

Commentary...

Hamas Kills Its Own By John Podhoretz

There's no ambiguity regarding the responsibility for the horrible deaths incurred by the Israeli attack on one of the world's worst terrorists. The responsibility lies with the dead terrorist himself, Salah Shehada, and with the evil-doing gang called Hamas that he helped to start and run.

Don't take it from me. Take it from international law - specifically, from the text of the Fourth Geneva Convention Relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War. The Fourth Geneva Convention goes into great and elaborate detail about how to assign fault when military activities take place in civilian areas. Those who are actually fighting the war are not considered "protected persons." Only civilians are granted the status of "protected persons" whose rights cannot be violated with impunity.

The Fourth Geneva Convention convicts Hamas and Salah Shehada in one sentence. That sentence makes up the entirety of Part 3, Article 1, Section 28. It reads: "The presence of a protected person may not be used to render certain points or areas immune from military operations."

This sentence appears in the Fourth Geneva Convention precisely to deal with situations like the ones the Israelis faced. Here's how.

The Jewish state is at war with Hamas and Palestinian militant organizations wreaking terrorist havoc. Hamas is at war with Israel.

But instead of separating themselves from the general population in military camps and wearing uniforms, as required by international law, Hamas members and other Palestinian terrorists try to use civilians - the "protected persons" mentioned in 3:1:28 - as living camouflage.

To prevent such a thing from happening, international law explicitly gives Israel the right to conduct military operations against military targets under these circumstances. Again, let's check out that 3:1:28 sentence: "The presence of a protected person may not be used to render certain points or areas immune from military operations."

There were plenty of "protected persons" around the home of the Hamas leader on Tuesday. He wanted it that way: Salah Shehada chose to live in an apartment house in Gaza City with his family and hundreds of others around him so that they would serve as human shields.

And because Salah Shehada did that, he's responsible for what happens to them. That's what the very next sentence of the Fourth Geneva Convention says: "The party to the conflict in whose hands protected persons may be is responsible for the treatment accorded to them by its agents."

Let's translate: The "party to the conflict" here is Hamas, or more specifically, Salah Shehada. Because Salah Shehada chose to live in a civilian setting, the "protected persons" are deemed to be "in his hands." And since they are in his hands, Salah Shehada "is responsible for the treatment accorded to them."

We can argue about whether the killing of Salah Shehada was a prudent act. The White House clearly thinks it wasn't. We can argue about whether assassinations of key terrorist leaders stops terrorism. The Israelis clearly think they do, and the slowdown in attacks seems to be a confirmation of that.

But we can't argue about who's responsible for the 15 deaths and 100-plus injuries in the Gaza City attack on Tuesday. The responsible party is Hamas. The responsible party is Salah Shehada, who was already responsible for hundreds of deaths for which he was gleefully proud. May he rot in Hell. (NY Post Jul 25)

ISRAEL NEWS

*A collection of the week's news from Israel
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From Oslo to Ground Zero By Ruth Wisse

On September 2, 1993, I got a call from Richard Bernstein of The New York Times, asking me to comment for an article on the "peace agreement" that was about to be signed by Yitzhak Rabin, the prime minister of Israel, and Yasser Arafat, head of the Palestine Liberation Organization.

As it happened, I was in Jerusalem, where my daughter was then living, and

along with everyone else in the country we had been watching the evening news.

My foreboding was registered in the next day's paper: "Ms. Wisse's concern is that in dealing with Mr. Arafat, the Israelis are, in effect, intervening in Arab politics, choosing the PLO chief, whom she called 'a killer,' to be the leader of the Palestinians in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

If things go wrong and she believes there is a good chance they will it is Israel that will bear responsibility, she said. It's the first time that an Israeli government is doing something for which I, as an American Jew, would not like to bear moral responsibility."

Bernstein's gentle summary barely conveyed my anguish. The reestablishment of a Jewish state was, to my mind, the most hopeful achievement of the 20th century, and the noblest proof if proof was necessary of the high worth of Jewish civilization.

Because of the many difficulties the country still faced, I believed that Israel had the right to ask of Jews like myself who lived outside its borders every kind of economic, political, and spiritual support.

However, I did not believe that Israel could claim my support for putting into power a mob of professional murderers and extortionists. As a non-citizen, I could do nothing to stop the leaders of Israel from carrying out this plan. But as a citizen of the world, I knew that this was the worst possible

move they could have made.

The physical threat to the country was then uppermost in the minds of many other American opponents of the Oslo Accords. Norman Podhoretz, Frank Gaffney and others predicted that hostilities against Israel would likely increase if Arafat were installed as head of a proto-Palestinian state. For the same reason, the voters of Israel had elected Rabin on a platform that explicitly rejected overtures to the PLO.

Military experts in Israel pointed out that the overhasty agreement had not taken account of security needs or developed a set of fall-back procedures should Arafat fail to keep his side of the bargain.

Although the intifada was claiming many Israeli lives in stabbings and other such random attacks, friendly columnists warned that things could get much worse if Israel compromised its policy of deterrence.

I fully shared these apprehensions for Israel's safety. The Arab war against Israel, which began formally on the day of its creation in 1948, was the most lopsided war in modern history prolonged by the preposterous asymmetry of fast-growing Arab Muslim populations and a Jewish people already decimated by the destruction of its European population.

Arab dictators and monarchs, none of whom rules democratically, had refused to accept the reality of a sovereign Jewish people in its historic homeland.

In rejecting the partition of Palestine, they had also condemned its Arabs to the status of permanent refugees to provide enduring "evidence" of Jewish liability.

Israel had been defending itself on the axiomatic premise that peace could only come if the Arabs stopped their aggression against it. It was now about to reverse that sensible policy by rewarding its most virulent enemy.

Arafat was before Osama bin Laden the world's leading terrorist. As cofounder of Al-Fatah in the late 1950s and head of the PLO since 1969, Arafat had spearheaded an "armed Palestinian revolution" against Israel. The PLO's targets were always civilians: The murder of the Olympic athletes at Munich in 1972 was but the most notorious example of its methods.

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Moreover, this terrorist network was paid by Arab governments to act as their proxy their hit man in the ongoing war against Israel. The PLO was tolerated, supported, and encouraged by Arab rulers only to the extent that it furthered the war against Israel and bought protection for their own regimes.

Yet Israel was now prepared to recognize the PLO terrorist network as the representative of the Palestinian people, entrusting its 20,000 armed "policemen" with the protection of Israel from terrorists.

Although Rabin said he expected Arafat to end the violence against Israel unrestrained by the human rights concerns of a democratic society, Arafat was much likelier to use his dictatorial powers to increase the violence of Palestinian aggression against Israel.

The risks of this so-called peace process far exceeded questions of security. The PLO founded in 1964, before Israel gained the disputed territories was the most dedicated ideological font of anti-Semitism since Adolf Hitler's Nuremberg Laws institutionalized Aryan racism.

The PLO "Covenant" a term that parodied the sanctity of God's brit (covenant) with Abraham was not a summons to national self-liberation, such as Zionists or other modern national leaders issued in their time. The PLO denied Jews their history and peoplehood in order to claim national legitimacy in their stead. It did not simply oppose the Jews as occupiers of part of the land it claimed for its own, but rejected the historical reality of a millennial-old Jewish people.

The PLO charter read in part: "The claim of historical or religious ties between Jews and Palestine does not tally with historical realities or with the constituents of statehood in their true sense. Judaism, in its character as a religion, is not a nationality with an independent existence. Likewise, the Jews are not one people with an independent identity. They are rather citizens of the states to which they belong."

Whereas anti-Semitism in Europe had stigmatized the Jews as an alien and unassimilable people, the PLO brought Palestinian nationalism into being as a replacement for a Jewish people it said did not exist.

Consider, then, what it meant for Israel to give the PLO responsibility for governing the Palestinian Arabs on the basis of a letter that promised to inaugurate "a new epoch of peaceful coexistence."

First, Israel was capitulating to Arafat because it felt it could no longer tolerate the toll of terrorism, yet asking the terrorists to renounce the methods that had handed them this major triumph. Surely, the evidence entitled Arafat to believe that terrorism had vindicated his professional calling.

Second, all that Israel extracted from him in return was a promise that "those articles of the PLO Covenant which deny Israel's right to exist, and the provisions of the Covenant which are inconsistent with the commitments of this letter are now inoperative and longer valid."

Arafat would submit (note the future conditional tense) the necessary changes to the Palestinian National Council for approval. But if the PLO covenant was predicated on Jewish illegitimacy, what possible import could Arafat have ascribed to an agreement with the people he intended to supplant?

Third, the precipitous deal with Arafat, based on secret negotiations conducted by non-elected Israelis, had the hallmarks of a revolutionary act rather than a considered democratic process. Declaring Arafat an ally over the objections of many patriotic citizens and overseas supporters had the absurd effect of repudiating friends with the expectation of gaining security from enemies.

The self-styled "fixers" who thought they were reforming Arafat actually furthered his agenda. They did not even require as a precondition of his reign public disavowal of the entire PLO Covenant and the articulation of a new set of ideological principles for cooperation with a sovereign Jewish state. Just as no new vocabulary of coexistence was extracted as the minimal test of reconciliation, so Arafat's flagrant violations of the accords were ignored from the day after its signing in Washington.

In the ensuing months, instead of requiring that the US and Europe help to monitor every PLO action and communication within the disputed territories in acknowledgement of the enormous risk Israel had taken, Israel's officials threw all their diplomatic resources into promoting financial and diplomatic assistance for the PLO. The hate message of terrorist extremists became the daily fare of an entire generation of Palestinian schoolchildren.

A recent article by Dan Polisar ["The Myth of Arafat's Legitimacy," *Azure*, summer 2002] documents the regime of corruption that was created by Arafat "a regime characterized by a massive police force whose specialty was intimidation of political opponents; an executive branch in which Arafat alone made all major decisions and in which the civil service was reduced to a corrupt patronage machine; the institutionalized absence of the rule of law, and a judiciary that lacked any independence; and the intimidation of the media and human rights organizations."

Polisar challenges the "myth of legitimacy" that Arafat acquired as leader of the Palestinian Arabs, without mentioning Israel's role in granting him that legitimacy. When Israel empowered a terrorist on the basis of promises it had no rational cause to expect him to keep, it freed him to rule as he wished, and allowed him to do so as a trusted leader. There has rarely been so keen an

example of the Talmud's teaching that kindness to the cruel becomes cruelty to the kind.

The effect of Oslo on Israel's reputation was also exactly the opposite of what its architects promised. To be sure, public opinion initially applauded the treaty and the Nobel Peace Prize seemed to grant it the seal of approval. By plucking Arafat out of Tunis and placing him in charge of a Palestinian Authority, Israel had implied that it could put an end to Arab aggression; the term "peace process" suggested that Israel's concessions would bring an end to the war against it. But since Israel could no more impose peace on the Arabs through concessions than it had by winning wars, this charade only meant that Israel would be blamed more relentlessly when it turned out that the conflict had never ended at all.

The painful truth of the so-called "Arab-Israeli conflict" is that only the Arabs have the power to stop it. Oslo did great damage inside Israel by encouraging the false hopes of an anxious society. Tenfold greater was its damage in the international arena by conveying the misimpression that Israel could put an end to Arab belligerence if only it were more forthcoming.

When the Arabs resumed their vilification of Israel, Europe joined in with a vengeance. Once Israel had fostered the impression that its concessions could bring peace to the Middle East, Europeans could blame Israel on the pretext that it had not made enough concessions. The political and economic balance between Israel and its enemies is anyhow tipped so strongly in favor of the Arabs that Europeans would normally court Arab oil and markets at the expense of Israel's security.

Many European politicians look for an excuse to hold Israel responsible for the aggression against it. This excuse seemed on hand when Israel said that peace could be won by yielding Arafat authority. In truth, the resurgence of European anti-Semitism has been the most shocking outcome of the Oslo accords. Israelis feel that they should be respected for having given such obvious proof of their good will. Instead, the country has been increasingly slandered as the obstacle to peace.

This brings us to the third, and by far the most damaging, consequence of Oslo: the creation in Gaza and the disputed territories of a terrorist polity.

President Bill Clinton was not thinking of the danger to America when he hosted Israel's signing of the treaty with Arafat on the White House lawn.

But the legitimization of Arafat was a boost to the coalition of all anti-democratic forces ranged against the West. Those forces may have used Israel as the excuse for anti-Western aggression, but Israel was only the most vulnerable target of hostility aimed at democracy entire.

How many of the terrorists freed by Israel at the behest of America and Europe as part of the "peace accord" have since plied their trade against democracies other than Israel?

How much anti-Western propaganda did Arafat pump into the region, and how much did his perceived triumph over Israel help to inspire al-Qaida and other Islamists in their wars against America?

How much help and encouragement did Arafat's troops provide to other terrorist groups and Middle Eastern dictators?

How straight or crooked is the road between September 1993 and September 11, 2001?

Although placing Arafat in charge of a Palestinian Authority was hailed as a "peace initiative," it actually opened the door for anti-Western propaganda and conspiracy on an unprecedented scale. The terrifying spread of suicide bombers signals the creation of an Arab-style Hitler youth that is being trained to sacrifice itself for a murderous ideal. Just as the Jews were merely the first, but by no means the only intended victims of German conquest in the 1930s, so the Jews are merely the first, but by no means the only intended victims of those who have declared war on Western civilization. The perceived capitulation of Israel to Arafat endangered democracy no less than it endangered the country itself, for it seemed to prefigure the way any democracy might act if confronted by terrorism for long enough.

It is not pleasant to think back on a political blunder that could have and should have been avoided. No one wants to pour salt into Israel's open wounds. Foresight would have been an advantage only if the opponents of Oslo could have prevented catastrophe. Yet we must face up to the damage of what the American columnist Charles Krauthammer rightly called "the most catastrophic, self-inflicted wound by any state in modern history."

As the current government of Israel and the Israel Defense Forces try valiantly to undo some of the disaster of the "peace process" that brought Arafat and the PLO into power, the most important task facing champions of democracy is to examine and weigh the false premises that allowed for the false promises of Oslo. (Jerusalem Post Jul 18)

The writer is Martin Peretz, professor of Yiddish literature at Harvard University.

What Does Arafat Want? By Dr. John Hagee

The streams of blood flowing through the streets of Jerusalem and into our living rooms via television numbs the mind. Pictures of buses shredded by the vicious blast of Islamic suicide bombers leaving human body parts on the streets and shreds of flesh plastered two stories up on the sides of public buildings are beyond belief.

Palestinian mothers lovingly embrace their small children on network television telling a worldwide audience it's her dream for her child to die a martyr killing the Jews.

This kind of demonic hatred is foreign to the Western mind. What mother's hatred for other people is so all consuming she's willing for her child to be splattered into bloody pulp?

What do Yasser Arafat and the Palestinians want? Is this a war over land? Absolutely not!

"Land for peace" has not worked in the past and it will not work now or in the future. There are times in moral fogs and spiritual twilights when the highest intellectual duty is to restate the obvious in the pursuit of truth. Here are some historical facts about the Middle East that have been rewritten by the world press and forgotten by geo-politically ignorant Americans.

After World War I, the British assumed control of "Palestine" from the Ottoman Turks and promised in the Balfour Declaration to create a Jewish home in Palestine.

In 1922, the British sliced off four-fifths of Palestine and named it "Trans Jordan" and gave it to the Arabs. Trans Jordan was later called Jordan.

The point to remember here is that the Arabs got 4/5 of the land and the Jews got 1/5. The Arabs were furious that the Jews got any land!

In 1947, Palestine was roughly the size of New Jersey and the Jews were given one half of that. The Jews of the world agreed to live on this tiny piece of land to be called Israel.

On May 15, 1948, the United Nations officially recognized the state of Israel. On that day, the Jewish state was attacked by five Arab armies trying to murder the Jewish state in the birth canal. Arab leaders told the Arab citizens to leave their homes and farms and as soon as the Jews had been driven into the sea, they could return and take both their homes and the land the Jews left behind.

Problem!

The Arabs lost the War of 1948. The War of 1948 produced the "Palestinian refugee" problem. When you declare a war and lose that war, you must be prepared to live with the consequences of that war. As soon as the Arabs lost that war, they started yelling for the Jews to give back the land.

During the Menachem Begin administration, another "land for peace" deal was offered to Israel from Egypt. Israel, ever eager for peace, gave up the Sinai Peninsula to Egypt. Israel lost billions in producing oil wells, homes, schools, synagogues and social infrastructure. It did not bring peace.

Yasser Arafat, at the Camp David Accord, during the Clinton administration, was again yelling, "land for peace." Israel's Prime Minister Ehud Barak offered Arafat a Palestinian state with part of East Jerusalem as its capitol. He offered Arafat control of 97 percent of the West Bank. He offered the release of political prisoners and gave Arafat everything he had ever demanded. What was Arafat's reaction? He stormed out of the room enraged.

Why?

It was everything Arafat had ever asked for and he turned it down cold. The answer is very clear! Arafat and other Arab leaders don't recognize Israel's right to exist. They refuse to recognize Israel's right to any of the land.

Arafat's PLO Charter calls for the extermination of Israel. The following news excerpts give us an indication of Arafat's unrelenting goals concerning Israel:

* "The goal of our struggle is the end of Israel, and there can be no compromise." (Washington Post, March 1970)

* "Peace for us means the destruction of Israel." (El Mundo, Caracas, Venezuela, February 1980)

* "The jihad will continue ... You have to understand our main battle is Jerusalem ... It is not their capitol. It is our capitol." (Arafat's speech in Johannesburg, South Africa, May 1994)

* "By Allah I swear ... that the Palestinian people are prepared to sacrifice the last boy and the last girl so that the Palestinian flag will be flown over the walls, the churches and the mosques of Jerusalem." (Arafat, Jerusalem Post, September 1995)

In her book, "My Life," the late Israeli Prime Minister Golda Meir wrote, "I have never doubted for an instant that the true aim of the Arab states has always been, and still is, the total destruction of the State of Israel and that even if we had gone back far beyond the 1967 lines to some miniature enclave, they would have tried to eradicate it and us."

What does Arafat want?

He wants what every Arab leader wants: the total and absolute destruction of the state of Israel. He wants to see the last living Jew in Israel driven into the Dead Sea. (WorldNetDaily.com July 19)

The writer is the pastor of the 17,000-member Cornerstone Church in San Antonio, Texas. He is a best-selling author whose radio and television ministry reaches 92 million homes in America and is seen around the world.

Jews among Arabs, Arabs among Jews By Jeff Jacoby

Israel's image got a black eye last week when its cabinet voted to advance a bill that would have barred Arab citizens from buying homes in some Galilee towns.

The proposed law was denounced everywhere, above all in Israel, where it set off a wave of outrage. Voices across the political spectrum denounced it -- from right-wingers like former Cabinet minister Benny Begin, who condemned it as "undemocratic" and "unworthy," to Yossi Sarid of the hard-left Meretz party, who said that adopting it would be tantamount to "turning Israel into a racist state."

Countless Israelis observed that such a law could only promote the antisemitic slander that Zionism -- the national independence movement of the Jewish people -- is racist. Many agreed with Dan Meridor, a minister from the Center Party, who said it is precisely because Israel is a Jewish state that it must never commit the kind of discrimination against minorities to which Jews have so often been subjected themselves.

Shamed by the public's reaction, the Cabinet reversed itself. On Sunday it buried the bill by a vote of 22-2. And in truth, it would have been surprising if the bill had met any other fate.

Bigoted schemes and intolerant proposals are not unheard of in even the most decent democracies; the mark of their decency is not that such schemes and proposals are never floated, but that they are usually shot down. What made the anti-Arab bill so newsworthy was how out of character it was. One of Israel's greatest distinctions, after all, is that despite the Arab world's long history of anti-Israel enmity and violence, the Jewish state has always guaranteed the equality and freedom of its Arab minority.

Israeli Arabs have the right to vote and to hold public office. Nearly one-tenth of the Knesset, Israel's parliament, is Arab; there is even a mosque in the Knesset building for those who are Muslim. One of the justices of Israel's supreme court is an Arab; so is a minister in Ariel Sharon's cabinet. Arabs are active in Israeli commerce, media, education, and law. A few years ago, a young Arab woman was even named Miss Israel.

The vast majority of Israelis regard all this as normal and desirable. It is true -- and most Israelis would acknowledge -- that Arabs do not enjoy full social or economic equality and are at times discriminated against in ways that Jews are not. Often there are tensions and flare-ups; how could there not be, given the thousands of Jews who have been killed or crippled by Arab terrorists?

And yet for all that, few Israelis dispute the right of their Arab countrymen to justice, dignity, and equity. The spirit of Israel's Declaration of Independence, which appealed "to the Arab inhabitants of the State of Israel to preserve peace and participate in the upbuilding of the state on the basis of full and equal citizenship," is still a core ideal of mainstream Israeli society. Nearly one Israeli in five is an Arab, and the consensus across Israeli society is clear: Arabs have every right to live among Jews.

If only there were an equally clear consensus that Jews have every right to live among Arabs.

Sadly, there is anything but.

Is there any group of people in this world more roundly despised than the 225,000 Jews who have settled in Judea and Samaria over the past 25 years? (Judea and Samaria are the age-old names for the territory Jordan renamed "the West Bank" after invading it in 1948.) If there is one thing that Europe, the State Department, the United Nations, and most of America's media Bigfets agree on, it is that the settlers are an intolerable affront who must be uprooted and removed if there is ever to be peace in the Middle East.

Yet why should that be? If it was repugnant to propose that Arabs be kept from moving into certain Jewish towns, it is even more repugnant to demand that hundreds of thousands of Jews be ethnically "cleansed" from their homes and communities. The Nazis had a word for this: *judenrein*. And as Palestinian terrorists make clear every time they commit an atrocity like Tuesday's slaughter of passengers on the Tel Aviv-Emmanuel bus, the Nazi comparison is entirely apt. Anyone who called for expelling every Arab from Israel would be seen as a bigoted extremist. Those who call for kicking the Jews out of Judea invite the same description.

The claim that the settlements are illegal is bogus. Israel took the West Bank in self defense in 1967, and nothing in international law prohibits Jews from moving there. Or rather, moving *back* there: Jews have lived in Judea and Samaria since antiquity. The only time they didn't was during the Jordanian occupation of 1948-67, when the occupiers insisted that the territory be *judenrein*. Far from condemning the settlements, the world should applaud the return of the Jews to their ancient lands -- especially since their goal is not to displace the Arabs living there but to dwell among them.

If there is room in Israel for a million Arab citizens, there is surely room in Palestine for a few hundred thousand Jews. It is time we began to say so.

The writer is a Boston Globe columnist. (JewishWorldReview.com Jul 19)

Holy Jihad! *Arab clerics do fire and brimstone.* By Michael Freund

I don't know what the weekly sermon sounds like in your local house of worship, but here is a sampling of what the Arab world was being told last Friday, July 19, from pulpits throughout the Middle East:

In a sermon carried live on official Syrian radio from the Anas Ibn-Malik mosque in Damascus, Sheikh Dr. Ziad al-Ayubi told his listeners, "O God, help our people in Palestine and the Golan. O God, annihilate the Zionists and make them destroy themselves."

A preacher appearing on Saudi Arabia's official TV1 network displayed broader ambitions, seeking to invoke Divine wrath not just against "the Zionists," but against all "infidels," i.e. Christians and Jews. "O God," he said, "support our brother holy warriors for your sake everywhere. O God, grant them victory in Palestine, Kashmir, and Chechnya. O God, deal with the aggressor Jews and all aggressive infidels. O God, deal with them for they are within your power."

Needless to say, the Saudi preacher's sermon was broadcast just a day after Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Saud al-Faisal, together with the foreign ministers of Egypt and Jordan, met with an "infidel" named George W. Bush in Washington.

But the Saudis are not alone in spreading this kind of venom. Yemen, another ostensible American ally in the war on terror, is no less fervent in the views which it airs on its official media outlets. Friday's sermon, broadcast live on state-run Yemeni television from Sanaa's Grand Mosque, included these gems of ecumenical tolerance: "God, deal with the enemies of religion. O God, deal with Jews and their supporters and Christians and their supporters. Shake the land under their feet. Instill fear in their hearts, and freeze the blood in their veins. O God, scatter their ranks, make fate turn against them, and continue pressure on them."

The criticism in such homilies is not always directed at those perceived to be the external enemies of the Arab world. Occasionally, the orator seeks to inspire the listener to action by surveying events in the region and pointing out the failings of the faithful. This tactic was evident in the sermon broadcast on Yasser Arafat's official radio and television stations last Friday. Addressing a crowd at the Sheikh Ijlin Mosque in Gaza, the preacher said that because of laxity in fulfilling various Islamic precepts, "God has afflicted us with sedition and an enemy, who does not fear us, but sweeps our towns, kills our children, and imprisons our heroes." This would not have happened, he insisted, "had we carried out God's orders, especially jihad, and had Muslims carried out their God's orders for jihad and not listened to this empty talk about peace. The Muslim must carry out his God's order."

If that is not an outright call for jihad, or holy war, then what is?

It would be easy to dismiss these frightful orations as the rantings of frustrated clergymen. But bear in mind that these weekly prayer sermons are broadcast on official, government-run stations in countries that are neither democratic nor free. The messages they convey are part and parcel of their government's overall propaganda strategy, and they are designed to shape and mold Arab public opinion.

The fact that Arab preachers, throughout the Arab world, are circulating such hatred so openly, is a sign not only of the antipathy they bear for both Christians and Jews, but also of the utter lack of concern they have over their messages being heard abroad.

Indeed, the quotations above all come from FBIS, the Foreign Broadcast Information Service, an arm of the U.S. government that monitors and translates media throughout the world. Propaganda officials in Syria or Saudi Arabia know full well that their regime's mouthpieces are being observed in Washington and elsewhere. Nevertheless, week in and week out, they continue to deliver fire-and-brimstone-style sermons against America, Israel, and the West.

And this, of course, is due in no small part to the State Department's failure to make an issue of such rhetoric, fearing perhaps that it would cast a pall over America's relations with various Arab regimes. Rather than calling for an end to such hatemongering, which fuels extremism and terrorism, the bureaucrats sit tight, content to let it fester.

Congress should step in where State has failed to tread, and require the secretary of state to compile and issue a quarterly report on anti-American and anti-Israel invective in the official Arab media. Such a document would go a long way toward raising public awareness about the issue, and putting Arab regimes on notice that America is not only hearing their words, but listening to them too.

For, as we know all too well, words have a power all their own. They can inspire and uplift, but they can also denigrate and demonize. And, worst of all, they can kill. (National Review Jul 24)

The writer served as deputy director of communications and policy planning in the Israeli prime minister's office from 1996 to 1999. He is currently an editorial writer and syndicated columnist for the Jerusalem Post.

Genocide by Any Other Name By Amnon Lord

"The greatest danger facing Israel today stems from the combination of fundamentalism, missiles and nonconventional weapons. This is also the danger facing our neighbors. There is no point in perpetuating the old conflict between us and our neighbors and ignoring the dangers that face us from Khomeinism, the evil tiding of the late 20th century, which inherited many of the qualities of Nazism." This quote comes from a reply written on August 24, 1995, from Shimon Peres, then also foreign minister, to Maj.-Gen. (res.) Benny Peled, who died last week.

Peres made only one small mistake in defining Israel's enemy as a reincarnation of Nazism. Saying it threatens "our neighbors" as much as it threatens us is like saying that the original Nazism threatened Germany, Austria, Belgium, Norway and France as much as it threatened Russia, England, the US and Poland. There is, after all, a difference between nations who are the natural carriers of genocidal ideologies and the nations who are those ideologies' targets for destruction. Islamo-Fascism might threaten some governments in the region, but it threatens no people except the Israelis.

Indeed, in recent years, Islamo-Fascism has deepened its hold on Palestinian Arabs. The word "terrorism" falls short of expressing the criminal essence of the Palestinian Arabs' war against Israel. Even an organization with anti-Israeli leanings such as Amnesty International has finally reached the conclusion that suicide terrorism is a crime against humanity.

But the question is whether we ourselves realize the magnitude of the crime being committed against our citizens. One of the most shocking aspects of the terror campaign against Israel that began 22 years ago is the deliberate attack on families. The number of casualties, horrific as it is, fails to reflect the essence of the terrorist crime against Israel.

As early as the 1970s, international law expert Yoram Binstein noted that, according to the definition set forth in the Convention to Prevent Genocide, Palestinian terrorism against Israelis constitutes genocide.

"The suicidal terrorists, who hold life itself in contempt, have chosen as their targets our families," writes Dr. Rafi Pollack, head of the unit for obstetrics and gynecology at Jerusalem's Bikur Holim Hospital, in a powerful unpublished document about his experiences – both as a doctor and an ordinary human being – over the past 22 months, near what he calls Israel's "ground zero". "The family as a unit is a target of attacks by those who call themselves 'martyrs.' In the current wave of attacks, entire families have been murdered in one blow. In many cases husband and wife were murdered together. The victims are men, women, children, even fetuses."

In a position paper called The Decision Imperative, retired intelligence officer Brig.-Gen. (res.) Aharon Levan determines that among the rights the Palestinians are fighting for is the right to murder Jews. Even this abomination has been enshrined in the Palestinian legal system. Many think the Palestinians are demanding territory, the right of return of refugees and so on. But behind the right to resist the very Zionist existence in "Palestine" is the imperative of killing Jews. There is no need to quote the countless speeches and articles that encourage Arabs to commit such acts of murder.

In spite of all the evidence of Palestinian intentions, we Israelis seem to be busy repressing and denying the nature of the onslaught. Instead of facing it, we talk of building a fence and behave like butterfly hunters running around with ridiculous nets, attempting to catch mosquitoes. Israel's leadership, headed by Prime Minister Ariel Sharon and Foreign Minister Shimon Peres, is responsible for not defining this grave reality in the clearest possible terms. Cannot Peres, who called Khomeinism the new Nazism, see that the whole of Palestinian society – from the individual terrorist to the entire political echelon – has come down with the same disease?

This week's F-16 missile attack in Gaza City in which the commander of Hamas's military wing, Salah Shehadeh, was killed along with a few civilians, has not altered this picture. In view of the murderous campaign being systematically waged against Israelis by an organized terror machine – and not by individual criminals – such an operation is the minimum requirement of a government in the defense of its civilian population. But rather than broadcasting a true and clear definition of its position within the current situation, the government is still apologizing.

Precise terminology is needed if the appropriate action is to be taken. Following the wave of suicide bombings in the mid-1990s, one of Israel's most prominent authors, S. Yizhar, told Ma'ariv in an interview: "If they are cannibals, I have nothing to say to them. A people that sends its sons to commit suicide is a cursed nation that has lost its place in the human family. We can have no negotiations with people who do such things, because we have no common humanity."

It is not too late to establish a new policy vis-a-vis our Palestinian neighbors, one whose decision-making, retribution and subduing of terrorists will be directly proportionate to the crime being committed against Israeli society.

The writer is the author of The Israeli Left, from Socialism to Nihilism and a columnist with Makor Rishon. (Jerusalem Post Jul 25)