



Jerusalem 6:11; Toronto 7:18

Commentary...

An American question and vision

By Rebbetzin Esther Jungreis

Delivered on August 31 at the Republican National Convention, New York City

We are living at a most challenging time in our history - one that our founding fathers could never have envisioned. Global terror and the breakdown of moral values menace our very lives.

Such threats are not foreign to me. I am a child of the Holocaust, a survivor of Bergen Belsen Concentration Camp. I have experienced the degradation and the brutality of which the world is capable, but I have also experienced the healing balm of faith, the magic of compassion and love that is the bedrock upon which our great Republic was built.

Following a Holocaust memorial address to our armed forces at Ft. Hood, Texas, an eight year old little girl, the daughter of one of the officers, asked: "Rebbetzin, Ma'am, why didn't you call the army or the police to help you?"

What an American question!

How could I explain to her that in those days of darkness a uniform was the symbol of torture and murder - that it was only when I encountered American soldiers and police that I discovered that these men in uniform could be trusted, that they are guardians of peace, committed to the protection of the innocent.

How different the world might have been if a man like President George W. Bush had been at the helm in those days of darkness.

Following 9/11 it was President Bush's valor and commitment to do battle against the forces of terror and evil that has ensured the safety and security of our nation. Of all the world's leaders, it was only President Bush who had the courage to raise his voice on behalf of beleaguered Israel and recognize that terror in any part of the world must be eradicated. And just this morning, we were witness to yet another horrific act of terrorism with a bus bombing in Israel. Let us pause for a moment of silence and pray for them.

More than HOPE, our president is determined to TRIUMPH over evil, and continues to labor, not only for a secure safe world, but for an America in which timeless values prevail.

The miracle that is America is not only to be found in her might, but in her faith in G-d, and it was with this faith that President Bush comforted our nation with the words of the Psalmist on that day of infamy.

"Gam kee elech b'getzal movehs..." - "Even though I walk through the shadow of the valley of death, I shall fear no evil, for You are with me..."

"Kaveh el HaShem" - "Trust in the L-rd..."

We place our trust in You, Oh G-d, We pray to You to heal those who are sick with hatred; to sensitize the hearts of those who are indifferent to the cries of their brethren.

Teach us, Oh G-d, to live by Your word in truth, compassion and peace.

G-d bless America, G-d bless our President and may G-d bless each and every one of you. (Jewish World Review Sep 2)

Rebbetzin Jungreis, an Orthodox Torah scholar, international lecturer and bestselling author, is the founder of the Hineni Heritage Center.

ISRAEL NEWS

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Where's Our Solidarity?

Jerusalem Post Editorial

It is the nature of terrorism that every time one thinks there is a limit to the depths to which terrorists can sink, they contrive even baser atrocities. By holding hostage and ultimately killing hundreds of Russian schoolchildren, Chechen terrorists have managed to set a low not seen since Palestinian terrorists took over a school in Ma'alot

in 1974.

We, who have been guarding every school - from nursery to university - for the past four years, watched events in North Ossetia with horror and sympathy. The tactics that Russia has used against Chechnya do not obviate the need to crush such terrorism, which is not as isolated as it is sometimes made to seem.

As one US-based scholar of the conflict, Michael Radu, put it, "The extent to which Russian brutality and clumsiness have radicalized many Chechens could be debated, as could Moscow's often-exaggerated claim that all Chechen resistance is Wahhabi and attributable to non-Chechen mercenaries. What is not arguable is the fact that the most effective, violent, and well-trained elements in Chechnya are indeed Islamists, part and parcel of the Qaida nebula, whose methods are imports from the Middle East."

It has been widely reported that some of the terrorists in the school were Arabs imported from outside Chechnya. A Qaida-affiliated group called the Islambouli Brigades (named after Anwar Sadat's assassin) claimed responsibility for the airplane and subway bombings over the last few days. Islambouli's brother, Radu points out, is a Qaida operative and a member of the Egyptian Islamic Group, led by Ayman al-Zawahiri, now Osama bin Laden's second-in-command.

None of this is to say that anything Russia now does in Chechnya bears the stamp of freedom and democracy, or that an independent Chechnya would necessarily become, like Afghanistan under the Taliban, a satellite of al-Qaida. What it does illustrate is the seamlessness of the global war against militant Islamism, and the error of pretending that different fronts are utterly disconnected

conflicts.

The Arab-Israeli conflict, for example, is even today widely treated as independent from the war against Islamist jihad. When the two are connected, it is sometimes to blame American support of Israel for Islamist fury. The truth, as Arabs will sometimes admit, is the opposite.

In his recent opus in Commentary, Norman Podhoretz quotes Ab'd Al-Mun'im Murad, an Egyptian columnist writing in Al-Akhbar just before 9/11, "The conflict that we call the Arab-Israeli conflict is, in truth, an Arab conflict with Western, and particularly American, colonialism. The US treats [the Arabs] as it treated the slaves inside the American continent. To this end, [the US] is helped by the smaller enemy, and I mean Israel."

To Islamists, Americans, Israelis, and Russians are all infidels to be fought. In some places, they may piggyback on local conflicts and grievances. The Islamists also show a remarkable ability to transcend geographic and even religious boundaries in prosecuting their war. The Iranian mullahs are Shi'ites, Osama bin Laden is Sunni, and Saddam Hussein was ostensibly secular, yet they all consider themselves, and should be considered, allies in the same jihad against the West.

The question is whether the West will show a modicum of solidarity in its own defense. To say that Israel, under attack for almost four years in an strikingly brutal Islamist-led offensive, has not enjoyed Western solidarity is to dramatically understate.

But neither has the United States, once the initial sympathy over 9/11

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Lionel and Ruth Fisch
in commemoration of yarzeit for
Bertha Fisch (Breina bat Rav Aryeh Leib)
and Tobias Stein (Tuviah ben Chaim)

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dissipated. What is stopping the US, France (which at this writing is struggling to free two hostages in Iraq), and Russia from using their power in the UN Security Council to impose draconian sanctions on Iran?

We can and must continue to fight Islamist-backed terrorism piecemeal, but we cannot hope to win the war as a whole if we, the Western nations, do not confront the most open national symbol of Islamism, the mullahcracy in Iran. This must be pursued, first and foremost, by using the ample economic and diplomatic tools at the West's disposal, and with the express goal of forcing Iran to verifiably forswear both its nuclear weapons program and its support for terrorism, as Libya has done. The European refusal so far to impose economic sanctions is quickly forcing a choice between the unacceptable – a nuclear Iran – and highly unpalatable military options. (Jerusalem Post Sep 5)

'Collaborators' Jerusalem Post Editorial

Unlike, say, Philadelphia cop-killer Mumia Abu-Jamal, Muhammad Abu Kainas and his son, Rami, will not become international celebrities as they face a potential death sentence in a Gaza City court house. Nor will their names be long remembered if they are convicted of "collaborating" with Israeli security services and executed by an Arafat execution squad. Indeed, they will not even be commemorated on any list of victims of Palestinian "justice": No such lists are kept by anyone.

What crime have the Kainases, father and son, allegedly committed? As reported by Khaled Abu Toameh in yesterday's newspaper, PA prosecutor Wael Zakout has told the Palestinian court that the two were informants for the Shin Bet since 1987, that they tipped off the IDF to the whereabouts of Hamas leader Abdel Aziz Rantisi in June 2003, leading to a failed assassination attempt, and that they also gave away the location of Ra'fat Za'anin, another Hamas leader the IDF killed in 2003. The Kainases, who have been disowned by their families and who cannot afford a lawyer, deny the charges.

The Kainases are not the only Palestinians in this predicament: some 60 other alleged collaborators also face execution by a Palestinian Authority that has stepped up its campaign against these supposed traitors. Some may indeed have spied for Israel; others, no doubt, are the victims of "denunciations" by commercial rivals, jealous neighbors, or jilted lovers. The caliber of justice these defendants can expect to receive is surely not very high.

But assuming the Kainases are guilty, one might ask, guilty of what? Spying for the enemy? Last we checked, the PA had committed itself to the road map, which requires it to put men like Rantisi and Za'anin in prison. Of course it has done nothing of the kind, and pretends that it can't. "With what police force and with what guns?" it asks. Presumably, with the same police and the same guns that may shortly be used to execute the Kainases. But never mind that.

Then again, what are we to make of yesterday's comment by PA Prime Minister Ahmed Qurei that Israel not only ought to expect retaliation for its strike on a Hamas training camp, which killed 14, but that such retaliation "will be justified"?

It's important to be clear about what Israel did yesterday. First, the strike was carried out in retaliation for the twin Beersheba bus bombings, for which Hamas claimed responsibility and which the Palestinian Authority publicly condemned. Second, the training site – a soccer field by day – was used, *inter alia*, to prepare bombs used in suicide attacks. Third, according to the Palestinians, all 14 killed were Hamas "fighters"; there were no innocent bystanders among the dead.

So here we have Qurei, the man even the Bush administration continues to do business with, failing to take any action against terrorists, justifying future acts of terrorism, and taking vigorous action against those Palestinians who aid Israel in fighting terrorism. How exactly does this make him the acceptable face of the Palestinian Authority to the wider world? In what fundamental respect does this distinguish him from Yasser Arafat? Indeed, what distinguishes him from such Hamas apologists as Tariq Ramadan, whose visa the US State Department recently revoked?

It is becoming increasingly plain that the notion of Palestinian "reform" is a farce. Even more farcical is the notion that genuine reformers in the PA could ever spring from Arafat's ranks. This is not merely because they remain answerable to Arafat. Rather, it is because they remain his ideological fellow-travelers, and whatever differences they may have politically or tactically disappear as far as Israel is concerned.

It is commonly said that Israel must continue to deal with the current PA, first, because it is not up to us to pick their leaders, and second, because "there is no alternative." But as the distinctions between Hamas and the PA blur,

"there is no alternative" assumes an entirely different meaning. And while it is true that Israel has no right to choose Palestinian leaders, Israel certainly is entitled not to speak to a Palestinian leadership that has already justified the next suicide bombing. Remember that the next time Arafat or Qurei "condemn it completely." (Jerusalem Post Sep 8)

My Problem with John Kerry By Stewart Weiss

My father taught me early on that it was best to avoid both religion and politics. As a rabbi, I violated his first commandment big-time. Now I have to transgress the second as well.

As the American presidential election approaches, I cannot help but weigh in on the import of this decision, and the ramifications it has not only for us, but for every citizen of the free world.

I admit: I am biased. I grew up in Chicago, ruled for decades by the mighty Daley Democratic machine, whose motto "vote early, vote often" was taken literally by its hordes of election workers.

The Dems had a lock on Jewish voters, and Jewish Republicans were about as popular as an "Indians for Custer" fan club.

But I was a contrarian. I idealistically believed that you should vote for the best man or woman for the job; it couldn't be that the Democrat was always the more skilled, and the Republican always the incompetent.

The person, not the party, ought to rule.

Well, I still feel that way. I know I'm in the minority among my co-religionists, whose knee-jerk practices at the polls stem either from grossly over-sentimental fantasies about FDR, or the belief that the Democrats espouse a "kinder, gentler" philosophy that is more akin to Jewish values.

But I prefer to look beyond the slogans, to the substance.

And I like President Bush. I like the way he has conducted himself in the face of a blistering firestorm of anti-American sentiment. I identify with his situation, because it's exactly the same one we Israelis face. We, too, are blamed for all the ills of society, from the security fence to the weather. And if we are unfairly criticized, then it's easy to accept that Bush is also being made the fall guy by the real villains of the world.

Now, I have no strong opinion about Kerry. He's an untested, unknown quantity about whom it's tough to paint a truly definitive picture. But I am bothered by two things: First, early on in his campaign (before his horrified spin doctors shut him up), Kerry talked about naming as special Middle East envoys Jimmy Carter and Bill Clinton, the two ex-presidents who may have done us the most harm in history.

Carter – arguably the pea-nuttiest prez of the 20th century – consistently blames Israel as the aggressor, and the Arabs as the victims, in his twisted view of the Mideast struggle. He even went so far as to say that while he and Egyptian president Anwar Sadat richly deserved their Nobel peace prizes, Menachem Begin – who ceded a land mass to Egypt larger than Israel itself – was "stubborn and dogmatic," and should never have been given the award.

Big Bill, on the other hand, had a different tactic. He consistently expressed his passionate love for the Jewish state. In fact, he almost loved us to death, continually nudging us to give and give and give, until there would be nothing left of Israel to even give away.

And until Yasser Arafat rudely rejected Clinton's overtures at Camp David, the arch-terrorist was the White House's most frequent foreign visitor.

Second, I am appalled at the legions of anti-Semites who prefer Kerry to Bush. Every Jew-hating, Israel-bashing nut-case is outside Madison Square Garden screaming for not only Bush's head, but Israel's skin.

And while Kerry may not be encouraging these flakes of the far Left, I sure haven't seen him condemning them, either. If so many would-be destroyers of Israel detest Bush, it tells me he must be doing something right.

But I not only admire Bush for what he's done – identify evil, condemn Palestinian terrorism, refuse to allow Arafat into Washington – I also respect him for what he hasn't done.

He hasn't condemned the security fence, the closures or the targeted killings of terrorist leaders.

He hasn't continually conned us into capitulating; he hasn't demanded we do nothing in the face of attacks on our population; and he hasn't insisted we give away the store in return for worthless promises from despicable

criminals.

"If a word is worth one coin," say the Sages, "then silence is worth two."

Bush's silence, his conscious decision to leave us alone to fight our own battles and confront the enemy on our own terms, should be sweet music to our ears. With so many self-appointed prophets telling us what to do or not do, it is an absolute pleasure to have an American leader who knows the art of being quiet. I'm not saying that Bush is a saint. But considering the field, I'd much rather have a Bush than a bushwhacker. (Jerusalem Post Sep 5)

The writer is director of the Ohel Ari Jewish Outreach Center in Ra'anana.

Witch Hunt? By Frank J. Gaffney Jr.

For weeks now, the FBI has carried out in the press a prosecution of individuals and organizations it has so far been unable or unwilling to pursue in court. Using innuendo and a steady stream of (often recycled) press leaks, the names and reputations of a number of people "including several who are senior officials in the United States government at the moment" have been sullied.

There is no need to repeat their names here. Virtually all are people I have known and greatly admired for decades. It is bad enough their years of public service have been in any way diminished by those leaping to unfounded conclusions.

Even more troubling is the transparent character of this witch hunt: With apparently one exception, all those named in one way or another in connection with this inquiry (for example, they have been briefed on the matter, they run large Pentagon bureaucracies in which an individual suspected of misconduct -- or, perhaps, espionage -- works, etc.) have something in common: They are Jews.

At this writing, it remains unclear if any crime has been committed or, if it has, if any prosecution will be forthcoming. Unnamed FBI sources, though, keep telling the media the bureau has been interested for some time in a Washington-based diplomat representing the government of a democratic and strategically vital ally, Israel; two staff members of the influential American-Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC); and one mid level Defense Department employee who may or may not be accused of sharing with the others a classified draft presidential decision memorandum on U.S. Iran policy.

Most press reports have in one way or another insinuated other people now or formerly associated with the offices of Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld and Vice President Dick Cheney who have concerns about or responsibility for the Iran portfolio have also been of interest to the FBI. There is, mind you, no publicly available evidence to support this insinuation. Yet it persists from news cycle to news cycle.

The insidious implication is that people who are Jewish or for other reasons sympathetic to the Jewish State therefore embrace Israel's conviction that the Islamist, nuclear-arming, terrorist-sponsoring Iran government is a mortal threat that must be dealt with -- sooner, rather than later. According to this, U.S. interests are not at risk from Tehran, only Israeli ones.

Such suggestions call to mind past charges that people such as these have divided loyalties, are disposed to subordinate the security concerns of their own country to those of Israel or some larger Jewish conspiracy. "The Protocols of the Elders of Zion" come to mind.

Today, anti-Semitic witch hunts can be dressed up as ideological conflicts between the Bush administration's so-called "hard-liners" and "moderates." The former are increasingly caricatured as "neoconservatives." For many who use this ill-defined term, though, it serves as an unmistakable, pejorative code word for "Jews."

To be sure, there are those in the U.S. government -- notably, in the State Department and CIA -- who have profound policy disagreements with key Defense Department decision-makers. Acrimonious interagency disputes between these organizations, particularly about the magnitude of the danger from the Iranian regime and how best to counter it, have leached again and again into the public eye. This has been particularly true since President Bush's State of the Union declaration after September 11, 2001, that Iran was part of the "axis of evil."

A critical point: Simply writing off the attacks against senior Defense Department and other officials to bureaucratic rivalry obscures the fact Mr. Bush has made clear his own views about the Iranian mullah-ocracy. Those within his administration who evidently are feeding rumors and innuendoes seemingly hope to damage not just their rivals, but the commander in chief, himself. The piling on of Democratic legislators like Sen. Jay Rockefeller of West Virginia and Rep. John Conyers of Michigan has simultaneously inflamed

the situation and clarified the gambit with their demands, respectively, for intelligence committee investigations and special prosecutors.

If the conduct of hostile bureaucrats and Democratic partisans, reprehensible as it is, can at least be easily understood, the behavior of the FBI is less comprehensible. It would be one thing if law enforcement filed charges and presenting compelling evidence of wrongdoing -- and clarity as to who engaged in it. Without such information, however, one has to wonder whether it is purely coincidental that the FBI has, since September 11, been assiduously cultivating a constituency keenly interested in driving wedges between the U.S. and Israel, neutralizing AIPAC's considerable influence in Washington and diminishing the effectiveness of the most articulate advocates of President Bush's offensive strategy for the War on Terror.

The bureau reported to the September 11 commission that, over the past three years, its officials have held some 900 meetings with, among other constituencies (including Sheiks and Jewish groups), self-identified "leaders" of the Muslim-American and Arab-American community. The available record suggests that most, if not virtually all of the latter meetings -- including at least 19 with FBI Director Robert Mueller or his senior subordinates -- have been with representatives of groups long sympathetic with Iranian or other Islamist causes.

It would be a dangerous irony if the witch hunt assailing prominent Bush administration Jews were to weaken a vital alliance, embolden our enemies and cause Mr. Bush acute domestic political problems to boot.

The writer is president of the Center for Security Policy and a columnist for The Washington Times. (Washington Times Sep 8)

No Other Word for it but Slaughter By Mark Steyn

Photographed from above, the body bags look empty. They seem to lie flat on the ground, and it's only when you peer closer that you realise that that's because the bodies in them are too small to fill the length of the bags. They're children. Row upon row of dead children, more than a hundred of them, 150, more, many of them shot in the back as they tried to flee.

Flee from whom? Let's take three representative responses: "Guerillas", said The New York Times. "Chechen separatists", ventured the BBC, eventually settling for "hostage-takers". "Insurgents", said The Guardian's Isabel Hilton, hyper-rational to a fault: "Today's hostage-taking," she explained, "is more savage, born of the spread of asymmetrical warfare that pits small, weak and irregular forces against powerful military machines. No insurgent lives long if he fights such overwhelming force directly . . . If insurgent bullets cannot penetrate military armour, it makes little sense to shoot in that direction. Soft targets - the unprotected, the innocent, the uninvolved - become targets because they are available." And then there was Adam Nicolson in London's Daily Telegraph, who filed one of those ornately anguished columns full of elevated, overwritten allusions - each child was "a Pieta, the archetype of pity. Each is a Cordelia carried on at the end of Act V" - and yet in a thousand words he's too busy honing his limpid imagery to confront the fact that this foul deed had perpetrators, never mind the identity of those perpetrators.

Sorry, it won't do. I remember a couple of days after September 11 writing in some column or other that weepy candlelight vigils were a cop-out: the issue wasn't whether you were sad about the dead people but whether you wanted to do something about it. Three years on, that's still the difference. We can all get upset about dead children, but unless you're giving honest thought to what was responsible for the slaughter your tasteful elegies are no use. Nor are the hyper-rationalist theories about "asymmetrical warfare".

For one thing, Hilton is wrong: insurgent bullets can "penetrate military armour". A rabble with a few AKs and a couple of RPGs have managed to pick off a thousand men from the world's most powerful military machine and prompt 75 per cent of Hilton's colleagues in the Western media to declare Iraq a quagmire.

When your asymmetrical warfare strategy depends on gunning down schoolchildren, you're getting way more asymmetrical than you need to be. The reality is that the IRA and ETA and the ANC and any number of secessionist and nationalist movements all the way back to the American revolutionaries could have seized schoolhouses and shot all the children.

But they didn't. Because, if they had, there would have been widespread revulsion within the perpetrators' own communities. To put it at its most

tactful, that doesn't seem to be an issue here.

So the particular character of this "insurgency" does not derive from the requirements of "asymmetrical warfare" but from . . . well, let's see, what was the word missing from those three analyses of the Beslan massacre? Here's a clue: half the dead "Chechen separatists" were not Chechens at all, but Arabs. And yet, tastefully tiptoeing round the subject, The New York Times couldn't bring itself to use the words Muslim or Islamist, for fear presumably of offending multicultural sensibilities.

In the 1990s, while the world's leaders slept - or in Bill Clinton's case slept around - thousands of volunteers from across the globe passed through terrorist training camps in Afghanistan and were then dispatched to Indonesia, Kosovo, Sudan . . . and Chechnya. Wealthy Saudis - including members of the royal family - invested millions in setting up mosques and madrassas in what were traditionally spheres of a more accommodationist Islam, from the Balkans to South Asia, and successfully radicalised a generation of young Muslim men. It's the jihadist component - not the asymmetrical one, not the secessionist one - that accounts for the mound of undersized corpses, for the scale of the depravity.

If the Russian children are innocent, the Russian state is not. Its ham-fisted campaign in Chechnya is as brutal as it is ineffectual. The Muslims have a better case in Chechnya than they do in the West Bank, Kashmir or any of the other troublespots where the Islamic world rubs up against the infidels. But that said, as elsewhere, whatever the theoretical merits of the cause, it's been rotted from within by the Islamist psychosis.

I wonder if, as they killed those schoolchildren, they chanted "Allahu Akbar!" - as they did when they hacked the head of Nick Berg, and killed those 12 Nepalese workers, and blew up those Israeli diners in the Passover massacre.

The good news is that the carnage in Beslan was so shocking it prompted a brief appearance by that rare bird, the moderate Muslim. Abdulrahman al-Rashed, the general manager of al-Arabiya Television, wrote a column in Asharq al-Awsat headlined, "The Painful Truth: All The World's Terrorists Are Muslims!" "Our terrorist sons are an end-product of our corrupted culture," he wrote. This is true. But, as with Nicolson's prettified prose in London, the question remains: So what? What are you going to do about it? If you want your religion to be more than a diseased death cult, you're going to have to take a stand.

What happened in one Russian schoolhouse is an abomination that has to be defeated, not merely regretted. But the only guys with any kind of plan are the Bush administration. Last Thursday, the President committed himself yet again to wholesale reform of the Muslim world. This is a dysfunctional region that exports its toxins, to Beslan, Bali and beyond, and is wealthy enough to be able to continue doing so.

You can't turn Saudi Arabia and Yemen into New Hampshire or Sweden (according to taste), but if you could transform them into Singapore or Papua New Guinea or Belize or just about anything else you'd be making an immense improvement. It's a longshot, but, unlike Putin's plan to bomb them Islamists into submission or Chirac's reflexive inclination to buy them off, Bush is at least tackling the "root cause".

If you've got a better idea, let's hear it. Right now, his is the only plan on the table. The ideology and rationale that drove the child-killers in Beslan is the same as that motivating cells in Rome and Manchester and Seattle and Sydney. In this war, you can't hold the line against the next depravity.

The writer is a columnist for Britain's Telegraph Group and the Chicago Sun-Times. (The Australian Sep 6)

Look Who's Talking about Defeating Terror By Israel Harel

"You cannot make compromises with terror," Ariel Sharon told the Russian foreign minister, Sergei Lavrov. "It must be fought and defeated."

And the sorrowing guest - this revolutionary lesson being taught to him at a time when most of the victims had not yet been laid to rest - did not respond, at least according to the communique that reported the above lesson, "Look who's talking about defeating terrorism." But if not publicly, than at least during their private conversation, it would nevertheless have been proper for the guest to put his host in his place.

"If one cannot make compromises with terror," Lavrov might have asked (though he apparently did not), "why did you declare, at the height of the terrorist war against Israel, that Israel recognizes the Palestinians' right to a state? No prime minister before you ever said that, and so from the Palestinians' point of view, that statement was not merely a compromise - it was

capitulation. And from the standpoint of those who are fighting Islamic terror worldwide, Israel, who gave the terrorists a state before defeating them militarily, thereby encouraged terrorism against us, however unintentionally.

"And even when the terrorists continued their atrocities, thereby proving that they were not fighting only for a state - since if they had been, they would have stopped blowing up buses and started establishing their state - you compromised, in defiance of the lesson you just taught me, with the ongoing terror.

"Fact: Instead of defeating them, as per your own doctrine, you began to build a fence. And even before the fence had been completed, you hastened to announce an additional compromise: the 'unilateral disengagement.' And the disengagement, in addition to being a compromise with terror, is also causing an internal rift in your nation and your party the likes of which have never been seen before.

"In the past, Israel acquired a reputation - in Operation Jonathan in Entebbe, for instance - as a country that does not give in to terrorism. And in a world in which countries many times larger than Israel, such as Germany and France, did give in to terror and even paid it protection money in various forms, your uncompromising stance aroused admiration and constituted a strategic asset.

"No longer. And, though it pains me to say so, this process of Israel losing its deterrent power in the face of terror has occurred precisely at a time when someone like you, who contributed perhaps more than any other Israeli to your country's deterrent image, is at its helm. The fact that you, of all people, are the one who decided to grant the Palestinians a state in response to terrorism, and to hide from terrorism by means of a fence, and who afterward chose the already tested option known as 'unilateral disengagement,' has caused a vast erosion - whose negative ramifications are hard to exaggerate - in your country's deterrent power vis-a-vis other, 'conventional' enemies as well.

Moreover, instead of waging the offensive war that previously characterized your army, and particularly your own military leadership, you are putting your people and your army into a narrow ghetto, both mental and territorial, and turning the Arabs, the originators of suicide terrorism, into the victors and heroes of the Muslim world. And that fact also impacts on us: We assume that the Palestinians' impressive achievements - yes, impressive - will also encourage our terrorists and increase their motivation.

"You know that we oppose the settlements. But tell me: What is the rationale behind packing them up now, before you have defeated the terror? If that is the conclusion you draw from the rule you advised us to adopt - that 'one cannot make compromises with terror' - then I must say, with all due respect, that this capitulation is a negative contribution to the war that we and the rest of the world are waging against terror. And don't be impressed by the compliments you receive - including, publicly, from us - for uprooting settlements: That is part of the verbal protection money that we also pay to buy a little quiet. But, as was proven in Beslan, to no avail.

"Despite the flattering articles in favor of disengagement that have appeared both in Israel and the rest of the world - articles whose purpose is to push you into additional concessions - you will never achieve the rehabilitation for which you long so greatly. Even now, they are saying that the fence is an act of apartheid and that you should be put on trial, along with the defense minister and senior Israeli officers, on charges of crimes against humanity. And such things were never said before, even when you controlled all the territory, when you built settlements on it, when you declared that it was the inheritance of your forefathers and that a Palestinian state would never arise upon it.

"Your excessive concessions have led the Palestinians, and all Muslims, to reach one clear conclusion: Terrorism pays. And that is what worries us. Just as international public opinion justifies terror against you, it is liable to justify terror against us, even though we are a great power. And we are liable to lose all the autonomous Muslim republics, not just Chechnya."

Presumably, these things were not said. But there is no doubt that Russians, Americans, Britons and even Frenchmen who are engaged in the war on terror are indeed astonished by what has happened to Israel, which has lost its self-confidence - a development that, as noted, also impacts negatively on the entire world's ability to fight Islamic terrorism. (Haaretz Sep 9)