



Jerusalem 4:06 Toronto 4:45

## Events...

Saturday, November 13, 8:00pm

Stewart Bell speaks on "Our National Security and Terrorists who live amongst us" at the Jewish Book Fair, Leah Posluns Theatre, Bathurst JCC. Sponsored by Bnai Brith Canada. \$10.

Saturday, November 13, 8:30pm

Rabbi Shlomo Riskin, Chief Rabbi of Efrat, will speak on Sharon's disengagement plan at BAYT.

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## Commentary...

**This Land Is My Land, this Land Is Your Land** By Rabbi Meyer Fendel

In this week's portion, the Torah relates in extensive detail the purchase by Abraham of the Mearat HaMachpela. Similarly, the Torah (Bereishit 33:19) details the acquisition by Jacob of a plot of land in Shechem - which according to tradition was the burial place of Joseph - even recording the purchase price of one hundred kesita. And in Divrei HaYamim-I (ch. 21, 22, 26) there is a lengthy account of the purchase of the Temple Mount by King David and his insistence on making full payment.

Midrash Rabbah (sec. 79) remarks that these three places - the Cave of the Patriarchs, the Tomb of Joseph in Shechem, and the Temple Mount - whose deeds of purchase are recorded in the Bible are safe from the gentile accusation that "this is stolen land in your hands". This remark seems odd in light of the events of our time. For it is precisely these three sites that are at the heart of the current conflict, the Arabs claiming each of these places as their own!

It may be suggested, perhaps, that the Midrash is addressing Klal Yisroel, asking us to be aware that the Torah goes out of its way in each instance to emphasize that our ancestors acquired each of these important places through an elaborate public purchase. WE need to know that this is our Land - our ancestors purchased it. We need not apologize to anyone. The Torah tells us that we are rightfully returning to our ancestral home. (Arutz Sheva Nov 1)

**About Being Kind to the Cruel** By Michael Freund

The outpouring of sympathy and concern has been nothing short of breathtaking.

Followers and well-wishers around the globe have expressed their fear and anxiety over the ailing patient's health, hoping against hope that somehow, yet again, he will stare death down and manage to recover.

Take, for example, the flood of statesmen wishing Yasser Arafat well, with everyone from Jacques Chirac to Vladimir Putin to Chinese President Hu Jintao expressing hope for his recovery.

Even the US State Department got into the act, with spokesman Richard Boucher telling reporters: "This is not a political matter for us. This is a matter of seeing that an ill person gets the medical care he needs for health. That is our wish and our hope in this circumstance."

Leila Shahid, Arafat's representative in Paris, said the Palestinian leader had been inundated with notes and letters of support.

"All these people have written personal letters to President Arafat, and I consider that this is what I would call the emotional medication, the psychological medication," she said.

A correspondent for the BBC went so far as to describe how she "started

# ISRAEL NEWS

*A collection of the week's news from Israel*  
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to cry" when the "frail, old" Arafat was taken from his compound for medical treatment abroad.

In just about any other scenario it would be difficult not to be moved by such a display of kindness. After all, caring for others is truly one of the most benevolent and elevated of human acts. And yet, when it comes to Yasser Arafat, all this talk of compassion and pity could hardly seem more misplaced.

Even with the natural tendency to set aside differences when a leader's health is in question, let's not forget about whom we are talking.

Whatever one's views of the peace process, Arafat was and remains a crude and ruthless serial killer. For decades he has devoted himself to violence and terror, sparing neither the young nor the innocent.

He is both literally and figuratively responsible for the deaths of thousands of people, and the maiming of countless others.

Arafat has sanctified terror and legitimized the rifle, corrupting the values of generations of Palestinians.

Given that we are finite beings and have a limited amount of energy and emotion at our disposal, why do so many world leaders and pundits feel it necessary to expend them on a killer rather than on his victims?

And yet when it comes to those whose lives have been destroyed by Arafat and his comrades, no equivalent level of sympathy has been forthcoming.

Last Friday, as Arafat was being airlifted from Ramallah, the Chizhik family of Tiberias was burying their 21-year-old son Michael, a sergeant in the military who had been murdered the day before in a Palestinian rocket attack near Gaza. Six of Chizhik's fellow soldiers were wounded, three of them seriously.

Do we even know their names or hear about their condition? Do world leaders pray for their recovery or call to find out how they are doing?

Just this week, a study was released underlining the extent of the harm caused by Arafat and his cronies. According to the University of Haifa's Center for National Security Studies, more than one out of five Israeli Jews has lost a friend or relative to Palestinian terror in the past four years.

That is the equivalent of some 55 million Americans being directly affected by the loss of a loved one.

What kind of warped morality, then, leads so many people to anguish over Arafat, even as they pay little heed to the devastation he has wrought?

Consider the words of Haaretz commentator Gideon Levy, who described meeting Arafat as being "in the embrace of a warm, effusive, caressing man."

While the Palestinian leader does not eat much, Levy tells us, he "heaps more and more food on your plate, like an oversolicitous Jewish mother." The least Israel should have done when Arafat fell ill, Levy insists, was to "offer medical treatment."

Medical treatment? To the man whose signature was found all over documents recovered during Operation Defensive Shield authorizing terrorist attacks? To the person who has devoted himself and his career to waging war against the Jewish people and their state?

Just imagine if Osama bin Laden were to emerge from his cave complaining of a nagging headache. Would anyone seriously expect the US to grant him safe passage to a leading Western medical facility so he could recover as quickly as possible and return to the path of terror?

Being kind to the cruel is nothing to be proud of, and it certainly isn't an appropriate policy.

By permitting Arafat to travel abroad, Israel was actually committing an anti-humanitarian act. Allowing the Gangster of Gaza to escape scot-free rather than arresting him and putting him on trial was neither moral nor just.

Israel's prison hospital in Ramle would surely have been more than able to accommodate him.

So my suggestion to all those worrying about Arafat's condition in Paris is this: Don't rush out and spend your money on get-well cards. It's the victims, not the perpetrator, who are truly deserving of your sympathy and support. (Jerusalem Post Nov 3)

The writer served as a communications and policy adviser in the office of prime minister Binyamin Netanyahu.

**One Country, Two Governments** By Evelyn Gordon

For a country to have two governments simultaneously is quite a trick. But as of last week, that is precisely what Israel has: one government that we elected, and one that we did not. The one we elected handles issues such

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as counterterrorism and economic reform. The one we did not handle disengagement.

It is not merely that in last week's Knesset vote the disengagement plan earned just 37 votes from the official government - the one that received the Knesset's confidence after last year's election. The other 30 votes, which enabled the plan to pass, came from opposition parties that never won the confidence of either the Knesset or the people.

Since the disengagement is Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's central policy initiative, the fact that it was passed by the opposition rather than the official government is bad enough. Far worse, however, is Sharon's unprecedented decision to split the 2005 state budget in two. One part, the section that deals with cutbacks and reforms, will be passed by the official elected government. The other part, dealing with disengagement, will be passed by the unofficial, unelected one.

Because the budget is the government's blueprint of action for the coming year, the annual budget law has unique constitutional status: Failure to pass it by March 31 automatically dissolves the Knesset and results in new elections within 90 days. No other issue can topple a government without even being brought to a vote.

Unforeseen developments have occasionally caused a government to submit a supplementary budget partway through the year. But never before has a key policy initiative been deliberately omitted from the budget because no coalition could be found to approve the entire budget with it present. What this means is that according to the test explicitly laid down in Israel's Basic Laws - that no government may survive if it cannot, once a year, find a Knesset majority to approve its plan of action for the next year - the Sharon government deserves to fall.

But Sharon has circumvented this constitutional litmus test by a method so devious that our lawmakers never thought to ban it: Instead of submitting his whole work plan for the year, he is submitting only part of it in the document entitled "The 2005 Budget Law." The remainder, funding for the disengagement, will be submitted separately and, like the disengagement itself, be approved by an unofficial coalition with Labor and Yahad that never received the Knesset's confidence. In the letter of the law there is no barrier to this maneuver. Nevertheless, it blatantly violates the spirit of Israel's constitutional legislation.

THE SHARON government is also constitutionally problematic in another way: It is the first government in Israel's history that does not enjoy the Knesset's confidence. There have, of course, been minority governments before, but these received support from outside the coalition that enabled them to claim the confidence of a majority of the Knesset.

That is not true of Sharon's government. A majority of Knesset members have no confidence in it and would topple it if they could, but they cannot because of an anomaly known as "constructive no confidence" that was added to the Basic Law: The Government in 2001.

This provision states that a government can be toppled only if a majority of MKs not only loses confidence in it but can also form an alternate government. In Sharon's case, this is impossible. Since his opposition comes from both Left and Right, the majority that opposes him is incapable of forming an alternative government.

Clearly, Sharon's survival under these circumstances is legal, since constructive no confidence is part of the Basic Law. It is not even unprecedented internationally. Though rare among Western democracies, this system is also practiced in Germany. Nevertheless, it contradicts the very essence of parliamentary democracy, as expressed in that same Basic Law (Article 3): "The Government holds office by virtue of the confidence of the Knesset."

None of these issues greatly bother Israel's chattering class, where the dominant view is that the end of dismantling settlements justifies any means, even the subversion of Israel's constitutional structure. With a few exceptions - Yuli Tamir and Yossi Beilin come to mind - almost no one on the Left has dared to say that the rules of the game have value in and of themselves, regardless of whether or not one likes the outcome.

But they do, and this ought to be of supreme concern to all Israelis - because it is only the rules of the democratic game that have allowed a politically and religiously fractured nation to live together for half a century. If these rules are shattered beyond repair - if too many Israelis become convinced that all that matters is seizing power, by any and every means - this country will not long survive. And Sharon has already stretched the rules dangerously close to the breaking point.

The simplest solution, of course, would be to call new elections. But a referendum on disengagement could also help because much of the opposition to this plan - both within the official coalition and within the nation as a whole - stems from the sense that it is fundamentally illegitimate for a man who won the election by running against unilateral withdrawal to proceed to implement that very program, which the voters explicitly rejected, with the aid of the parties they explicitly rejected.

If disengagement passed a referendum, thereby acquiring unassailable public legitimacy, Sharon would probably be able to form a real government around the initiative - one that enjoyed the Knesset's confidence and didn't depend on anti-constitutional tricks such as splitting the budget for its survival. Either elections or a referendum would be expensive and disruptive. But the alternative - for Sharon to continue warping Israel's constitutional structure beyond recognition - would, in the long term, be far worse. (Jerusalem Post Nov 1)

## When Begin's Oratory Took Flight By Yehudah Avner

The possible renewal of Saturday flights in the wake of El Al's privatization calls to mind a Knesset oration of yesteryear.

For days, tension permeated the Knesset. Stocky, gesticulating men combed its corridors, committees and canteens, their numbers rising daily like tugboats heaving in fresh infusions of lobbying power.

They were El Al union men, accompanied by their whispering lawyers, intent on scotching prime minister Menachem Begin's resolve to halt the national airline's flights on the Sabbath, from sundown Friday to sundown Saturday.

Without let-up, they pressured, pestered and petitioned the parliamentarians. Even the ever-bullient, highly erudite, and strictly observant interior minister, Dr. Yosef Burg, was collared.

He was waylaid by a union man who placed an amicable arm around his shoulder, jabbed a forefinger into his chest and barked into his face so grimacingly that his head was jerked backwards as if to have the arguments shoved physically down his throat.

This was on May 3, 1982, the day premier Begin limped into a crowded Knesset chamber tense with expectancy. He was in pain, recovering from a severe hip injury, and it was with heavy, purposeful steps that he mounted the tribune to deliver his El Al speech.

He began quietly, factually, declaring that the government had finally decided to halt all El Al flights on Shabbat and festivals - a revelation that sent eyes glaring and hatreds flashing in the public gallery where the union men sat.

Simultaneously, a sudden restlessness seized the opposition benches, which erupted into a paroxysm of heckling:

"So why don't you shut down TV on Shabbat, too?" screamed one.

"What about football matches on Shabbat?" bawled another.

"Are you going to stop Jewish merchant ships at sea, too?" shouted a third.

This spasm of derision fazed the premier not one little bit. On the contrary, it supplied him with new inspirations of vitriolic wit.

"Shout as much as you will," he ribbed, his deep-set, bespectacled eyes scanning the opposition faces with scorn, his gaze finally settling on the young, secular, radical left-winger Yossi Sarid.

"I have nothing to say to you and your kind, Mr. Sarid," he said, with a glance that could wither. "In fact, I have nothing to say to anyone who supports a Palestinian state that is a mortal danger to our people."

And then, changing tone, pitching his voice to a muted, sonorous, trembling pitch, this man who believed in oratory as the supreme artful weapon, a matter of style, cadence, and the application of controlled but massive intellectual energy, intoned:

"Forty years ago I returned from exile to Eretz Yisrael. Engraved in my memory still are the lives of millions of Jews, simple, ordinary folk, eking out a livelihood in that forlorn Diaspora where the storms of anti-Semitism raged.

"They were not permitted to work on the Christian day of rest, and they refused to work on their day of rest. For they lived by the commandment, 'Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.'

"So each week they forswore two whole days of hard-won bread. This meant destitution for many. But they would not desecrate the Sabbath day."

"So, stop football on Shabbat, too?" butted in Sarid provocatively, triggering off another squall of jeers, hissing, and name-calling.

ADROITLY, TO the delight of his supporters, Menachem Begin put his power of mimicry to full use by calmly raising his right hand as if to catch a ball, tossed it back, and resumed his rhetorical flow:

"Shabbat is one of the loftiest values in all of humanity," he said, his voice husky with emotion. "It originated with us. It is all ours. No other civilization in history knew of a day of rest.

"Ancient Egypt had a great culture whose treasures are on view to this day, yet the Egypt of antiquity did not know of a day of rest. The Greeks of old excelled in philosophy and the arts, yet they did not know of a day of rest.

"Rome established mighty empires and instituted a system of law still relevant to this day, yet they did not know of a day of rest. Neither did the civilizations of Assyria, Babylon, Persia, India, China - none of them knew of a day of rest."

"So, put on a yarmulke," sneered Sarid.

"Hutzpa!" boomed Begin, bristling. "I speak of our people's most hallowed values, and you dare stoop to mockery. Shame on you!"

Then, arms up, fists balled, he thundered with the devotion of a disciple and the fire of a champion: "One nation alone sanctified the Shabbat, a small nation, the nation that heard the voice at Sinai, 'so that your man-servant and your maid-servant may rest as well as you.'

"Ours was the nation that enthroned Shabbat as sovereign Queen."

A crescendo of approval from the government benches sent the rafters rattling, muffling every last vestige of dissent.

And he, the Great Commoner, idol of the common folk, caught up on the wave of his own enthusiasm and sense of mission, rose to a pitch of almost uncontrollable fervor, and thundered on:

"So, are we in our own reborn Jewish state to allow our blue-and-white El Al planes to fly to and fro as if broadcasting to the world that there is no Shabbat in Israel? Should we, who by faith and tradition heard the commandment at Sinai, now deliver a message to all and sundry through our

blue-and-white El Al planes – 'No, don't remember the Sabbath day. Forget the Sabbath day! Desecrate the Sabbath day.'

"I shudder at the thought."

The ensuing ruckus was terrific. The speaker sat ham-fisted, vainly banging his gavel, which thudded as soundlessly as a velvet mallet.

So Begin himself raised his palms and then lowered them gently, once, twice, thrice, until the furor quietened of itself.

Whereupon, to hammer his point home, he quoted the words of the celebrated secular philosopher of early Zionism, Ahad Ha'am: "More than the Jews kept the Sabbath day, the Sabbath day kept the Jews."

With that, he raised his eyes to the public gallery and vouchsafed its occupants an intensely solemn stare.

"Let me say this to the good workers of El Al," he told the crowd. "The government has been the object of threats. We disregard them. In a democracy, government decisions are not made under threat."

And then, like a sudden bugle call to historical grandeur, he perorated with compelling passion:

"Know this: We cannot assess the religious, national, social, historical, and ethical values of the Sabbath day by the yardstick of financial loss or gain. In our revived Jewish state we simply cannot engage in such calculations when dealing with an eternal and cardinal value of the Jewish people – Shabbat – for which our ancestors were ready to give their lives.

"One thing more. One need not be a pious Jew to accept this principle. One need only be a Jew." (Jerusalem Post Nov 2)

*The writer was on the personal staff of four prime ministers, including Menachem Begin.*

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### **Bush's First Test** Jerusalem Post Editorial

The reelection of George W. Bush will be perceived by militant Islamists as a defeat for them, just as the fall of the Aznar government in Spain was seen by them as a victory. Bush's endorsement by the American people by a respectable margin is a landmark for this region, as the election was fought, more than perhaps any in history, over policies relating to this part of the world.

Though the war in Iraq was the central issue in the campaign, it might be premature to argue that the election constituted a ringing endorsement of that war. Rather, Americans, despite their misgivings, seemed to agree that there is no turning back in Iraq.

Perhaps most significantly, the election provided a mandate for the context in which the war was fought: Bush's conclusion that the spread of liberty, rather than the "stability" of a sea of dictatorships, is the only real way to stem the tide of Islamist terrorism.

Now that Bush has received this mandate, the urgent question is what he will do with it. The election, as elections do, postponed and distorted what might have been the natural evolution of the Bush policy following the ousting of Saddam Hussein.

Speaking to cheering troops on the USS Abraham Lincoln on May 1, 2003, Bush laid down his post-war marker: "Any outlaw regime that has ties to terrorist groups and seeks or possesses weapons of mass destruction is a grave danger to the civilized world – and will be confronted. And anyone in the world, including the Arab world, who works and sacrifices for freedom has a loyal friend in the United States of America."

It has not been that way, exactly.

The Iranian regime, now the leading remnant of what Bush aptly called the "axis of evil," is openly defying Europe and the United States. The mullahs have actively contributed to, and taken advantage of, the troubles America has had in Iraq. Between the war and the election, Teheran has enjoyed a form of immunity, during which it has bought precious time to transform its quest for nuclear weapons into an irreversible fait accompli.

There is still much to do to consolidate an American victory in Iraq – a victory central to transforming the Middle East. At the same time, the Iranian challenge looms ever larger. The war in Iraq, after all, was fought not only to demonstrate that regimes that openly support terror and defy the world will not stand, but to prevent the nexus of the "world's most dangerous powers and most dangerous weapons."

On that aircraft carrier, Bush said, "The battle of Iraq is one victory in a war on terror that began on September 11, 2001 – and still goes on." He was right that it was just one victory, but since then the war has, except for the very important capitulation of Libya, essentially stalled on the level of challenging rogue regimes. Success in Iraq, itself not guaranteed, will have been a failure if it prevented the United States from confronting the not lesser threat from Iran. Bush has repeatedly stated that each situation requires its own policy, meaning that the precedents of Afghanistan and Iraq do not mean that the only tool in the American arsenal is military force. This makes perfect sense, but it introduces the question: how will the Iranian bomb be stopped?

Even before Bush's reelection, and despite their wish for his defeat, France and Germany have quietly moved to heal wounds from the bruising battle over the war in Iraq. They have, with the UK, led their own initiative to stop the Iranian nuclear program, which they claim is unacceptable.

Unlike with Iraq, then, Bush's European problem was having to take yes for an answer. His reluctance was doubtless a function of both the ongoing embroilment in Iraq and the impending election.

Now that the election is over, and the E-3 have had ample chance to coax Iran into compliance, there is little more time for "testing" Iranian intentions that are obvious for all to see. It is not clear that even the threat of painful UN

Security Council sanctions will induce Iran to demonstratively abandon its nuclear program. What is clear is that nothing short of such a threat has a hope of success, and that sanctions are the best hope for avoiding the need to take military action. (Jerusalem Post Nov 4)

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### **On a Collision Course?** By Zalman Shoval

A "secret" Israeli Foreign Ministry report warns that Israel and Europe will find themselves on a collision course, causing serious economic and diplomatic damage to the Jewish state.

According to the report, prepared by the ministry's Center for Political Research, we could be increasingly isolated if Europe becomes more influential, even to the point of threatening our legitimacy as a sovereign Jewish state.

In part, the report sounds almost self-accusatory.

"The EU could sharpen its expectation that Israel will comply with international norms and honor the authority of the United Nations and its agencies," it warns.

But is this to imply that when Israel exercises its legitimate right and duty to protect its citizens against terrorism, including the building of its security fence, that we are not complying with international norms?

As to the UN and its agencies, I suppose this refers primarily to UNRWA, the main culprits in perpetuating the Arab refugee problem for almost 56 years and whose top functionary recently admitted employing Hamas members in his organization.

An important underlying premise of the report – that Europe may soon match or exceed the influence of the US – is certainly open to question. If anything, the gap in military power, not to mention willingness to project it, has only widened over the last few years.

Similarly, it is hardly a foregone conclusion that the expanded membership of the EU to the east would increase its anti-Israel tendencies; the opposite could well be the case.

This is not only because most of these new members are determined to maintain close ties with America but also because few of their priorities resemble those of some of the EU's older members.

On the positive side, the bilateral relationship between Israel and most European states, including France, is far better than it appears. Economic and scientific ties in particular are rapidly expanding, to the satisfaction of both sides.

Indeed, in a more perfect world European support for Israel would have been almost axiomatic, and not just because of the Jewish people's history in and with Europe.

Israel, after all, is more "European" – culturally, economically, and democratically – than any other state in the Middle East and several of the EU's members, old and new.

THAT SUCH a better relationship has not emerged is due to a variety of reasons: economic interests, support for corrupt and undemocratic regimes, and a lessening of the perceived moral responsibility towards the Jewish people in the wake of the Holocaust.

As the report points out, anti-Semitism on both the extreme Right and Left is growing and has fashionably taken the form of opposition to Israel.

Traces of this neo anti-Semitism can be found in the statements of some European politicians and in places such as the British Guardian newspaper.

In such circles the suggestion that the creation of Israel was a mistake, too high a price for Europe's behavior during the Holocaust, is openly discussed.

Others sanctimoniously talk about "one state for two peoples," thus denying the Jewish people its right to live in a Jewish state.

Finally, Israel is being blamed for provoking terrorism, including that of al-Qaida, although any honest analysis of the scourge of terror proves that there is no real connection between the two.

Even were Israel to submit to the Palestinians' most extreme demands, terrorism would not only not cease, it would increase, to further prove that terror brings results.

The democratic leaders of Europe should recognize that it is only a matter of time until this combination of old and new anti-Semitism not only threatens the Jews but jeopardizes freedom and democracy everywhere, as did Nazism in the not so distant past.

Students of history may actually wonder what constructive contribution Europe has made in the Middle East since World War I; its present attitude toward the Palestinian-Israeli conflict is a case in point.

Here we have the Sharon government taking a historic and very difficult decision to withdraw from Gaza and parts of the West Bank. The government's objective is to eventually revive the chances for an equitable settlement with the Palestinians – in spite of continuing Palestinian terrorism.

The EU is at best paying lip service to these efforts and will likely continue to court Yasser Arafat, his health permitting, even though he would only sabotage the Israeli initiative.

Not only that: Instead of encouraging the Palestinians to stop the violence and take the opportunity for self-government, the EU foreign ministers criticize Israel for exercising its legitimate right to defend itself and its citizens against terror!

One might well ask why the EU doesn't take a more active role in planning for the post-withdrawal situation in Gaza, helping to forge a civil society among the Palestinians instead of once again renewing its futile and

self-defeating efforts to force Yasser Arafat down the throats of Israel – and the Palestinians. (Jerusalem Post Nov 3)  
*The writer is a former ambassador to the US.*

### **Is the Pope Catholic?** By Sarah Honig

One proverbial Roman dawn, the Holy Father awakened to see the light from Mecca.

Having experienced a miraculous epiphany, he not only espoused Islam but opted for the most extreme fanatical variant thereof.

Moreover, with the fiery zeal of a new convert he was determined to impose his recently acquired theology on a billion Catholic faithful worldwide.

While citing the Koran, he refused adamantly to relinquish his position as Successor to St. Peter and proceeded to brand whoever didn't follow him on his Hajj a heretic.

Only those who do as the Mohammedan pope ordains can be deemed true believers.

Absurd? Maybe in Rome.

But on one hardly proverbial Jerusalem dawn, Prime Minister Ariel Sharon awakened to see the light of Peace Now. Having undergone a miraculous epiphany, he not only espoused retreatism, but opted for the most extreme, unilateralist variant thereof.

Moreover, with the fiery zeal of a new convert he was determined to impose his recently altered politics on hundreds of thousands of Likud Party faithful countrywide.

While quoting Meretz rhetoric, he refused adamantly to yield his position as successor to Jabotinsky and proceeded to brand whoever wouldn't emulate his about-face a renegade.

Only those who do as the left-wing Likud leader dictates can be deemed true democrats.

Absurd? Maybe a year ago.

But now, with the power vested in him by Likud wimps he bullied into submission and Godless opportunists he tempted with worldly rewards - latter-day incarnations of Gonen Segev and Alex Goldfarb - Pope Arik has excommunicated Uzi Landau for the apostasy of insubordinately insisting that in a democracy authority derives from the will of the people, and not from a divine-rights premier.

In a partisan context it's the will of party members - like those who participated in the much-maligned Likud referendum, where they overwhelmingly nixed disengagement. Their will is just as powerfully reflected in their popularly-approved party platform and the decisions of popularly elected party forums.

The party, a voluntary framework, doesn't oblige those who no longer adhere to its values to stay on. Those who choose to remain, however, are obliged to abide by majority verdicts.

But ruthless Arik brazenly defied the authority of those who nominated him, fielded his candidacy and voted for him - those whose views he vowed to represent. Arrogating all authority to himself, he declared his say-so the new Likud gospel.

To support his demand for blind obedience, he claims full credit for the Likud's 2003 victory, though its list was poised to win big even if headlined by a scarecrow.

The voters renounced leftist defeatism more than they hankered after Arik. In fact, corruption charges against him (still pending) probably reduced the Likud's win. If anything, Arik was a liability.

Moreover, the "painful concessions" to which he vaguely alluded were never elucidated. Instead, the Likud's incumbent was crystal-clear on what must not be done.

His Labor challenger Amram Mitzna preached unilateral withdrawal from Gaza "one year after Election Day." Arik's oft-reiterated response was that "Netzarim is like Negba. Abandoning Netzarim will embolden terrorists and intensify the pressure on Israel."

WE'RE YET to be dignified with an explanation of why Mitzna's mantra, which Candidate Arik denounced, became one Premier Arik is hell-bent on implementing. We were never told what momentous, earth-shaking events transpired in the interim months to trigger such an improbable ideological reversal.

We deserve to know why we're required to acquiesce in what Arik only recently condemned as sacrilege, and why we must now accept his mysterious new teachings as infallible. We deserve to understand why Arik went the way of Yossi Beilin, tracing the very route he urged the electorate to reject (as, indeed, it overwhelmingly did).

Arik's incongruent leftist cheering section gleefully defends his right to change his mind (as long as it's to their liking) without going back to the voters he left behind cheated, disenfranchised, admonished and ordered to like it or lump it.

Doubtless Arik has the right to ideological rebirth. But he has no right to brutally coerce others to undergo his metamorphosis on pain of penalties ranging from political demotion to long prison terms.

His 2003 mandate expired when he reneged on the terms of his contract with his voters. Having breached their trust, he - and not Landau - has rebelled against their authority.

Only reelection can confer legitimacy on Sharon's drastic redirection. Elected representatives can't luxuriate in ordinary folks' privilege to be fickle. Leaders impact on all our lives, and we, the people, cannot afford to issue carte blanche for caprice.

Until Sharon runs again on a party platform befitting his latest agenda, he must be viewed as a lapsed Likudnik. The Right can't kid itself - it's preposterously led by a new-leftist.

It's no use asking, "Is the Pope Catholic?"

This one is an ayatollah. (Jerusalem Post Nov 1)

### **Speaking Truth to Jihad** By Saul Singer

Palestinians lob missiles at Israel, killing children; Israel responds with a military campaign against terrorists in Gaza. The Palestinians run to Europe crying "Massacre! Stop them!" Now, imagine European leaders responding thus: "Before you call us to complain about Israeli atrocities, why don't you tell Yasser Arafat and Hamas to stop the rocket attacks?"

The good news is that this is not a report from the "Messianic Gazette," but the Post's own Khaled Abu Toameh, quoting what a senior Palestinian official said he was told last week by a senior European diplomat. Another ambassador told a top Arafat aide, "My government is not prepared to interfere this time with Israel unless the Palestinian Authority starts taking practical measures to enforce law and order."

Perhaps not coincidentally, we are witnessing a slight rebound against the Palestinians in the international press. Though the savaging of Israel continues ("The harvest of death in this most dispossessed of refugee camps continued" began a report in The Toronto Star), the savagers have themselves begun to come under attack. As journalist Tom Gross pointed out in these pages, an editor at the Times publicly blasted the Independent's Mideast correspondent, Robert Fisk, for coverage that "masquerades as reporting but is, in fact, polemic."

Bill Newman, ombudsman for the Sun, said Fisk's coverage of Israel was "distasteful."

These slight shifts may presage a sea change or prove anecdotal. What they do illustrate is how the current Palestinian terror war could have been prevented, and how its next stage still can be.

For the past four years, Europe has nodded sagely as the Palestinians claimed, in effect, "it all started when he hit back." The more Israel was attacked, the deeper our isolation became, encouraging further attacks. At any given time, the Palestinians could reasonably hope that the international community would, rather than recoiling from their suicide bombing campaign in disgust, reward it by imposing sanctions against Israel.

IF THE same European diplomats who are giving Palestinian leaders the cold shoulder now had done so four years ago, the current terror war would likely have been squashed in its cradle, saving thousands of Israeli and Palestinian lives. One even wonders whether al-Qaida, instead of noting that the blame for suicide bombings can easily be transferred to its victims, might have reconsidered the wisdom of its own plans against the United States.

But all this seems as water under the bridge. As Israel disengages from Gaza, as the beheadings in Iraq and the massacre of children in Beslan discredit the jihadis, as relentless Israeli military pressure is increasingly tolerated, and as the security fence is completed, the current Palestinian terror war seems to be on its last legs. The changing breeze, however welcome, follows rather than brings relief.

Or so it seems. In reality, the new European attitude, if it takes root, comes just in time to block the next stage of the Palestinians war.

With the tool of suicide bombings physically and diplomatically blunted, the ruling Palestinian terror coalition will shift to a three-pronged approach: attacking Israel with missiles, accusing Israel of apartheid, and demanding a "binational" state. The rule of thumb of "when the world blames you for stalemate, attack Israel even harder" - which proved so successful after Arafat turned down a state at the 2000 Camp David summit - will be tried again.

So now Europe will have a second chance. When the Palestinians come crying for protection from the results of their missile attacks, and to tear down the "apartheid wall," Europe will have a choice. It can continue to encourage Palestinian aggression by going along with the Arab campaign to delegitimize Israel in the United Nations and through the International Court of Justice. Or it can make the novel suggestion to the Arab world: why don't you try stopping your attacks against Israel?

The same test applies for the Palestinian temptation to go for a one-state, "binational" solution. Europeans can respond by, little by little, dropping their historic support for the idea of a Jewish state. Or they can say to the Arab world, no, we reject the destruction of Israel whatever the guise, and reject the "right of return" to Israel, which is inconsistent with Israel's right to exist.

With these simple words, Europe (and the US if it leads Europe in this direction) has the power to end the Arab-Israeli conflict. It is not the lack of a Palestinian state that keeps the conflict alive, but the Arab hope for Israel's destruction. Once that hope is removed, the conflict will end.

The jihad to destroy Israel is by now so obvious that placing so much weight on exposing and rejecting it may seem odd. Yet the refusal to do so is so pervasive that it applies even to the United States, which still places Palestinian statehood, rather than ending Arab rejectionism, at the center of its peace policy. The irony is that the chief impediment to a Palestinian state is no longer Israel, but the world's tendency to blame Israel for its absence, which takes Arab rejectionism off the hook and gives hope to jihad. (Jerusalem Post Oct 31)

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