protect bin Laden's Palestinian counterparts in the terrorism business. We must by this logic allow them to freely congregate to plan attacks, appear on television to incite attacks in Arabic and justify them in English, and watch quietly as they conduct "negotiations" with Egypt and the EU.

Like Bush, we too are deeply troubled by yesterday's attempt to take out a mass murderer of our fellow citizens. We are troubled because Rantisi has lived to murder another day. We wish the air force better luck in the future in carrying out its mission of safeguarding the lives of Israeli citizens from the murderous likes of Rantisi. (Jerusalem Post Jun 10)

George W. Clinton by Michael Freund

There is a story making its way around the Internet, as such stories inevitably do, about a recent encounter which took place between US President George W. Bush and one of his former Yale university classmates on the eve of the president's much-publicized visit to the Auschwitz death

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camp in Poland. In tones alternating between respect and outright veneration, the author tells us to have no fear, because the president assured him personally that he would not harm Israel's security. "There he was--the most powerful man in the world--telling me once, then reassuring me again, that Israel's security is of utmost importance to him", notes the e-mail's author. And, lest we doubt the president's commitment, our faithful correspondent informs us that Bush's pledge "was sealed with two firm hugs". Not one, you see, but two.

Well, that certainly makes me feel better.

After all, it has barely been a week since Bush flew in to the Middle East and forced Israel into submission, compelling the Jewish people to agree to divide their land, create a terrorist state next door and forego the right to defend themselves against those who seek their destruction.

Bush also embraced Palestinian prime minister and renowned Holocaust-denier Abu Mazen as a man of peace, refused to compel the Arab states to normalize relations with Israel, and effectively demanded that thousands of Jews be thrown out of their homes in Judea, Samaria and Gaza against their will.

So, I guess it's a good thing that Israel's security is "of utmost importance" to him. Otherwise, we might really have reason to be worried.

But worry we should, because by all indications, Bush has now decided to adopt the approach of his predecessor, Bill Clinton, who continued to court the Palestinians even as they violated their commitments and carried out acts of terror against the Jewish state, all the while twisting Israel's arm to refrain from protecting its national interests.

It is interesting to note that before he was elected, Bush was singing a very different tune. He went to great lengths to differentiate himself from Clinton's policy on the Middle East peace process, which often seemed to stress speed over substance.

On May 22, 2000, in an address to AIPAC, Bush took a swipe at the Clinton-Gore team, saying, "In recent times, Washington has tried to make Israel conform to its own plans and timetables. This is not the path to peace."

Subsequently, in October 2000, in his third presidential debate with Al Gore, Bush again attacked Clinton, stressing that "the next leader needs to be patient. We can't put the Middle East peace process on our timetable. It's got to be on the timetable of the people that we're trying to bring to the peace table. We can't dictate the terms of peace."

Yet now, just two-and-a-half years later, that is exactly what Bush is attempting to do. In laying out the road map leading to the creation of a Palestinian state, Bush has sought both to impose a series of timetables as well as to dictate the outcome of the process.

In other words, he's become George W. Clinton, only without the intern.

And so, we now find ourselves once again confronting an awfully similar scenario, one in which Israel is forced to make concessions even as the Palestinians persist in killing Jews. Indeed, in the first three days following Bush's June 4 summit in Aqaba, there were a total of 24 Palestinian terrorist attacks against Israelis, including shootings, bombings and rocket attacks.

Then, this past Sunday, five Israelis were murdered in yet another post-Aqaba measure of the Palestinian commitment to peace.

And so how did the Bush team react to this new spasm of Palestinian violence? Why, by turning up the pressure on Israel, of course.

The Sharon government's sudden decision on Monday to start dismantling Jewish outposts in the territories reportedly came about only after America demanded immediate action on the issue. Within hours, the bulldozers were unleashed, and Jewish homes were under assault. It is safe to assume that the lack of an Israeli military response to the recent spate of Palestinian attacks is also the result of Washington's diktat, since the Jewish right to self-defense was apparently not considered worthy of inclusion in the road map.

At first glance, it is difficult to comprehend the Bush team's infatuation with the new Palestinian premier. Since assuming his post, Mahmoud Abbas (a.k.a. Abu Mazen) hasn't shut down a single terrorist training camp, he has not confiscated any illegal weapons, and he has failed to halt anti-US and anti-Israel incitement in the Palestinian media. Not one terrorist group has been disarmed or disbanded, and no Palestinian terrorists have been arrested or detained by the security forces under Abbas' control.

And, in a press conference held Monday in Ramallah, Abbas openly ruled out the possibility of confrontation with terrorist groups such as Hamas and Islamic Jihad, saying only that he would use "dialogue" in his dealings with them.

Nevertheless, despite Abbas' dismal record, Bush and his aides continue to deny reality, overlooking the Palestinian leader's failure to do more than just offer up a few platitudes about peace.

Nowhere was this willful obfuscation more on display than in US Secretary of State Colin Powell's interview on Fox News Sunday, where he said, "We've made our choice. We are going to be supporting Prime Minister Abbas."

And so, it doesn't really seem to matter whether or not Abbas lives up to his end of the bargain. Either way, the Bush team will not hold him accountable, because, as Powell so clearly stated, "We've made our choice."

This, too, is a throwback to the Clinton era, when Washington purposefully made a choice to overlook PA Chairman Yasser Arafat's complicity in terror, just because it conflicted with their vision for resolving the Israeli-Palestinian dispute.

But as the decade since the signing of the 1993 Oslo accords so amply demonstrated, such an approach is not only short-sighted, it can be deadly too, for it sends the Palestinians a dangerous message, leading them to believe that

they can murder Israelis with impunity. On a flight to South America this past Monday, Colin Powell told reporters that regardless of the recent attacks on Israel, "we can't let the terrorists win."

What he fails to realize is that by following in Clinton's footsteps, and pressing for the establishment of a Palestinian state, that is precisely what he and his boss in the White House are doing. (Jerusalem Post June 11)

The writer served as Deputy Director of Communications & Policy Planning in the Israeli Prime Minister's Office.

Learning the Hard Lessons of Oslo By Daniel Pipes

Can the road map that President George W. Bush just launched do better than the dismal failure of prior Palestinian-Israeli diplomacy? It can, if it avoids making the same mistakes.

The failure of the last round was foreshadowed at the very moment it started, on September 13, 1993. That day famously saw a handshake between two arch-enemies, Yitzhak Rabin and Yasser Arafat, on the White House lawn, and the signing of the Oslo Accord.

Less famously, its demise came at the same moment, as a pre-recorded speech by Arafat to the Palestinians rolled on Jordanian television. In it Arafat avoided any mention of peace with Israel or the renunciation of terrorism, the central premises of that day's agreement. Instead, he explained how his having signed the Oslo Accord fit into the context of destroying Israel.

Arafat reminded viewers of a decision by the Palestine Liberation Organization in 1974 to establish "a national authority on any part of Palestinian soil that is liberated or from which the Israelis withdraw." He presented the Oslo Accord as a step toward the piecemeal dismantling of Israel.

In response Rabin should have immediately put a stop to the negotiations. He should have declared the just-signed agreement void because Arafat had breached its core principle Palestinian acceptance of the Jewish state. Rabin should have suspended his part of the bargain until Arafat spoke again to renounce violence and accept the permanent existence of Israel.

But Rabin, of course, did no such thing, not then and not at any other time during the remainder of his prime ministry, despite myriad cases of incitement and violence. Nor did his successors. To the contrary: Israelis showed themselves so indifferent to violence directed against themselves that their most far-reaching concessions to the Palestinians came after the current war started in September 2000.

THIS SEEMING illogicality had a reason, as Douglas Feith (today undersecretary of defense for policy) explained in 1996 in the Middle East Quarterly. The Israeli leadership, he showed, was engaged in a "withdrawal process, not [a] peace process." In one politician's words, the West Bank and Gaza were but "a burden and a curse." In effect, the Israeli government unilaterally pulled out of those territories. Arafat exploited this reality by pretending to renounce violence and accept Israel, while in fact doing the reverse. That proved good enough for the Israelis. Not surprisingly, Palestinians developed a disdain for those agreements which they breached with impunity and felt ever-more emboldened to kill Israelis. Finally, they launched a war and the Oslo round collapsed in February 2001.

This history has direct implications for the road map. The impetus for diplomacy this time comes from Washington, not Jerusalem; so when Palestinian violence again flares up (as it is now doing) American officials will be the ones deciding how to respond.

Bush has rightly emphasized the need for "a complete end" to violence and official incitement. He has also promised to insist on "commitments fulfilled." The monumental question ahead will be whether such statements are Oslo-like, rhetorical or truly operational.

What will happen if: Mahmoud Abbas' promise to "act vigorously against incitement and violence and hatred, whatever their form or forum may be" is as hollow as when Arafat gave such assurances? His renunciation of "terror against the Israelis wherever they might be" is meaningless? Hamas and Islamic Jihad engage in violence against Israelis?

The temptation will be as Israel's government did during the Oslo round to overlook the Palestinians' trespasses, hoping that further benefits will somehow cause them to stop the incitement and the violence. But that approach failed last time and will do likewise this time.

Ironically, should President Bush be serious about his round of diplomacy succeeding, he must give more consequence to the murder of Israelis than did successive Israeli prime ministers. He must be willing to delay the timetable he has set out until the Palestinians truly fulfill his requirements of them.

The White House last fall established a zero tolerance policy for Iraqi violations of UN resolutions; it must do the same today with the Palestinians: Any incitement or sanctioned violence stops the process cold.

Doing so will permit the Bush Administration to help bring about Palestinian-Israeli reconciliation. But ignoring the violence will only make things even worse than they are now. (Jerusalem Post Jun 11)

The writer is director of the Middle East Forum and author of Militant Islam Reaches America.

Stage by Stage, Peace by Piece By Boaz Ganor

In the context of the Palestinian Authority's acceptance of the road map, it is important to understand the strategic goals of the moderate Palestinian leadership.

In contrast to the Islamic fundamentalist groups, Hamas and Islamic Jihad, the secular Palestinian leadership's goals never seem to be stated outright.

While the leaders of Hamas and Islamic Jihad have never bothered to conceal their ambition to annihilate the State of Israel and establish an Islamic Palestinian republic in its stead, in signing the Oslo Accords the secular Palestinian leadership was required to ostensibly accept Israel's right to exist and agree to the implementation of a two-state solution.

Yet as can be seen from statements by the Palestinian leadership, behind this seemingly benign solution lurks a "strategy of stages," meant to lead to the eventual elimination of Israel, though not necessarily by violent means.

This strategy is built on a three-phase approach, starting with the establishment of an independent Palestinian state in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. The second stage involves the overthrow of the Hashemite regime in Jordan, whose population consists of a vast Palestinian majority.

Once Jordan is under the control of its Palestinian population, it will be unified with the existing Palestinian state in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

It is clear to the Palestinian leadership that they have much to lose by jumping the gun; a revolution in Jordan prior to the establishment of a state would only undermine their claim to an independent state in the disputed territories. Thus, ironically, the lack of a Palestinian state in the territories guarantees the continued stability of the Hashemite regime in Jordan.

In this the current sequence of stages differs from the original Palestinian plan, which attempted to overthrow the Hashemite monarchy in the early 1970s. This plan, with its emphasis on the need for Palestinian control of Jordan as a necessary first step, was in the late 1960s incorporated in the emblem of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine: an arrow passing through the Jordanian capital into the map of Israel, to show that "the road to the liberation of Palestinian is through Amman."

Once both Jordan and the West Bank are under Palestinian rule, the Palestinian leadership will initiate the third stage of its strategy with a change of rhetorical tacks: from claiming that Israel is a conquering colonialist state they will insist that Israeli is a racist "apartheid" state which differentiates between its Jewish and Arab citizens. Israel's Arab citizens will be encouraged to back this claim. After all, they will say, Palestinian citizens of Israel cannot be expected to identify with a flag that has a Jewish star or sing an anthem depicting the return of the Jewish people to its homeland.

Nor can they accept a situation whereby, according to the Law of Return, every Jew is entitled to immigrate to Israel and receive Israeli citizenship, a law which does not apply to Palestinians. Naturally, to the enlightened world, these claims will appear quite legitimate and appropriate to the system of liberal-democratic values. Thus Israel will be called upon to cease being a Jewish state and become instead "a state of all its citizens."

No one will remember the original background against which the Jewish state was established: the Holocaust and the recognition of the right of the Jewish nation to be restored to its ancient homeland.

The third stage of the Palestinian strategy of stages will thus end in the annulment of the Jewish character of the State of Israel as a result of international pressure. This will be helped along by the natural demographics of the region, whereby population growth among the Palestinians is much larger than that of the Jewish population within the 1967 borders. Further Palestinian population growth will take place through the opening of Israel's gates to Palestinian immigration via the family unification program, in the framework of a peace agreement signed as part of the first stage of the Palestinian strategy.

The result of this staged process will of course be the elimination of the State of Israel as a Jewish state without the use of violence. As a Palestinian leader known for his moderate views recently told me: "I recognize Israel's right to exist, but I do not recognize Israel's right to be a Jewish state."

ISRAEL MUST start fighting now for its national Jewish character before it is too late. It must make it clear to Yasser Arafat and his cohorts that as long as their dream is to change the Jewish character of Israel they will not be eligible partners to a future peace agreement.

Israel must demand as a fundamental condition to the establishment of a Palestinian state that any agreement state specifically that the signing thereof signifies the end of the conflict between the Jewish not Israeli nation and the Palestinians by partitioning the land of Israel into two national states: one for the Palestinians and one for the Jews.

From the date of that signing, either ethnic group would be permitted to reside as a minority in the other state, but would not be entitled to demand a change in the national character of the state where he or she lives.

While not ruling out future Palestinian-Israeli hostilities, these clauses would at least serve as a ratification of Israel's right to exist as the state of the Jewish nation in the eyes of the rest of the world. (Jerusalem Post Jun 11)

The writer is director of the Institute for Policy against Terrorism at the Interdisciplinary Center in Herzliya.

Etched in Their Minds By Ze'ev B. Begin

The cafes are open, even those that were shattered to pieces. The shopping malls are packed with people, even the malls that were blown up. People take the bus to work and thousands of picnickers swarm to the nature sites. Couples are marrying, children are being born. The majority of the public agrees with the statements by Israel's defense ministers that the country's citizens are showing excellent resolve in the face of terrorism. That's not true.

The logic of terrorism is cruel but simple: inducing governments to change their positions by intimidating the citizens. Hence the yardstick by which to measure the effectiveness of terrorism. By that yardstick, there is only one conclusion to be drawn from the Israeli case: The terrorism perpetrated by the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and Hamas against Israel has been a very successful project.

For many years after 1967, Israeli governments and the majority of the public objected to negotiations with the PLO, opposed the establishment of an Arab state between the Mediterranean Sea and the Jordan River, supported the widening of Israel's borders to include parts of Samaria, Judea and the Gaza District, insisted on the application of Israel's sovereignty to greater Jerusalem, and were against the return of the Arab refugees into the State of Israel. Those positions have been eroded. Official negotiations with the PLO have been conducted for the past 10 years, the majority of the public does not oppose the establishment of an Arab state west of the Jordan and, moreover, the majority of the Jewish respondents in a March 1999 survey (conducted by Tel Aviv University's Steinmetz Center for Peace) thought that "the Palestinians' demand for an independent state is justified." So justified that last week the government, under Likud leadership, adopted a plan based on the vision of the establishment of an Arab state in the western Land of Israel.

On the Jerusalem question, the Israeli government in 2000 put forward an official proposal according to which the city would be divided and on the Temple Mount, Israel would make do with sovereignty over the subterranean section. Regarding the border issue, the public and its leadership - all the way to the far ends of the Israeli left - took a resolute position: The 1949 armistice lines demarcate the smallest territory to which Israel can agree. Not any more. By 1996, high-ranking officials in Israel suggested that the Gaza Strip be expanded at the expense of the Halutza area in the western Negev. A look at the map shows that in this area, the proposal is congruent with the United Nations' partition map of 1947.

So what's left? The last Zionist bastion: opposition to the return of Arab refugees to the State of Israel. However, the foundations of that bastion, too, are being undermined. In July, 2000, according to another survey by the Steinmetz Center, 22 percent of the Jewish respondents supported the idea "to allow 100,000 refugees to return to their former homes inside the Green Line, that is, within the State of Israel." In January, 2001, an Israeli cabinet minister and a member of the delegation to talks with the PLO at Taba put forward a proposal for "a just solution for the Palestinian refugees based on UN General Assembly Resolution 194, providing for their return" [emphasis added - Z.B.B.]. In April, 2003, 32 percent of the Jewish respondents in a survey agreed to the proposition that "a limited number of refugees will return to Israeli territory within the framework of family reunifications." Recently an Israeli jurist recommended (Haaretz, April 14, 2003, Hebrew edition) that Israel adopt the UN's proposed model for peace in Cyprus, which includes the return of refugees in a quota limited to 10 percent of the population that will absorb them. In the Israeli case, that would mean more than 500,000 refugees.

During this entire period, the basic positions of Hamas and the PLO remained intact. Not an iota has been changed. The Palestinian Covenant, which rejects the right of the Jews to maintain a Jewish state, has not been annulled, as the chairman of the Palestinian National Council, Salim Zaanoun, admitted in February, 2001. The demand to realize the refugees' right of return to their original homes within Israel continues to be put forward vehemently. The goal remains "Palestine, liberated and Arab," "from the river to the sea," or, in the words of the late moderate, Faisal Husseini, "We have to bring about the dissolution of the Zionist entity, gradually."

How did all this come to pass? How, in the face of the rigid and steadfast Arab stand, did the positions of the Israeli public and government move closer to some of the positions of the PLO and Hamas? Since two-thirds of the Jewish public repeatedly attributes to the Arabs the intention of destroying Israel, the explanation for this phenomenon does not lie in eruptions of good will or in a readiness to compromise in response to reported softening in the position of the enemy. Only one reason can account for that long-term change of positions: the pressure of terrorism.

The naive desire for "just a little respite" has been shown to be a powerful agent of erosion. The horrors of repeated murders intimidated the public and wore it down and induced Israel's governments to abandon their basic policy guidelines. The only consistent element in the Israeli position has been the constant retreat from its stated positions on issues that are critical to the country's future. Evidently, terrorism works.

Submission to violence, under the alluring slogan "Don't be just, be wise," is not only morally but also practically flawed. The distress signals sent out

by Israel are received loud and clear in Gaza and Jenin, and are also correctly deciphered. The tactical dispute there does not override the logical conclusion of the leaders of the terrorist organizations that violence is drawing them closer, step by step, to the realization of their goals. That conclusion is not based on the wishful thinking of fired-up zealots, but on a chain of irrefutable facts. This is how any observer with eyes in his head would analyze the erasure of clear "red lines" and the dissolution of solid Israeli positions.

Successful projects are not terminated, and contrary to the rumor that was floated here about 60 years ago, our neighbors are not dumb. They can teach us the value of *soumud* - of clinging to one's land and one's goal. They adhere to Article 9 of the Palestinian Covenant, which asserts that: "Armedstruggle is the only way to liberate Palestine. This is the overall strategy, not merely a tactical phase." They are watching and reading and learning and understanding. They know that the Jews want to live well. Now. From the knowledge they possess, which by now includes the economic explanations by members of the Israeli government for their decision to accept the "road map," despite their initial reluctance to do so, our neighbors conclude that in order to live well now, the Jews are ready to continue their retreat, both political and physical. Under these conditions the prospect for peace is not small. It is nil.

Our peace activists resemble generals. The latter are convinced that the campaign will be decided after they conquer just another hill, one more chunk of a commanding terrain, while the former are certain that they need just one more clandestine meeting in order to bring the ordeal to a happy end. Following the failure of the Camp David summit in July 2000, Israel's foreign minister stated that only four additional days were needed to reach an agreement with the PLO. In January, 2001, upon the failure of the Taba conference, he took a more sober approach: This time he declared that two weeks were missing to complete the task.

Neither two weeks nor two months nor two years - because after years of retreat, we have succeeded in etching the minds of the chiefs of the terrorist organizations with a simple awareness that is grounded in reality: Faced with force, ultimately, the Jews yield. Fourteen reservations? Red lines? For Israel? Come on. (Ha'aretz (Magazine section) June 2003)

The writer is a former minister and Likud MK.

Middle East History for Dummies By Shmuel Katz

There is much talk of illegal occupation in this land. But the only illegal occupation of Judea, Samaria and the Jordan Valley in modern times was effected by Transjordan.

When the Ottoman Empire collapsed in 1918 Britain was granted a Mandate by the League of Nations in 1922 as a trustee for the reconstitution of the Jewish National Home. This was the modern charter for the development of sovereignty for the Jewish people in its ancient homeland.

When, in 1947, the United Nations (successor to the League of Nations) recommended the partition of Palestine into two states, one Jewish, one Arab thereby gifting the Arabs with a part of the Jewish heritage the Jews consented, but the League of Arab States declared that it would not "allow the creation of a Jewish State in Palestine."

Consequently, in May 1948, the British having abandoned the Mandate, the Arab states launched their war for the annihilation of the infant Jewish state. They did not achieve the destruction of Israel, but Transjordan succeeded in capturing Judea, Samaria and the Jordan Valley, while Egypt captured the Gaza Strip. Transjordan went on to "annex" the captured territories and was henceforth renamed "Jordan."

Jordan's rule lasted 19 years. Never during these years did the Arabs living in the annexed areas protest against the occupation, let alone rise up, declare themselves a separate nation or demand the territories for themselves. They peacefully accepted Jordanian citizenship.

True, after 16 years, the PLO was established in 1964 and carried out a number of terrorist acts not against Jordan and its occupation but against Israel inside the narrow waist of the armistice lines of 1949.

THE LEADERS of the Arab League, whose original purpose in 1948 to destroy Israel had been frustrated, decided in 1967 to try again. A charismatic president, Gamal Abdel Nasser, had come to power in Egypt, and, having decided that the Arabs' strength was now "sufficient" (as he said in a speech), he led the pan-Arab campaign for a new war.

In May he took practical preliminary steps. He demanded that the UN Peace Observer team be removed from Sinai which was done; and he closed the Tiran Straits, Israel's only gateway to the south and the east.

While concentrating his armed forces in Sinai, Nasser delivered a series of belligerent speeches describing the lethal aim of the impending war. On May 25, Cairo radio announced to the world: "The Arab people is firmly resolved to wipe Israel off the map." And on May 30, Nasser declared: "The armies of Egypt, Jordan, Syria and Lebanon are stationed on the borders of Israel. Behind them stand the armies of Iraq, Algeria, Kuwait, Sudan and the whole of the Arab nation."

Cheering crowds in the Arab capitals greeted the promise that Israel's end was nigh. The effect of this preparatory campaign was tremendous. Abba Eban, Israel's foreign minister, subsequently described in detail the international armament ready to attack Israel on three fronts: "The greatest force ever

assembled in that peninsula in all its history."

"Nobody who lived through those days in Israel," said Eban at the UN some days after the war, "will ever forget the air of doom that hovered over our country."

"Hemmed in by hostile armies ready to strike, affronted and beset by a flagrant act of war, bombarded day and night by predictions of her approaching extinction, forced into a total mobilization of all her manpower, her main supplies of vital fuel choked by a belligerent act, Israel faced the greatest peril of her existence that she had known since her resistance against aggression 19 years before at the hour of her birth. A crushing siege bore down upon us."

Fear gripped the Diaspora. The notion of an assault on tiny Israel by the massed forces of the Arab nations was overwhelming. Young men rushed to get places on planes to Israel. In synagogues Jews gathered to pray for Israel's security. In Israel old men, women and children dug trenches in the parks and open spaces of the cities; hospitals were emptied of all but urgent cases in preparation for thousands of casualties.

Then, in six days, the Israeli forces won a great victory. In part of that victory Judea and Samaria, the Jordan Valley and the Gaza Strip were liberated from their Jordanian and Egyptian occupation.

The stunning victory was followed by an equally stunning offer by Israel to hand back the liberated territories to the Arabs in return for peace. The Arabs refused categorically. From a conference at Khartoum, they announced that there would be no peace, no negotiations and no recognition of Israel.

It was then, in the early seventies, that Jews came to live and build their homes in the wide acres of Judea, Samaria, the Gaza Strip and the Golan. They are the "settlers" who have written a new and heroic chapter in the Zionist imperative of building the land; and their living where they are living is as legal and as natural as President George W. Bush living in Texas and Prime Minister Tony Blair in England.

THE MAKERS of the road map tried to impose a deleterious policy on Israel and evidently, to our shame, succeeded without any discussion, precisely because they did not want to discuss the central historical facts that expose the grotesque Arab fabrications on which rests the policy underlying the road map.

First, that the current "dispute" between Israel and the Arabs began with murderous Arab terror in the 1920s and 1930s; that deliberate Arab military aggression brought on the war of 1948, and Arab terror continued during the decades that followed. Throughout this whole period there were no "settlers" in Judea and Samaria or Gaza; and when the Six Day War, which the Arabs pretend did not happen, was launched, there were no "settlers."

The worldwide tumult about settlers being responsible for the conflict is simply a reflection of the grand hopes of the Arabs to evade responsibility for their lethal designs on Israel.

The mapmakers are thus collaborating in trying to make the hoax work.

Secondly, the Arabs have demonstrated, admit even boast and teach their children that they mean to get rid of Israel and that killing Jews is a virtue, a mitzva.

Once you ignore these damning facts you can construct any scenario you like. And if the scenario is conceived by a consortium of veteran friends of the Arabs (like Britain, other Europeans and the US State Department) and the UN, which harbors dyed-in-the-wool anti-Semites (see Durban), plus Saudi Arabia, then you are not creating a vision of peace but of the next war; a repetition, as the Arabs see it, of 1948.

The alternative may simply be a continuation of terror against Israel from behind the protective wall of the sovereignty of a Palestinian state. THE ARABS have made it clear that the state they are now demanding represents the penultimate phase so often referred to by Arafat in the struggle for Israel's destruction.

It's a state they could have had in 1947, under the UN Partition plan. They could surely have had a state when Israel offered to give back Judea, Samaria and the Gaza Strip in return for peace after the Six Day War. Their contemptuous rejection of the offer was an open declaration that peace with Israel was not their objective.

The propaganda against Israel in the Arab world, indeed within the Muslim world, has since that time become more strident and more specific.

In the mosques, on the streets and in the schoolrooms they do not call for a state on the "West Bank," they call for a Palestinian State "from the [Jordan] river to the [Mediterranean] sea." Why do they prefer to fight and kill (and die) in order to gain sovereign possession of this sliver of Jewish territory? The answer seems to be that they cannot tolerate the idea that the Jews who lived in Muslim lands as third-class citizens are now treated as equals in human society. That is why the Arabs, when they have been defeated in war by Israel, insist that it is England or America that fought the war for them.

If the present policy of pressure on Israel while the Arabs are cheering is pressed to the end, the Bush vision will prove empty and the road map a lie.

And there will still be no peace. (Jerusalem Post Jun 11)

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