

Events...

Wednesday October 9

Haim & Edna Avraham, parents of Israeli MIA Benny Avraham, will speak at Shaarei Shomayim

Toronto One Israel Missions

With Aish Hatorah October 12-20:

Visits throughout Yesha, Shabbat in Hevron, For info: 905-764-1818 x228.

With BAYT Brotherhood November 3-10:

Visits throughout Yesha, Shabbat in Jerusalem, For info: 905-896-4451.

Commentary...

Death of a Hero Jerusalem Post Editorial

Two weeks ago, a photograph of a bright, young soldier appeared in this newspaper alongside an article about how his mother, with the assistance of some generous strangers, had helped to feed him and his 34 comrades serving in Nablus. Yesterday, that same soldier's photograph graced the front page, albeit in far more heartrending and painful circumstances.

Sgt. Ari Joshua Weiss of the Nahal Brigade was just three weeks short of his 22nd birthday when he was shot and killed by Palestinian terrorists on Monday during a fierce gun battle in Nablus. Another soldier, Shai Haim, was badly wounded in the exchange of fire. Islamic Jihad claimed responsibility.

Weiss, whose father Rabbi Stewart Weiss is director of the Jewish Outreach Center of Ra'anana and a Jerusalem Post columnist, made aliya with his family from Dallas, Texas, a decade ago. Weiss is survived by his parents, five siblings, and his maternal grandparents, both of whom are Holocaust survivors.

Any time that a young life is snuffed out in the line of duty is, of course, a cause for inconsolable grief, something with which this country has become all too familiar these past two years.

While parents elsewhere are accustomed to seeing their children off to college or a career at 18, Israeli mothers and fathers must send their young men and women off to a war that was forced upon them.

But Weiss' untimely death in uniform carries with it an additional component, one that many of us often do not sufficiently appreciate – the enormous sacrifice that immigrants have made in helping to build and defend this land.

Like so many other Western immigrants, the Weiss family left behind the comforts and familiarity of their birthplace. They packed their belongings, left their families, and set out to live their dream: to build the State of Israel.

It wasn't long before they rose to prominence in the Ra'anana community, delivering food to the needy, organizing classes and seminars, or assisting other new immigrants in overcoming the challenges of absorption and acculturation. Rabbi Weiss, together with his wife Susie, strove to enrich the society around them, whether by bringing guest speakers of national renown to lecture, or by offering pre-holiday educational programs.

But, like other immigrants, the Weisses brought more than just their own talents and energies to this country. They brought their family, and their future, with them as well. Despite the risks, and irrespective of the difficulties, they

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*

chose to make this their home, and there was nothing which made them prouder than to see their eldest son don the uniform of the IDF, the Jewish people's army.

Like any native-born couple, the Weiss family lived with the daily worries and fears, listening intently to the news, and praying for the safety and well-being of their son and his comrades. But whereas for many parents, army service is part of the standard track to

adulthood, for the Weiss family, and other immigrants like them, it embodies far more. It is part of the process of becoming truly Israeli, and of fully participating in the various joys and sorrows that come with it.

In a column which appeared on April 14, Rabbi Weiss poignantly captured these feelings when he wrote about his childhood friend, Rabbi Aryeh Weiss of Kiryat Arba, whose son had been killed in action: "With each day's new list of victims, we hold our breath as we hear the latest casualty reports. Will we recognize the name? Will the attack have been on a bus route we frequent? Will the soldier hail from our town? For those of us with boys in the army, we grip the wheel a little tighter, and perk our ears up each hour on the hour."

"Each time a soldier breathes his last," Rabbi Weiss noted in conclusion, "each time a hero is slain in the noble war against terror, a little bit of each of us dies with him."

The same can be said for Ari Weiss, his beloved son. He died a hero's death, defending his people and his land. And along with him, a little bit of each of us died too. May his memory be for a blessing.

(Jerusalem Post Oct 2)

This week's issue is dedicated לעילוי נשמת
אבינו מורינו וזקנינו
ר' שמואל יצחק ע"ה בן ר' משה דוד ז"ל
With love, by Mrs. Susan Goldstein,
Frances, Naomi, Yoni & Moshe

BAYT Sisterhood presents **Ahuva Gray**, author of
"My Sister the Jew," Sunday, October 6, 8 p.m. at BAYT

The Face of Anti-Semitism

By Jeff Jacoby

When Lawrence Summers became the president of Harvard last year, not even his greatest admirers predicted how resolutely he would make the university's motto -- "Veritas" -- his own. Almost from the day he was inaugurated, Summers has insisted on speaking unpopular truths: about the disrespect shown to Americans in uniform, about the rot of grade inflation in Harvard's classrooms, about the absence of "mainstream values" among "coastal elites" -- even about the failure of a celebrity professor like Cornel

West to do serious academic work.

Last week, voicing another unpopular truth, Summers spoke out against the spread of Jew-bashing -- not only in Europe and at UN conferences, but also at American universities.

"There is disturbing evidence of an upturn in anti-Semitism globally, and also closer to home," he said on Sept. 17. "Profoundly anti-Israel views are increasingly finding support in progressive intellectual communities. Serious and thoughtful people are advocating and taking actions that are anti-Semitic in their effect if not their intent."

Actually, even anti-Semitic intent can be found on American campuses these days. At San Francisco State University, for example, pro-Palestinian demonstrators recently confronted supporters of Israel with signs reading "Jews = Nazis" and chants of "Hitler should have finished the job." Earlier this month, anti-Israel rioters at Concordia University in Montreal smashed windows and hurled furniture to protest a scheduled speech by Benjamin Netanyahu.

Fortunately, such naked Jew-hatred is still rare in academia. What Summers had in mind was something less blatant but no less disgraceful.

"Some here at Harvard and some at universities across the country," he said, "have called for the university to single out Israel among all nations as the lone country where it is inappropriate for any part of the university's endowment to be invested. I hasten to say the university has categorically

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rejected this suggestion."

The divestment campaign Summers was referring to demands that Israel be treated as a pariah, a country so toxic that American universities shouldn't even own stock in companies that do business there. It is modeled on the anti-apartheid movement of the 1970s and 1980s, and its planted axiom is that there is no important moral difference between Israel -- a free and tolerant democracy at war with dictatorial enemies bent on genocide -- and the former white-ruled South Africa. That is a position only a moral idiot could endorse.

Supporters of the divestment effort at Harvard and elsewhere were quick to condemn Summers for his "McCarthyesque" attack. "This is the ugliest statement imaginable," fumed John Assad, a neurobiology professor at Harvard's medical school, "to paint critics as anti-Semitic."

But Summers didn't "paint critics" as anti-Semitic or anything else; he characterized their *actions* as "anti-Semitic in their effect." He was not ascribing base motives to those who support the divestment campaign. He didn't presume to read their hearts. Rather, he was pointing out the impact of their behavior. One who supports a campaign that singles out Israel for demonization and obloquy is taking an anti-Semitic action, whether he intends to or not.

Are Israeli policies fair game for criticism? Of course. But it is not "criticism" to falsely smear Israel as racist -- not when the Arab world seethes with a hatred of Jews more rabid even than the Nazis'.

It is not "criticism" to portray Israel's lawful presence in Gaza and the West Bank as an illegal occupation, yet never murmur a word of objection to China's occupation of Tibet, or Syria's of Lebanon, or Turkey's of Northern Cyprus, or Russia's of Chechnya.

It is not "criticism" to lay the blame for the violence of the Middle East at Israel's doorstep while ignoring the immense risks that Israel has taken and the sacrifices it has made in pursuit of peace with the Palestinians.

It is not "criticism" to accuse Israel of apartheid, when it is the Arab world that preaches, "Kill the Jews!" and dances in the street when terrorists do so.

This is not criticism -- it is calumny. It butchers the truth and subjects Israel to an outrageous double standard. It abets the cause of the world's foremost Jew-haters -- people whose explicit goal is the liquidation of the Jewish state. A professor who signs his name to something so grotesque is committing an anti-Semitic act.

"In our own day," Norman Podhoretz once wrote, "Israel has become the touchstone of attitudes toward the Jewish people, and anti-Zionism has become the main and most relevant form of anti-Semitism." Anti-Semitism used to express itself in demanding that good Aryans boycott Jewish shops. Today it demands that good universities boycott the Jewish state. It may look different on the outside, but it's the same old poison underneath.

The writer is a columnist for The Boston Globe.

(IsraelNationalNews.com Sep 27)

Haters of Hebron Jerusalem Post Editorial

The Jewish community of Hebron last week found itself the target of two brutal assaults -- one a lethal attack by Palestinian terrorists from without, and the other an unsightly broadside by Israel's extreme left from within. For the second year in a row, Palestinian terrorists sought to disrupt what has become an annual Succot tradition, as tens of thousands of Israelis from across the country visit the city, which boasts a range of ancient and modern attractions. Last year, two Israeli women were shot and wounded by a Palestinian gunman during a visit to Hebron, while this year, Shlomo Shapira, 50, the father of seven from Jerusalem, was killed, and three of his young children wounded, when a Palestinian terrorist attacked a Jewish tour group. Courageously, Israelis remained undeterred, and they continued to flock to the city in droves.

Hebron's appeal to Jewish visitors is easy to understand. It is home to one of the most sacred of Jewish holy places, the Cave of the Patriarchs, as well as the tombs of other biblical figures such as Avner ben Ner and Othniel ben Kenaz, Israel's first judge. The city also carries great symbolic and emotional importance to Jews, as King David ruled in Hebron for seven years before declaring Jerusalem Israel's capital, and a Jewish community lived continuously in the city up until the Arab massacre of 1929. Indeed, it was David Ben-Gurion who remarked, shortly after the 1967 Six Day War, that "Jewish history begins in Hebron... and we will make a great and awful mistake if we fail to settle Hebron, neighbor and predecessor of Jerusalem, with a large Jewish settlement, constantly growing and expanding, very soon."

Currently, there are some 500 Jews living in Hebron, as well as 6,000 in neighboring Kiryat Arba, and they have been subjected to a wave of Palestinian terror since the start of the intifada two years ago. Palestinian gunmen have repeatedly fired into Jewish homes in Hebron from the surrounding hills, and on March 26, 2001, a Palestinian sniper shot and killed 10-month old Shalhevet Pass at the entrance to the Jewish neighborhood of Avraham Avinu. The incident over Succot last week was but the latest in an unrelenting series of Palestinian

assaults against the Jewish residents of the city.

Under normal circumstances, when an Israeli community comes under attack by terrorists, the response one would expect on the part of other Israelis would be solidarity and understanding. After all, in the past 24 months, the Palestinian terror campaign has made no distinction between Haifa or Hebron, Netanya or Netzarim. Why, then, should we?

But such sentiments were sadly in short supply last week, as Israel's extreme left used the murder of Shlomo Shapira as a pretext -- not for berating the murderers, but for lashing out at their victims. In an editorial last Wednesday, Ha'aretz went so far as to intimate that Shapira himself was to blame for the fact that he was murdered: "It is hard to fathom the mind-set of the thousands of visitors who flock to Hebron. A father who takes his children to Hebron and is tempted into roaming with them on the edge of its open market area puts at risk his own life and those of his children." These words, which were published less than 36 hours after Shapira was gunned down in cold blood, betray a strange sense of morality, one in which the perpetrator's responsibility is effectively minimized because, as far as Ha'aretz's editorial writers are concerned, Jews have no business being in Hebron in the first place.

Quick to join the fray was opposition leader Yossi Sarid of Meretz, who on Wednesday revealed a secret civil administration report documenting alleged acts of vandalism by certain members of the Hebron Jewish community. Speaking to reporters, Sarid saw no problem in generalizing about the many based on the actions of a few, asserting that Hebron is "the ugliest stain on the face of the Zionist enterprise," and that its Jewish residents are all characterized by "fanaticism, lunacy, and hooliganism."

Whatever one's views about the Jewish community of Hebron, no good can come from demonizing or delegitimizing them, particularly when they are under attack. Jews are living in Hebron with the approval and permission of successive Israeli governments and, like Israeli citizens everywhere, they are entitled to its protection and deserving of our support. (Jerusalem Post Sep 29)

Blood Libels Are Alive and Well in the Arab World

By Yossi Ben-Aharon

When peace negotiations were launched with Syria in Madrid in October 1991 and in Washington, I raised the subject of anti-Semitic literature with the Syrian delegation, in one of the early sessions. With me was a copy of a book, authored by the Syrian minister of defense, General Mustafa Tlas, called *The Matza of Zion*, available in bookshops throughout Syria. The cover showed a picture of two ugly, gloating Jews in the process of cutting the throat of a man, his blood dripping into a pot, to be used for the baking of matza for Pessah.

Holding up the book, I asked the head of the Syrian delegation: "Is this how you come to negotiate peace with Israel? If this book is a typical demonstration of your attitude toward the Jewish people and state, do you seriously think we could believe you when you say you want to make peace with us?"

My interlocutor evaded the question and suggested we concentrate on the pressing issue of Israeli withdrawal from the Golan Heights.

I WAS reminded of this exchange upon reading a Middle East Media Research Institute report on the French authorities having subpoenaed Ibrahim Nafi, the editor of the largest Egyptian government daily, al-Ahram. The subpoena came nearly two years after al-Ahram published an article entitled "Jewish matza is made of Arab blood" by Egyptian journalist Adel Hamoodah. Both the book by Tlas and the al-Ahram article were based on the 1840 blood libel, in which the Damascus Jewish community was accused of murdering a priest and his assistant to obtain blood for making matza for Pessah.

The reaction of the Arab media to the subpoena (See the full report on www.memri.org) is worth noting. It was described as "intellectual terrorism," a "blow to freedom of expression," a "Zionist attack on the Egyptian press," and "an insult to the entire Arab press."

Not a word was said anywhere on the charge that Jews use blood for matza. Or on the fact that the Association of Arab Journalists, of which Nafi is the chairman, has a record of expelling any Arab journalist who visits Israel.

MEMRI also reported that al-Ahram was inundated with expressions of support by an imposing list of Egyptian and Arab personalities, including religious functionaries, legislators, lawyers and university professors.

It would be very unwise for us to disregard this demonstration of Arab hatred of Jews. It would be equally foolish to discount the story that has gained immense credibility in the Arab and Muslim countries, according to which Israel was responsible for the attack on the World Trade Center. These

are given credence and widely distributed by the upper echelons of Arab society.

We can sign agreements, even peace treaties, with Arab governments. But we must finally realize that in our part of the world, such treaties do not signal any acceptance of the reality or the legitimacy of Israel's existence by the Arab collective. Not today, not tomorrow, not in the foreseeable future. And this is not a pessimistic conclusion. It is the simple truth. (Jerusalem Post Oct 1)
The writer is a former director-general of the Prime Minister's Office.

The Prettiest Girl By J. Philip Rosen

This year on Yom Kippur, as in the previous 12 years, I watched most of my friends walk out of the synagogue as I prepared for the unending pain of the Yizkor services. During Yizkor those of us who have lost relatives pray to remember the dearly departed and for their souls. It always seemed heartbreaking to me that the synagogues divide into two for the Yizkor services, i.e. those who have living parents, siblings and children walking outside for idle chatter and friendship while those unfortunate enough to have lost someone close to them staying inside praying and crying.

However, this year was particularly painful, more than my previous Yizkor experiences. This year, in addition to praying for my parents and my aunts and uncles and grandparents who died during the Holocaust and left no one to pray for them, I added the name of Danielle Shefi to my prayers. Danielle Shefi, as a representative of the over 600 men, women and children who were murdered in cold blood by Arab terrorist murderers led by Yassir Arafat over the past two years.

During our last solidarity mission in July of this year, our group visited the Shefi family in Adura. Mr. and Mrs. Shefi greeted us in their home in a small community on top of a hill and showed us their house. They told us that no one from outside the community had yet visited them. They led us into the tiny livingroom where we crowded in to watch perhaps the most heartbreaking home video I've ever seen - a film about the life of Danielle Shefi - very similar to a bat mitzvah video using film clips from different stages of Danielle's life, a birthday party at 2, a performance in a play at 4, with the beautiful music of the Israeli song, "The Most Beautiful Girl in the Kindergarten Class" playing in the background. However, this bat mitzvah video didn't end with the bat mitzvah - this bat mitzvah video ended with terrorists walking into the Shefi house on a Saturday morning, finding Mrs. Shefi and her three children, Danielle being the oldest, age 5, in the bedroom curled up in her bed. The terrorists looked at the family straight in their eyes, a mother and three babies, and shot to kill all four. Mr. Shefi told us how lucky he was (a man whose five year old daughter is murdered in cold blood is lucky?) that the rest of his family was alive and had recovered from wounds suffered as a result of the gunshots. All 55 of us sitting around the living room cried like babies as we felt even a measure of the pain of the Shefi family, as well as the pain of the families of each and every one of the victims of terrorism. The end of the film which showed the news clips on the morrow of the murder - the bedroom right upstairs from us covered wall to wall in blood, with pools of blood on the bed, our hearts were filled with an indescribable sorrow.

We are now approaching the holiday of Succot during the last days on Shemini Atzeret/Simchat Torah we say Yizkor once again. I ask each and every one of you to add a special thought in your Yizkor prayers, whether you stay in or go outside - a thought about the prettiest girl in the kindergarten class and the 600 other gems that were viciously and cruelly taken from their families over the last two years in particular. At the same time I ask you to think about whether "The New Middle East" is any different from the Middle East of the 1929 Hebron massacre or from the Jewish communities of Eastern Europe during the pogroms and from the communities of Europe during the Holocaust. Jews who were/are murdered just because they are Jews - men, women and children, including the prettiest girl in the kindergarten class.

The writer is the Chairman of American Friends of Likud, a member of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, and the Chairman of Media Watch International. (IsraelNationalNews.com Sep 26)

The Truth Be Told By Bill O'Reilly

How many times over the last year have we heard various pundits and agenda-driven bigmouths say the following: The United States is partly to blame for world terrorism because it has abused and exploited the Muslim world.

This is an enormous lie and one that should be stopped dead in its tracks. The real reason that many Muslims hate America is that it supports and defends Israel. That is the truth, and all these other canards are charades.

A few years back, I was wandering around Morocco - perhaps the most pro-U.S. Muslim country in the world. Everywhere I went, little kids ran up to me asking for handouts. When they saw I was an American, many of them asked in English: "Are you a Jew?" When I answered in the negative, they were very

pleased. Jews were bad, they all said.

If you travel anywhere in the Muslim world, I guarantee you that the vast majority of children will behave the same way. They are taught hatred for the Jews in school. Their parents reinforce the prejudice at home. This has been going on for thousands of years, and it's all about land. The Muslims feel the ancient land of Palestine is their territory. But the Jews have chosen this place to make their stand.

The United States has heroically supported Israel in the face of almost worldwide condemnation. But what the world refuses to acknowledge is that without America's help, the Arabs would slaughter the Jews much like the Nazis did. There is no question about this. Hamas, Hezbollah and the other insane terrorists will tell you flat out: The Jews deserve to die. If the United States ever stopped supplying money and weapons to Israel, there would be a second holocaust.

So once again, America is practicing heroism. The United States has put itself at risk to prevent the Jews in Israel from being murdered even while our presidents have tried in vain to negotiate a peaceful settlement to the land conflict. We Americans have also contributed trillions of tax dollars over the years in an attempt to stabilize the Middle East. We are doing the right thing - what's the rest of the world doing?

The United Nations is not going to help Israel or propose a fair peace deal. At that farce of a conference which the U.N. recently sponsored in Africa, anti-Semitic rhetoric ran amuck. The tone the United Nations allowed was shocking but, sadly, predictable. Israel has few friends in the world forum.

But the most egregious betrayal of all lies on the doorstep of Germany. The loathsome Gerhardt Schroeder sold out the United States and Israel by refusing any assistance in the Iraq situation in order to win re-election. Schroeder and the rest of his government know that Saddam Hussein would kill Israeli civilians in a heartbeat if he felt he could get away with it. The Germans know Saddam is capable of doing Israel great harm. Yet those courageous Germans are sitting this one out. Even though it is because of them that Israel had to be created in the first place.

Of all the people on this earth, the Germans are the ones who should be doing everything possible to help the Jews. They have not repaid the Hitler debt - and show no signs of wanting to do so. It is shameful and cowardly that Schroeder and his followers have once again failed to fulfill their historical obligation to the Jewish people.

So when you hear all this claptrap about how America is insensitive to the Muslim world and arrogant and discourteous to weaker nations - ignore it. What lies beneath terrorism and the endless Middle East conflict is glowing, murderous hatred that has been centuries in the making.

America is protecting millions of Jews from another mass homicide as sure as Yasser Arafat is a corrupt incompetent. Once again, the United States has put itself on the line to protect human beings that desperately need protection.

And that is the truth. (WorldNetDaily.com Sep 26)
The writer is host of the "The O'Reilly Factor" and author of two best-selling books.

The Best and Worst By Mona Charen

Doctors in Israeli hospitals had been noticing that when they operated on people wounded in homicide bombing attacks, patients often continued to bleed even after being sutured. Eventually, a young medical resident figured out why: The terrorists filled their bombs with as many nails, screws, glass shards and pieces of shrapnel as they could, and these were first dipped in rat poison. The rat poison worked as an anti-coagulant.

Now Israeli emergency room doctors can treat bombing victims with Vitamin K to control the bleeding, but as the Rocky Mountain News reported, stronger drugs can cost up to \$10,000 per vial.

And so Israel struggles from day to day. The homicide bombings have diminished as a consequence of Israel's tough response -- so much for the argument that force would only intensify "the cycle of violence." But the depraved hatred the Palestinians have revealed by their sponsorship of such violence has left many Israelis with a sense of horrified despair.

In the midst of this abomination, one story deserves more attention than it has received. It is the story of 19-year-old Jonathan (Yoni) Jesner. He was a religious Jew from Scotland who had gone to Israel to study in a Yeshiva before beginning medical school. On Friday, Sept. 20, he boarded a bus in Tel Aviv that was blown up by a homicide bomber.

Yoni was one of six who died. When doctors told the stunned family of their son's death, they asked whether they would like to donate Yoni's organs. His father later explained: "There were about 20 of the family in the

hospital, and we had to consider for 10, 15 minutes. But we thought that because Yoni was going to be a doctor and he wanted to help people that the organs should be donated for humanitarian purposes. We weren't told and we didn't care whether it went to a Palestinian, an Israeli or an American, or whatever, and Yoni wouldn't have cared."

Yasmin Abu Ramila is a Palestinian 7-year-old from East Jerusalem. She has been undergoing dialysis in an Israeli hospital -- yes, an Israeli hospital -- for nearly two years. When Yoni's kidneys became available, Yasmin's name was next on the waiting list for transplants. She is doing well, and while it's too early to say whether the transplant was a complete success, she has been given a chance at life. The girl's father has said he would like to meet the Jesner family some day.

The child's mother was grateful. "I don't know what to say to thank the family of the man killed in the attack," she told the Israeli daily Ma'ariv. "I grieve for their loss and thank them for their donation."

But what of the larger Palestinian community that has greeted each bombing with war whoops and cheers? Can a gesture as tender and humane as the Jesner family's penetrate their hate-distorted minds? A Jewish kidney now keeps little Yasmin Abu Ramila alive. But the question, "Can a Jew touch a Palestinian's heart?" remains open. (townhall.com Sep 27)

Sound, Fury Signifying Nothing Jerusalem Post Editorial

What have we learned from the ignominious end of Israel's siege of Yasser Arafat's Mukata? First, that if we decide to generate a lot of smoke, we might as well light a fire. Second, that signals are no substitute for real action. Third, we cannot assume that the US will always act consistently or even in its own interest in the war on terrorism.

Israel's decision to once again lay siege to Arafat's headquarters in response to another terrorist atrocity was the equivalent of the pre-September 11 responses of the United States to terrorism: lob a few cruise missiles somewhere and call it a day. It was an action that was by design indecisive and inconclusive. It was action as symbolism, and therefore a substitute for, rather than an example of, action itself. Security officials were reduced to describing the action in psycho-symbolic terms: It will "humiliate" Arafat and accentuate his responsibility for terrorism.

Yet by destroying building after building around Arafat while pledging not to harm, evict, or arrest the man himself, Israel succeeded in demonstrating its unwillingness to use its power. A show of force was transformed into a show of inability to use force.

Many have wondered why Israel continues to choose Arafat as the proper address for blame for terrorist attacks, when it is obviously Hamas and Islamic Jihad that are the leading source of suicide bombings. But the problem with the government's action is not that it places too much blame on Arafat, but that by implication it feeds into the myth of his indispensability.

Regarding Arafat's culpability for the current war, whose second anniversary is being marked this week, Middle East scholar Fouad Ajami said it well in our recent collection of attempts to bestow a name to this conflict (September 20). "This war has a name -- Arafat's war," writes Ajami. "He willed it and planned it, and then waged it with brutal effectiveness."

Ajami points out that Arafat noticed that more pragmatic Arab leaders, such as King Abdullah of Jordan (the late King Hussein's grandfather) and Anwar Sadat of Egypt were assassinated, while Jerusalem Mufti Haj Amin Husseini "had given his people a history of defeat and maximalism, [and yet] died of a ripe old age in Beirut, as a revered figure of the Palestinian national movement."

US President George W. Bush's speech of June 24 calling for a new Palestinian leadership seemed to signify the US coming to exactly this conclusion: that the hopes pinned on Arafat to lead his people to peace with Israel were misplaced. But this sea change in US policy only sharpens the anachronistic odor rising from Israel's actions. All Israel has succeeded in doing is proving that, even after June 24, the US president is still willing to be seen protecting Arafat from Israel.

All this is, no doubt, a Pyrrhic victory on Arafat's part, because all it really signifies is that he is untouchable while the US is busy preparing to oust Iraq's Saddam Hussein. But it does demonstrate that sometimes the only thing worse than doing nothing is to do something halfheartedly in a way that invites all the criticism but delivers none of the benefits.

The sense of immunity that Arafat, and perhaps by extension other enemies of Israel such as Hizbullah and Syria, have gained by this episode may be temporary, but could be very costly. It was a great mistake for the US to signal that it is willing to rein in Israel at this time, because it will invite exactly the trouble that the US seeks to avoid. But it was also a mistake for Israel to assume that the US would not make such a mistake, rather than working to ensure first that we were not acting at cross purposes.

The burden of better coordination lies with both Washington and Jerusalem.

It is not too soon to prepare to prevent similar foul-ups from occurring before, during, and after the upcoming campaign in Iraq. "Coordination" should not just mean Israel acceding to American demands for restraint, but US backing for sensible and decisive actions to defend itself from Arab attacks designed to derail US action in Iraq. (Jerusalem Post Sep 30)

Going Home to Gaza By Matt Rees

Though ravaged by terror, a Jewish family's return illustrates the determination of Israeli settlers

Orit Cohen hobbles angrily away from the house as fast as her prosthetic foot will take her. The 13-year-old doesn't want photos taken of the injury she suffered 22 months ago when a roadside bomb blew up her school bus. From the doorstep, her father Ophir calmly watches her go. He knows she can't run far. Her leg is still weak, and in any case no one ventures alone outside this isolated Israeli settlement in the Gaza Strip, a tiny fortress under constant threat of Palestinian attack.

Three of Ophir Cohen's eight children lost limbs in the bus bombing, an incident that shook his commitment to stay in Kfar Darom, a settlement of 51 families. But after living near Tel Aviv for 21 months during the children's rehabilitation, Cohen and his wife Noga brought their family back. "It wasn't easy," says Cohen, watching Yisrael, 8, roll by awkwardly on skates. The boy has a prosthetic leg to replace the one he lost just below the knee. "But if you believe this is your land, you know you belong here." Ideological settlers like Cohen believe they're living on land God gave to the Jews, as recorded in scripture.

The Cohens' return to Kfar Darom is a sign of the growing defiance among Israel's 7,000 Gaza Strip settlers and their 200,000 counterparts in the West Bank. Though settlers are prime targets for attacks, given their proximity to Palestinian communities and the animus their presence evokes, Israelis are still moving into the territories for ideological reasons or for the financial incentives the government offers, such as income-tax breaks and cut-rate mortgages. Since the outbreak of the latest Palestinian uprising, or intifadeh, two years ago, the settler population in the West Bank has risen 4.8%, more than double the increase in the overall number of Israelis. In the 20 Gaza settlements, 242 new families have moved in, adding to the 1,155 families there. Only 25 families have left. Twelve years ago, Ophir Cohen left Jerusalem and was one of the first settlers to move to Kfar Darom, a community of Orthodox Jews. All his children, except the eldest, Orit, were born there. From the beginning, the settlement was ringed with machine-gun emplacements. With today's heightened dangers, it is now hedged by tanks and more than 3.5-m concrete barriers. On Nov. 20, 2000, the Cohen children boarded their bus to the nearest school, in a settlement two miles away. The bus had barely left the compound when Cohen heard a thunderous boom. He rushed to the scene. By the time soldiers allowed him through, an ambulance had taken away three of his children. Inside the bus, Cohen saw the corpses of two adults. With that image in his mind, he drove fast to find his children at the hospital in Beersheba.

Orit and Yisrael each lost one limb; Tehila, who is now 10, lost both legs below the knee. During the kids' recuperation at a hospital near Tel Aviv, victims maimed in other attacks visited the kids to show them how well prosthetic limbs could work. Cohen and his wife weren't sure they would ever return to Kfar Darom. The terror strikes kept mounting. The big suicide bombings in Israel's cities grabbed the headlines, but attacks on settlers were far more frequent. Of the 624 Israelis killed in the intifadeh, a disproportionately high 125 were settlers, and 70 were Israeli soldiers who died protecting them.

Still, the Cohens felt a religious and national duty to ignore the dangers. So they returned to find Kfar Darom's population had increased. The settlement's most recent addition: eight prefabricated apartments with roofs reinforced against the mortars that Palestinian militants shoot toward Kfar Darom most nights. A new school had been built in the settlement so local children don't have to risk the roads each morning. But not every danger can be guarded against. On a recent afternoon, a rocket-propelled grenade hit the army guard post at the edge of Kfar Darom, punching a grapefruit-size hole in the reinforced concrete turret where a soldier usually stands watch. This is the Cohen family's welcome home. (Time Magazine Oct 7)

[If you are interested in the unique and special opportunity to visit with the great Jews living in Kfar Darom and Gush Katif, consider participating in one of the One Israel missions noted in the "Events" section on page 1. Only One Israel missions always visit these remarkable communities. - Ed.]
