



Quote for the Week...

"Suicide missions are the highest form of struggle of the Palestinian people in the war against Israel for their ...Suicide missions are heroic." - General Secretary of the Palestinian Authority, at a convention held in Ramallah called "Suicide Attacks and the National Dialogue. He further said that the Fatah movement has been supporting the Hamas position for years. (Al'Hayat Al'Jadida June 9 / IDF Spokesperson Jun 14)

Their Lives, Their Legacies...

1. He made aliyah from LA. He was 70, a Holocaust survivor, and retired. On Tuesdays, he would volunteer to do his weekly 'chesed.' Dr. Moshe Gottlieb would attend to children with severe handicaps. For 13 years, Dr. Gottlieb spent his Tuesdays helping the children in different clinics. He would not take any payment. He said that he owed G-d for surviving the Holocaust. Dr. Gottlieb was a benefactor for a yeshiva where he wanted young men to learn and help in their communities. Dr. Gottlieb was blown up by the terrorist as he was enroute in his Egged bus ride to chesed. Dr. Moshe Gottlieb is survived by the Holocaust and his family in the USA and Israel.

2. Leah Baruch, 59, worked for the President of Israel for 23 years. Lea was one of the housekeepers who knew the house of the President of Israel on Hanasi.

Leah was a 'mother' and a sister to the Presidents and their families. Leah's funeral was attended by former First Ladies, Herzog, Weizman, and by President and Mrs. Katzav. Leah is survived by two daughters whom she helped with her salary from the President's house as their chief housekeeper for 23 years.

3. Rachamim Tzidkyahu, 51, was supposed to drive another Egged bus yesterday. Rachamim got to work early and switched bus routes with another driver who was late. In two months, his son, Ron would celebrate his barmitzvah at the Kotel. Yesterday at the night funeral of his father, who died in his driver's seat on the bus, the Rabbis asked Ron to say kaddish before he even knew his whole barmitzvah parsha of Parshat Nachamu. Only two days ago Rachamim worked out his summer work schedule so that he could take off a whole week to celebrate with his wife and Ron on the barmitzvah Shabbat after Tisha Ba'av. Last night Tisha Ba'av arrived early in the Tzidkyahu home. Rachamim was the 'first' Egged bus driver to die in a terrorist attack in six years. Rachamim is survived by his wife, Ron, 12.5, and Chani, 20, a daughter.

4. Baruch Garani, 60, was on his way to Machane Yehuda to buy vegetables. His wife asked him to be 'careful' and he rode the same bus 32 every morning to go around the city. His children had just bought him a cellphone after the last Machane Yehuda bombing. When his wife was in the hospital two months ago at Shaarei Zedek, Baruch, 60, would walk 1.5 hours from Gilo to make kiddush for her every Shabbat afternoon. Yesterday, Baruch's wife and four children said kaddish for him at Shaarei Zedek hospital.

5. Boaz Aluf, 54, had just celebrated his young son's barmitzvah last week with the entire Aluf family. Boaz worked in Bank Tefahot as a clerk for many years helping with people's mortgage processing. Boaz was the gabbai in his synagogue in Gilo, a synagogue which was hit by Beit Jalla's bullets months ago. Boaz was the daf yomi giver each day in the synagogue at 6:30AM. Boaz is survived by five children and his wife, Esther, a nurse who was in the hospital to 'receive' the news of her dead husband, as she treated other injured victims.

6. Shiri Nagari, 22, the third child of the five children of Dr. Tuvia and Esther

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*

ט"ב
Nagari. Dr. Tuvia is a well known dentist in Jerusalem and Esther is a mathematician for the government's statistic office. Shiri was a graduate of Pelech, a dati leumi high school, where she graduated with honors before serving the IDF as a teacher. Shiri had just returned from a year studies in the USA. On Sept. 11, 01, she was near the World Trade Center to watch its destruction. Shiri worked with kids here who have Down's Syndrome.

They cried at the grave last night with the family of Shiri. Who will help these kids today in their hours of special needs?

7. Glila Bugla, 11, was from Ethiopia. The nightly shootings into Gilo were too much for her family. A family in New York had helped the Buglas buy an apartment in New York. Glila was scared to go anywhere and only on Sunday had told her 5th grade teacher at the Paula Ben Gurion school in Jerusalem that her family was leaving Israel on July 10, 02. Glila's body was blown into pieces and today that which is left, is buried here. Glila is survived by a brother, 14, and her parents who wanted to leave to New York.

8. Shani Avitzedek, 15, was a ballet dancer in the 9th grade. Tomorrow was her last day in school and she had a ballet performance scheduled for Sunday. Yesterday was the "Yom Kef" fun day that the class was to have gone to the pools of Mesilat Zion. Shani's parents reminded her at 7:30AM not to forget the sunscreen and take plenty of water for drinking. Shani's last words to her parents were not to worry, "The sun won't kill me." Shani is survived by her parents and her three siblings. Today was to have been her 7 year old brother's birthday party. This Friday, her big brother was to have been released for 48 hours of R&R from his paratroop duties in the IDF.

9. Helena Avon, 63, was an immigrant from Romania, 20 years ago. Helena was a 'nanny' and caregiver to Mani family. She had just finished walking the dogs and boarded the bus to go to the city for errands. Helena survived the earthquake of Bucharest many years ago before aliyah. Tomorrow, Helena's employer, Mrs. Mani, was coming back to Israel from a visit to Romania.

Helena had fed the dogs and then minutes later on the 32 bus, was killed by an animal terrorist.

10. Mendel Barzon, 71, loved to ride the busses. His son had just dropped him off at the bus stop and asked his Abba if he wanted a ride today. "No, I have my bus pass and friends on the bus." Mendel was the shoemaker and sandlar on Hillel street. He had been everyone's shoe repairman in the

Ben Yehuda area. He survived Ben Yehuda bombings and other terror attacks. Mendel the shoemaker was an oleh from Russia in 1991 during the Gulf War. Mendel was a leader in the Meretz senior citizen party who believed that Israel should give it all back and make peace with Arafat. Mendel's body was blown up into 'peaces' by Arafat. Mendel is survived by his two children and three grandchildren.

11. Michal Biazi, 24, had not ridden busses for months. Yesterday, her car was in the repair shop. She had no choice, although fearful of this ride to the city in the 32 bus. Michal and her husband got into his car but Michal had forgotten her clothing for the bris of her new nephew which was to take place yesterday afternoon. Michal did not want to come back home to Gilo after work and be late to the bris. Michal asked her husband to drop her off at the bus stop and she would continue to work at the Ministry of Tourism. Michal's husband drove back to the apartment to get Michal's clothing which he would bring to the bris. Michal was killed by the terrorist on her 'first' and 'last' bus ride in months. The bris went on schedule, but was rushed by the Mohel, as the bris congregants had to rush out to bury Michal, the aunt who forgot her clothing and never held her baby nephew. Michal and her husband did not yet have children. Michal was supposed to be one of those women who would carry in the baby to the bris, as a 'segula' (good luck) to have her own baby soon. Michal is survived by her husband, her six siblings, and parents.

12. Tania Braslavsky, 41, immigrated to Israel 11 years ago with her husband and child. Tania was an engineer. She and her husband were fearful of aising a child in Russia. Her husband had been beaten by antisemites in Russia for

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wearing his kippa in public. Tania's love of the sea brought her family each weekend to Tel Aviv for a swim and fun. Tania's hands were found separated 100 meters from the bus' explosion. Tania was buried last night, another immigrant from Russia of fear to Israel of death.

13. Rafael Berger, 27, served with the IDF as a reserve officer in Jenin during Passover. Only nine months ago, he and Orit, his wife, moved to Gilo. Rafael was working on his doctorate at the Hebrew University. Rafael was supposed to finish oral exams next week for the Ph.D.. Rafael is survived by the battle of Jenin, his wife, and parents.

14. Liat Gan, 24, sat next to her baby brother, Yoni, 16 on the bus. The terrorist entered the bus and Yoni whispered to his sister that he was suspicious of the terrorist. Seconds later the bomb went off. Yoni talked to his sister and tried to 'revive' her. Yoni fell into a state of unconsciousness and thought that his sister had fainted. Liat was engaged to be married in August. Liat was an employee in a law firm. She and her brother often travelled together on the same bus. Yoni would get off the bus to go to high school and his sister, Liat, would continue onto work. Liat is survived by three siblings, parents, and a fiancée.

15. Gila Nekev, 55, made aliya from France 30 years ago. Gila was a bus rider too. Gila never liked driving her car as parking was always a hassle where she worked. Gila was a single Mom who raised her three daughters, Ela, 28, Orit, 24, and Noa, 20. Gila was always proud of her three soldier daughters. Yesterday the three daughters recited kaddish together for Mom. Gila was going to work on her last day before vacation week.

16. Iaman Gazi, 25, was an Arab from Wadi Ara, and a student at the vocational school in Jerusalem. He had been awarded a special scholarship to the vocational school from the government. He would return every weekend to his home in Wadi Ara to save money on dorm life at the school in Jerusalem. He was an Israeli Arab who was killed by a terrorist Arab. He is survived by 6 siblings and parents.

17, 18, 19 bodies are still in pieces, no identification yet.

Commentary...

Enough Is Enough Jerusalem Post Editorial

As expected, another massacre. One moment, 19 people, some of them children on the way to school, are sitting on a bus.

In the next, their bodies lie in black plastic bags on the sidewalk, in front of the prime minister of Israel and a crowd from the international media.

The security forces worked heroically to prevent this atrocity, but it is not just the lack of a fence that allowed it to happen. What allowed it to happen is the tolerance of the world for murdering Israelis, which Israel has allowed to prevent it from using the force it has to crush terrorism.

After the last horrific massacre Israel did not really react, because Prime Minister Ariel Sharon was on his way to Washington. This time Israel will not really react either - because US President George W. Bush is about to give a major speech on the Middle East. Next week Secretary of State Colin Powell's upcoming visit will be a reason for restraint. And so on.

According to Channel 1 defense analyst Ron Ben-Yishai, there will be no break in this pattern unless there is a "mega" attack or a string of bombings such as occurred in March. In other words, yesterday's toll of 19 dead and over 50 wounded lies within the de facto "acceptable" range - a lump that Israel must take, because any decisive reaction would cost it too much diplomatically.

This is an intolerable situation, analogous in some ways to the weeks before the Six Day War, 35 years ago. Unlike that fearsome time, Arab armies are not poised to annihilate Israel. But like then, Israel tried for weeks to implore the international community to solve an intolerable problem. Then, it was the blockade of the Straits of Tiran, which the international community pledged to bust with a convoy of ships, but did not. Today, it is the Palestinian terror offensive, which the international community condemns, but does virtually nothing to stop.

Let there be no mistake: The United States and Europe could force Yasser Arafat to end his offensive by cutting off all ties and money until he does so. The United States has not chosen to do this, in large part because the Israeli government has not, with a united voice, asked the US to do so. Europe, far from cutting off Arafat, has threatened Israel with sanctions.

Given this situation, Israel has two choices: issuing an unmistakable ultimatum to the international community saying "either you stop Arafat or we will" - or assuming that such an ultimatum is futile and acting accordingly. Instead, we are pursuing a third option: neither presenting the international community with an ultimatum nor acting decisively ourselves.

This third option - waiting for the Palestinians to reach new heights of murder - is not acceptable. It is tantamount to resigning ourselves to more massacres, when we know that whenever Israel finally acts, the world will act to restrain and reverse Israeli actions. But if no number of dead Israelis really convinces the world that Israel has a right to defend itself, then what are we waiting for? Sharon has tried to play along with Bush's respectful attentions to the concerns of Arab

states to an extraordinary degree. Before leaving for Washington last time, he let it be known that he would be asking for Arafat's ouster, let alone receiving American support along those lines.

Sharon has had two good reasons for indulging Bush, aside from the usual components of the US-Israel relationship. The first reason is that Bush is gearing up to oust Saddam Hussein, and Sharon wants to help Bush in any way to achieve this goal, even if he believes the US is mistakenly linking a need for Middle East calm to acting in Iraq. Second, Sharon knows that Bush would be almost as happy as he would be to see Arafat go, and therefore is willing to follow Bush's timetable rather than his own.

The only problem with Sharon's patience and prudence in this instance is the cost in Israeli lives and the further erosion of Israel's right to defend itself. There comes a point at which Sharon must say to Bush (and to the Labor Party), "I've tried it your way, but it is not working." There comes a point when he must say, "You are not only asking me to sacrifice Israeli lives, but this sacrifice does not help you prepare to act in Iraq, because it only encourages further Palestinian attacks." There comes a point for Israel to say enough is enough. (Jerusalem Post Jun 19)

"He Tarries: Jewish Messianism and the Oslo Peace"

By Charles Krauthammer

The Distinguished Rennert Lecture for 2002, delivered upon the awarding to Dr. Charles Krauthammer of Bar-Ilan University's Ingeborg Rennert Center for Jerusalem Studies 'Guardian of Zion' Award, in Jerusalem, June 10. The address can be heard (audio) via the Internet at www.biu.ac.il

Thank you, Rabbi Rackman, for that very kind introduction. It is truly an honor to be introduced by Rabbi Rackman. It is an honor to be honored by Bar-Ilan University, which is such an important institution in the life of the Jewish people, and to be honored by the Ingeborg Rennert Center, which has been such an important element in bringing the sacredness, the importance, and the permanence of Jerusalem, to the consciousness of Jews everywhere in the world. I can't think of a more important enterprise, and I commend Inge and Ira for their extraordinary work as real defenders and guardians of Zion.

Some of you may know that I used to be a psychiatrist, but I want to assure you tonight that I am a psychiatrist in remission. I haven't had a relapse in twenty years, I have been doing very well. I am sometimes asked what is the difference between my career today as a legal observer of governments and politicians in Washington and a psychiatrist. And I tell people that in both professions, in Washington where I observe political actors, and in psychiatry where I used to work in an asylum, I see people every day who suffer from delusions of grander and paranoia, with the exception that today those people have access to nuclear weapons, so it makes it a little bit of a more interesting game.

I want to talk to you tonight about an important, and I think neglected, aspect of Jewish consciousness, namely Jewish Messianism. Thirty-five years ago today the Six-Day war ended. It seemed like a new era, and I remember some months afterward my rabbi questioned whether we should continue to celebrate Tisha Be'av. Jerusalem had been reunited, the Temple Mount was ours, Israel. The land had been retaken, perhaps we had entered a new age.

The cruel lesson of the last thirty-five years is that we will always have Tisha Be'av and we will always need to have Tisha Be'av.

It is true that according to Maimonides, one of the fundamental beliefs of Judaism is belief in the coming of the Messiah, but that does not mean that we have to believe in the imminent coming of the Messiah. In fact, the rabbis long discouraged the belief in the imminent coming of the Messiah as almost a form of impiety. Messianic speculation has not been good for the Jews.

My thesis tonight is that many of our troubles today, as a people and as a Jewish state, are rooted precisely in this new Messianic enthusiasm.

The Jewish experience with Messianic speculation is long and sad. We have not had very good luck with Messiahs, and I am not referring here to the most famous claim to the title. I am thinking not of Jesus of Nazareth, but of two subsequent episodes in Jewish history.

The first of Bar Kochva, rebellion of the 2nd century. It was not just a rebellion against Rome, it was a rebellion against history. It is well known that the greatest rabbinic authority of the time, Rabbi Akiva, proclaimed Bar Kochva the Messiah, and we know the rest of the story. We know how that Messianic adventure ended in catastrophe, the destruction of the Jewish State and exile for eighteen centuries.

A millennium and a half later we had an even more remarkable eruption of Messianic speculation - Shabtai Zvi. He acquired hundreds of thousands of followers in the Jewish world, promising return, redemption, and the imminent end of days. This episode ended, I would argue, even more tragically than Bar Kochva. Shabtai Zvi was captured by the Turks, became a convert to Islam, not only destroying but humiliating the movement that had believed in him. And yet, so deep was the belief and the need for the

Messiah, that his portrayal was somehow seen by some of his followers as part of an even greater, more mystical, more mysterious Messianic plan, and Shabatiism lasted for centuries after his death.

This led the rabbis to discourage Messianic speculation, and as we know, there is rabbinic injunction against hastening the end, lo lidchok et haketz, presuming by human agency to bring about what only God can. And yet, the Messianic hunger never dies, but it often goes unnoticed.

There are today at least three of these strains worth noticing. The first, and the one that has received the most attention, is the religious Messianism of the more extreme and radical elements of the Gush Emunim, and the purist culture of which, which is the Temple Mount faithful, who spend their waking hours learning Leviticus so that they will be ready to offer sacrifices in the new temple.

The settler movement is often caricatured as a Messianic, I believe this is unfair. There is only a small minority that believe that settling the territories is not for reasons of security, not for reasons of national glory and power, not even to fulfill biblical injunctions. Only a small minority of the settlers believe that their settling of the land is the necessary instrument to a kind of apocalyptic Messianic restoration.

Now, some might argue that the entire Zionist enterprise is Messianic, that the entire religious Zionist enterprise is. And indeed, the prayer for the Jewish State that we recite every Sabbath refers to Israel as "reishit tzmichat geulateinu". But note the qualifiers and the distancing here, it refers to Israel as "the beginning of the flower of the redemption". Twice removed from redemption. A promise, but hardly a promise of imminence.

There is a second instance of religious Judaism that has dabbled in Messianic speculation, a more bizarre and even more interesting one. It erupted with scandalous intensity a few years ago with the death of the Lubavitch Rabbi. During his lifetime, as you know, and particularly towards the end, Rabbi Shneurson was surrounded by a Messianic aura. It was whispered among the faithful that he was the Messiah and he would declare himself. And although he never did declare himself, he never discouraged speculation that he might be.

And then of course disaster struck. The rabbi died. And that is a disaster, because in the Jewish tradition the Messiah must be a living person. Nonetheless, so powerful was the feeling, that many of his followers remained undaunted. Some even danced at his funeral procession, believing that he was not really dead, but would immensely arise and proclaim his kingdom. Sound familiar? It was a rather astonishing, and I would say even scandalous event, that one of the most Orthodox and successful Jewish sects in modern history should have adopted an essentially Christological interpretation of the end of days. Of course most Jews, and in fact most of the Lubavitch Movement, were aghast of this development. And yet the very fact that it occurred even in a minority testifies to the power of the Messianic idea.

Now, these two forms in Messianism, the religious Zionism of the extreme Gush Emunim and the Lubavitch, while worlds apart and different in content, still fit the tradition or notion of Messianism as being particularly and peculiarly expressions of extreme eschatological religiosity.

But I would argue that you don't have to be religious to be a Messianist, you don't have to believe in God to believe in the end of days. And indeed, I would argue that the secularist temptation is the strongest of all; and is surely exerting an influence far more important and powerful than its religious counterparts in shaping contemporary Jewish history and bringing us to the terrible crossroads at which Israel finds itself today.

Consider the following quotations: "The hunting season in history is over", "War as a method of conducting human affairs is in its death road", "The conflict shaping up, as our century nears its close, will be over the content of civilization, not of territory", and finally, "The Trojan Horse of war is obsolete."

These worries were not uttered by a religious fanatic under the spell of prophetic visions, nor were they uttered by an inhabitant of a lunatic asylum -- although as a former psychiatrist it wouldn't have surprised me to hear this coming from one of my former patients.

Many of you will recognize these words, the words said and written by the current Foreign Minister of Israel, Shimon Peres. There is no way to characterize the vision he enunciated of the New Middle East, a vision which underlay, powered, and indeed beguiled the entire Oslo Peace Process as indeed Messianic. He (Peres) was talking about a radical break in history, occurring not in the future, but occurring now. He was talking about a new era in human relations.

At the Sharem-A-Sheik Summit he said, "We are at a watershed. Our region is going through a period of transition. The dark days are at an end, the shadows of its path are lengthening. The twilight of wars is still red with blood, yet its sunset is inevitable and imminent."

They are words of Isaiah -- they could have been the words of Isaiah -- which were a prophecy about the far future. This was a man speaking about what he saw happening before his eyes. And I must say, to reread these words is to experience real heartbreak.

Many statesmen speak in grandiose terms about changes in history and the dawn of new ages, but these are usually meant as rhetoric, and they are always presented as a possible future. What is so astonishing about the words I read to you is the secular messianism it represents. He was speaking not about the

future but of the present as imminent and inevitable, whose reality was upon us and could not be denied.

It reminds me of the story that they tell about the secret chapter in Henry Kissinger's life. Henry Kissinger, the most un-messianic political leader of our time. Unknown to most of you, he spent his lost years in the political wilderness as the Head of the Biblical Zoo. As with everything, Henry had turned out to be a fantastic success. A newspaper editor in America heard about this, so he sent a young reporter to find out why thousands of people were streaming to Kissinger's zoo. The young man arrived, he walked up to the gate, and he saw thousands of people all struck before the main exhibit, a lion and a lamb lying down together. The young reporter was astonished, he burst into tears, he burst into Kissinger's office and said, "Dr. Kissinger, for 2000 years people have dreamt, they have prayed, they have wept for the lion to lie down with the lamb, and you have done it. How did you do it?" And Kissinger said, "Every day, a new lamb."

Here we are today in the midst of the worst bloodletting in Israeli history. Every day, a new lamb.

Most poignant to me was the observation that Peres made: "The Trojan Horse of war is obsolete." The turn of phrase is particularly ironic and painful, because 'Trojan Horse' is precisely the term used by Faisal Husseini to describe the PLO's objective in signing the Oslo Peace Process. Shortly before his death, Husseini said explicitly that the intent in the signing of Oslo was not peace, but to establish a Palestinian entity from the river to the sea. Oslo was the 'Trojan Horse' that would give the Palestinian the foothold from which to carry on the struggle. And like the Trojan Horse, the catastrophe would erupt upon the Israelis the same way it erupted upon the Trojans, in a reverie of self-satisfied and ultimately self-delusional victory.

I remember when I first heard about the Oslo peace accords, when the news first broke. I immediately called an Israeli friend, whom I won't mention, who was editor of a prominent publication. And I said to him, "What happened?" And he said to me, "We won, we finally won. They have accepted us."

I was shocked by his response. And yet, that was the view not only of him, but of many Israelis and of many Americans.

Now, it is important to understand that this view of the end of days, this view of the imminence of a new history, is not unique to the Israeli left. In fact, it is not unique to Israel; it was something that swept the West in the 1990's.

In the early 1990's, the idea that history had turned became a very current and very prevalent one. When the Berlin Wall came down, Francis Fukuyama wrote a most famous article at the time called "The End of History". It was a sensation. I would note, by the way, that in the manuscript it appeared in National Interest with a question mark at the end. That question mark was added by the editor, who was a prudent man. But Fukuyama had no question mark in his original title.

Fukuyama did not of course mean that history itself had ended, but what he meant was that political and ideological history had indeed ended. A century that began with the great battle against Nazism, Fascism, Communism, and ended with the triumph of liberal democracy, and that this triumph was irreversible and it was a permanent change in the human condition. We had reached, he argued, the end of the ideological evolution of mankind. The history that occurred from now on would be different. It would be more narrow, more constrained, more purely commercial and economic, and more boring. Hallevei - how I wish this would be true.

Now, some people would say, "Well, it was just intellectuals who went for this." That is not so. The idea of the end of history was prevalent in the West and in the United States, in particular among the people and among the government. It is very interesting that in the three elections of the 1990's in the United States - in '92, in '96, and 2000 - these were the three elections that in all of American history had less discussion of foreign affairs than any other election, and that is because we had a feeling that we had achieved a kind of county and permanent peace.

And among the government, the Clinton Administration for eight years made the '90s a holiday from history. It made the work of foreign policy the work of accumulating and signing treaties -- on buying weapons and chemical weapons, on disarm of it, on nonproliferation, on landmines, on everything -- with absolutely no effect on the real world. And yet, it treated the attack on the World Trade Center, the Attack on the Khobar Towers, the attack on the embassies in Tanzania and Uganda -- as a form of crime and not as a form of war.

In the 1990's, America slept and Israel dreamed. The United States awoke on September 2001. Israel awoke in September 2000.

Like the left and like the reverie that we had in the United States, the secular Messianism was intoxicated with the idea that history had changed from a history based on military and political conflict to one in which the ground rules were set by markets and technology. This was the infatuation with globalization as the great leveler and the abolisher of things like politics, war, and international conflict. This kind of geo-economics was widely

accepted in the early post-cold era.

It was September 11th that abolished that illusion. It taught us in America there are enemies, they are ideological, they care nothing for economics, and they will use whatever military power they have as a means to achieve their ideological ends. This is the old history, perhaps the oldest history of all, the war of one god against another. No new history, no break in history, no redemption from history.

The other source of this secular Messianism in the Israeli context was the success of the European Union, which was seen as a model for peace in the Middle East. There was talk of the Israel, Palestinian, and Jordan becoming a new Benelux, with common markets, open borders, friendship, and harmony.

Indeed, if you look at the Oslo, of course there is page upon page of all of these ideas of cooperation on economics, on technology, on environment, all which in retrospect appear absurd. And indeed, this entire idea of the Benelux on the Jordan looks insane in retrospect, but I believe that it was insane from the very beginning, when it was first proposed ten years ago.

There are such obvious differences between the European situation and the Middle Eastern one. First is that the period of harmony, integration, and commodity among the Europeans happened only after the utter and total defeat of one party. It did not come from long negotiations between France and Germany at Camp David, compromising their differences over the 20th century. It came from the utter destruction of Germany and the rebuilding of a new Europe after that surrender and accommodation.

These conditions do not apply in the Middle East. The only way that that kind of peace will come definitely is the peace not of the brave but of the grave, and that means a peace that would be established with the defeat of Israel and its eradication. There is no way that Israel can utterly defeat the Arabs the way the allies defeated Germany and Japan in the 2nd World War. So that the idea of some kind of harmonious Middle Eastern Union drawing on the European mantle is drawn from a totally false historical analogy, one that is based on surrender and accommodation that could not happen in this Middle Eastern context, unless we are looking at the world through the eyes of Hamas and Hizbollah.

Secondly, the Middle East is still a collagen of religious fanaticism, economic backwards, and political tyranny. It is nothing more than a mirage to transpose the situation in Europe with the harmony that came after half a millennium of conflict and in conditions of modernity to transpose those conditions to the Middle East, with a conflict as much younger and the political culture infinitely less mature. In this context, to look at the savage religious and secular conflicts going on throughout the Middle East and to believe that the most virulent of these, the conflict with Israel, can find the kind of harmonious coexistence that exists in Europe, can only be called Messianic.

Now, this is not to say that the only impulse underlying Oslo was Messianic. There was a Messianic left and there was a realistic left, if you like. The realists saw Oslo as a pragmatic way out of Israel dilemma. I believe in retrospect, as I believed at the time, that they were utterly mistaken, but at least they were not dreaming.

I think Rabin had a fairly coherent logic behind Oslo. He saw three basic changes in the world having occurred in the '90s, and he thought they would give Israel an opportunity to quickly settle the Palestinian dispute and to concentrate on the larger disputes coming in the longer run from periphery, from the missiles and the weapons of mass destruction that would soon be in the hands of Iran, Iraq, Libya, and others.

And the three events he saw were: First, the collapse of the Soviet Union, which deprived the rejectionist Arabs of the great superpower sponsor and source of economic, military, and diplomatic assistance. Second, was the victory of the United States in the Gulf War and the establishment of American hegemony in the region. Third, was the terminal condition of the PLO. Arafat had again, as always, chosen the wrong side in war, was cut off by Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, ostracized by the United States, lost all of his financial and diplomatic support. The PLO was on at last legs.

Rabin thought he was cleverly exploiting the weakness of the PLO by reviving it, he imagined, just enough so it could make peace with him. With the Soviets gone, with Iraq defeated, with the US ascended, with the PLO weakened, he thought he could make a deal on this basis. He turned out to be hopelessly mistaken, both on the intentions and on the recuperative powers of the PLO once Israel had helped it out of its abyss.

It was one of the great miscalculations in diplomatic history.

Indeed, I believe Oslo will stand as perhaps the most catastrophic, self-inflicted wound by any state in modern history.

But at least in Rabin's mind, as I understood it, it was a calculation. For Peres and his counterparts on the Israeli left, it was a leap of faith. And I mean the word literally, faith. Chesterton once said that when a man stops believing in God he doesn't believe in nothing, he believes in anything. In the ideologically fevered 20th century, this belief in anything often turned out to be a belief in history, history with a capital H. For the messianic left, Oslo was more than a deal. It was a realization, a ratification of a new era in history.

Rabin's Oslo was pessimistic, peace with fences, separation, divorce wearing

its tenuousness. Peres' Oslo was eschatological: Benelux, geo-economics, the abolition of power politics.

Interestingly, this kind of Messianic mistiness often occurs to otherwise reasonable people, who are caught deep in the weariness of war. In 1943, upon returning from the Moscow Conference, Cordell Hull, Franklin Roosevelt's Secretary of State, was similarly rhapsodic when he said, quote, "There will no longer be the need for spheres of influence, reliances on balances of power, or any other of the special arrangements through which in the unhappy past the nation thrived to safeguard their security." Roosevelt himself was caught up with this vision of the UN as a kind of super session of the very idea of power politics and of the advent of a new era of the regulation of international conflict by norms and by committee.

The irony is that the United States took only a couple of years to understand the fallacy of the vision and to awake to reality. By 1947, President Truman summoned America back to the dirty, unpleasant, seemingly endless existential struggle with the new enemy, Soviet Communism. Israel, on the other hand, labored under its illusion, did not awake to its reality for seven long years, until reality declared itself in the summer of 2000 at Camp David, when Barak's astonishingly conciliatory peace offer elicited a Palestinian counter offer of terrorism and suicide bombing.

This is not to say that peace is impossible, it is only to say that peace will always be contingent. And even that contingent peace will require the demonstration by the Arab side of its willingness, its genuine willingness, to live in acceptance of a Jewish state.

Again, that is not impossible. That is what Sadat offered, and he meant it. It is not clear that post-Sadat Egypt means it, although it has lived within the Sadatian parameters at least for reasons of prudence ever since.

But there has never been a Sadat among the Palestinians. And the idea that one can strike a real peace deal with Arafat, in the absence of a Sadat-like acceptance of the Jewish State, is indeed delusional. Until there is a genuine Arab, a genuine Palestinian acceptance of a Jewish state within whatever borders, there will be no end to history, there will only be more and more history. Bismarck once said of the Balkans that they produce more history than they can consume, and that will be the fate of the Middle East for the foreseeable future.

Let me conclude by dealing with one objection to my characterization of the secular Messianism of the Israeli, and I might say American, left. One might ask, "Was not the original Zionist dream itself Messianic?" After all, a hundred years ago Zionism itself appeared to be a crazy dream. The idea of the ingathering of the exiles, the reestablishment of the Hebrew language, of Hebrew culture, the settling of the land, the achievement of political independence, appeared all to be, well, Messianic.

I would argue precisely the opposite. Zionism is the antithesis of Messianism. Zionism argued against waiting in the Diaspora with prayer and fervency for some Deus Ex Machina to come and to rescue the Jews. Zionism rejected the idea of waiting for an outside agent, for a Shabtai Zvi and a Bar Kochva. Zionism is supremely an ideology of self-reliance, of self-realization. It refuses to depend on others, it postulates no sudden change in the psychology of enemies, it postulates no change in human nature, it postulates no discontinuity in history.

Zionism accepted the world precisely as it was, and decided that precisely because the world was as it was, the Jews had no future in the Diaspora and would have to build their future in Zion. Most of all, they understood that the building of Zion would depend on Jewish action, Jewish initiative, Jewish courage. They had to go out and to build a state themselves, and they did.

Oslo, on the other hand, a supreme expression of post-Zionist Messianism, was entirely contrary to that spirit. Why? Because of its passivity, its reliance on an almost quasi-religious change of heart among Israel's enemies. It is an acceptance of Israel by people who daily in their propaganda, in their sermons, in their pedagogies, anatomize the very idea of the Jewish State. It expected a renunciation of terrorism by people who practice, support, and fund and glorify it, and who had been doing that for twenty years, thirty years. It believed in entrusting the security, the safety, perhaps even the very existence of the Jewish state into the hands of sworn enemies.

We have now learned, to our sadness and horror, that one cannot contract out the safety of the Zionist experiment to others, most especially to Arafat and the PLO. That was the premise of Oslo and it has proven to be catastrophic.

I repeat, in the 1990's America slept, and Israel dreamt.

The only good news is that Israel has awoken from that reverie, the most disastrous Messianic seduction since Shabtai Zvi. Shabatism survived nonetheless for centuries; Osloism still has its cultic adherence. But the body of the Jewish people have awoken, let us hope not too late, and once and for all determined never again to succumb to the Messianic temptation.

Thank you very much.