

 Jerusalem 4:00; Toronto 4:35

Commentary...

Post-Zionism and Post-Humanism By Shalom Freedom

Many Israelis are worried about the effort to supersede the Zionist story and the Jewish state with the post-modern "state of all its citizens." Mankind as a whole is facing a similar phenomenon. There is a whole culture of what used to be called "futurists" – people who predict and then work to bring about an "ideal" future, and who are retelling the human story in the process. Among the most notable are Alvin Toffler and Ray Kurzweil. Toffler has written of a "fourth wave" in which humans will, thanks to multiple advances in technology, "transition" themselves into "posthumans."

Kurzweil (in *The Age of Spiritual Machines*) speaks of the coming "singularity," after which artificial intelligences will leave human forms behind. For these thinkers and others like them, humanity is not the single, distinct intelligent species whose story is the drama of history itself. For them, the human story is one small part of a far vaster narrative, one in which humanity as we know it is only a transitional phase. As they understand it, fairly soon (most of them believe it will be within a century) mankind will be replaced by some kind of "successor being," whether through bioengineering or mechanical means. In other words, these futurists believe mankind will be made obsolete by products of our own creation. Humanity's successors – much more durable, and vastly more intelligent than we are – will explore and populate the universe in ways we cannot. We small, fragile mortals with our weak human flesh and minuscule lifespans will become a kind of pathetic vestige – perhaps kept around as living fossils.

These trends have been cautioned against by more conservative thinkers such as Frances Fukuyama and the chairman of the President's Committee on Bioethics, Leon Kass, both of whom show a greater awareness of and feeling for the complexities of human life and nature. Kass and Fukuyama advocate a more measured and supervised development of technology – one that will prevent any serious undermining of humanity. Both post-Zionism and post-humanism deny the uniqueness and lasting value of that which they would supercede. The remarkable story of the Jews' return to their ancient homeland is retold by post-Zionists such as Tom Segev and Baruch Kimmerling as just another example of Western imperial colonization. Similarly, the history and development of mankind is seen by the zealots of post-humanism as merely part of a larger cosmic process. The significance of the Jews, like the significance of mankind, is thus reinterpreted out of existence. And the realities taken to be of value in and of themselves – the Jewish state, and mankind as a whole – are shown to be of relative worth, and of much smaller worth than we had imagined.

Countering this argument, it seems to me, is much easier in regard to Israel. For the unique value of Israel is attested by the lives dedicated to, and in many cases sacrificed for, its creation and continued survival. Such writers as Israel Prize winner Aharon Megged and historian Shlomo Aronson have countered the post-Zionist claims of the so-called "new historians" by reaffirming the story of Israel's founding in the context of the Jewish people's struggle to escape historical anti-Semitism and build a life of independence and freedom in their ancient homeland.

To stand for humanity against the post-human ideal is somewhat more complex, for it involves a conviction that the only real higher consciousness there can be is God's. It involves, that is, a certain kind of faith in the special quality of the human mind and character – a quality which nothing else can hope to emulate or replace. This is where post-Zionists and post-humanists find a common ground, and a common foe. Those who stand for Israel as a Jewish state, and those who stand for mankind as being of permanent intrinsic value, often do so with a theological connection in mind. It is the biblical promise which

ISRAEL NEWS

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gives each its special value.

In this sense the choice and division seems clear. Those of the post-Zionist and post-humanist camps see everything as the result of chance, of realities which are superseded by other possibilities. Those who affirm the unique value of Israel and the unique value of humanity, on the other hand, rely on their connection with a God who is beyond history and the universe, yet who operates within both. (Jerusalem Post Nov 9)
The writer is author of Small Acts of Kindness: Striving for Derech Eretz in Everyday Life, to be published by Urim later this year.

A Civil Servant's 'Neutrality' By Andrew Srulevitch

In a recent interview with *The Jordan Times*, UNRWA Commissioner-General Peter Hansen said, "I challenge [the Israeli government] to produce anything I've said that's been one-sided or unbalanced." As the only non-governmental organization exclusively mandated to monitor the integrity of the United Nations, UN Watch will gladly pick up that gauntlet.

The UN Charter requires UN officials to have "the highest standards of efficiency, competence, and integrity." Hansen fails this test, having demonstrated his pro-Palestinian bias on several occasions.

Hansen's partiality was most prominently on display last year during Operation Defensive Shield. He demanded on April 7, 2002, that Israel "end this pitiless assault on civilian refugee camps."

Months later, in a July 22 press release, Hansen admitted that "undoubtedly, there were weapons and munitions that had been produced in the camps, as had been the case in Jenin."

Having headed UNRWA for over seven years, Hansen could not in good faith have been ignoring of terrorist activities in the camps.

Jenin was also the subject of Hansen's most infamous statement. On April 18, he led a UN delegation there, after which he said: "I had hoped that the horror stories of Jenin were exaggerated and influenced by the emotions engaged, but I am afraid these were not exaggerated and that Jenin camp residents lived through a human catastrophe that has few parallels in recent history." The most well-known of these "horror stories" was Saeb Erekat's claim to CNN that 500 Palestinians had been killed. Not only did Hansen's statement give this Palestinian lie a UN endorsement, his reference to a human cost with "few parallels in recent history" exposed Hansen's one-sided sympathies. Only three weeks before Hansen's statement, a suicide bomber murdered 29 Israelis on the eve of Pessah in Netanya – killing indiscriminately an even greater number of civilians than were killed accidentally in Jenin. One of the deadliest terror attacks in Israel's history apparently slipped his mind. When challenged about his statement at the Commission on Human Rights, UNRWA replied: "The commissioner-general made this statement after leading a UN delegation into the Jenin refugee camp as soon as humanitarian workers were allowed in after the fighting died down. The report of the secretary-general confirms that assessment." In fact, Kofi Annan's report contradicts Hansen's statement. Referring to the Palestinian propaganda, the secretary-general calls it – in diplomatic language – a lie: "A senior Palestinian official alleged in mid-April that some 500 were killed, a figure that has not been substantiated in light of the evidence that has emerged."

Nor does the secretary-general's report confirm Hansen's statement that the battle in Jenin had "few parallels in recent history." Kofi Annan makes no comparative assessment, reporting only the consensus opinion that there were 52 Palestinian deaths in Jenin, and noting that "Human Rights Watch

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By his children Louis and Meyer & Sylvia Zeifman

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documented 22 civilians among the 52 dead."

Hansen has also tried to suppress Palestinian abuse of UNRWA facilities. UNRWA's July 22, 2002, press release asserted that UNRWA is responsible only for the integrity of its own facilities, not the policing of the entire camps, and "[Hansen] could say with absolute certainty that there were no questionable activities in any UNRWA installations."

Yet, at the December 5, 2001, meeting of signatories to the Fourth Geneva Convention, Hansen admitted: "Outside parties have entered UNRWA schools in the Gaza Strip and shot at Israeli positions," and "armed Palestinians have on occasions entered UNRWA schools in the Gaza Strip during the last year."

Hansen may also have covered up the involvement of Palestinian UNRWA employees in terrorist organizations. Reacting to the death of two UNRWA employees, including Osama Tahrawi, in an Israeli missile attack in Gaza last December, Hansen said: "This loss of civilian lives, of people working for a humanitarian UN Agency, is completely unacceptable."

But was Tahrawi a civilian? The al-Aksa Martyrs Brigades reportedly claimed him as a member, and his mother told a New York Times reporter: "All the young men here left their houses. Some had guns, some not. Osama had a gun."

These are just a few examples – independent of any Israeli government allegations – of Hansen's failures to live up to the standards expected of an international civil servant.

Additionally, Israel claims that one UNRWA employee admitted to using an UNRWA ambulance to transport arms for Hamas, while another used an UNRWA vehicle to hide armed terrorists en route to an attack.

In the end, Hansen himself provided the most damning evidence of bias. In the very same interview in which he proclaimed his objectivity and issued his challenge to the Israel government, he dropped all pretense of neutrality. After characterizing the two sides to the conflict as "asymmetrical" militarily, he asserted that Israelis and Palestinians were also "asymmetrical in the legitimacy of their cause."

The challenge for Hansen is going to be defending that statement and keeping his job. (Jerusalem Post Nov 11)

The writer is executive director of UN Watch.

Moshe Katsav is Wrong By Evelyn Gordon

The average Jewish Israeli, according to the latest monthly poll conducted by the Tami Steinmetz Center's Peace Index project, is less gullible than the initiators of the Geneva understandings undoubtedly hoped.

They may have scored with US Secretary of State Colin Powell, who hypocritically gushed last week that "projects such as [this] are important in helping to sustain an atmosphere of hope." (Had a group of Democratic congressmen negotiated a draft peace agreement with Saddam Hussein in the run-up to this year's Iraq war, would Powell also have viewed that as "helping to sustain an atmosphere of hope"?)

But a resounding 65 percent of Jewish Israelis declared that peace negotiations by private individuals, such as those that produced the Geneva document, are illegitimate, even if technically legal, because they undermine the elected government's status. Only 28% deemed such behavior legitimate.

Moreover, substantial majorities viewed the document's Israeli sponsors as incapable of representing the national interest. Yossi Beilin was perceived this way by 61% of Jewish Israelis (only 18% thought the opposite), Amram Mitzna by 57% (22%) and Avraham Burg by 41% (26%). That is precisely why Beilin, who vied for places on two Knesset lists, Labor and Meretz, in the last elections, failed to win a realistic slot on either one; why Burg lost the Labor Party leadership contest to Binyamin Ben-Eliezer; and why Mitzna, after becoming Labor's leader, led his party to the most resounding defeat in its history, garnering half the number of seats that Likud did.

Nevertheless, Beilin and friends believe they have a secret weapon: Israelis' well-known impatience. This impatience is epitomized by President Moshe Katsav, who reportedly told the Geneva gang last week: "We have to make a strategic change. In the past three years, we have tried everything within a very specific strategic framework. We have tried all sorts of political initiatives and all sorts of military initiatives. The time has come for a change of strategy, a different way of dealing with the problem. Israeli society is ready for it, and is ready for the change in mentality." (Since Katsav has not denied this quote in the week since it appeared on Haaretz's front page, he presumably considers it accurate).

On a factual level, Katsav's comment is inane: The Geneva understandings, far from representing a "change in strategy," are a direct continuation of the Oslo strategy that produced the intifada in the first place.

Far more troubling, however, is the warped understanding of international relations that this comment reflects: the presumption that all conflicts are necessarily solvable within three years, and if we have failed to solve ours within that time frame, our own behavior must be to blame. In fact, most major conflicts between democracies and non-democracies take decades rather than years to resolve – because resolution generally requires a sea change on the non-democracy's part. The Arab-Israeli conflict, of which the current intifada is

merely the latest round, is an excellent example.

It took 30 years and four wars before Israel signed its first peace treaty with an Arab country (Egypt), and what enabled that breakthrough was not any change in Israeli policy, but Cairo's decision to abandon its goal of driving the Jews into the sea and accept the Jewish state's existence. Without this Egyptian turnaround, no peace agreement would have been possible.

Similarly, the Cold War lasted almost five decades, and ended not because of any revolution in American policy, but because the Soviet Union collapsed – and with it, the ideology of worldwide communist revolution. Without an end to Soviet efforts to dominate and subvert countries around the globe, peace would have been impossible.

The India-Pakistan conflict, which has involved three hot wars over the last five decades, remains unresolved to this day, and India continues to suffer Pakistani-inspired terror attacks on a regular basis (though most, unlike the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, merit only a few lines in the papers).

Perhaps the best parallel to the intifada, however, is the Irish Troubles: a terrorist war that killed close to 500 people in its worst year (1972) and continued at a lower level (60-120 deaths a year) throughout the 1980s and most of the 1990s. In total, this conflict lasted three decades before a peace deal was signed – and that agreement, too, was made possible only by a radical turnabout in the IRA's position: a decision to halt its terror campaign, despite having failed to achieve its goal of uniting Ireland and Northern Ireland.

Whether the agreement will survive is an open question: It was suspended last year because of the IRA's refusal to disarm. Yet it remains alive, however fragilely, because the IRA has honored its declared cease-fire for the last five years – unlike the Palestinians, who began violating their declared cease-fire the moment the Oslo Accord was signed (suicide bombings alone killed 132 people from 1994-96).

Unpleasant though it may be to acknowledge that some things are beyond our control, the unavoidable lesson of history is that no conflict is resolvable unless both sides want peace.

Until that point is reached, all that is possible is conflict management: attempting to keep your casualties as low as possible without conceding key goals. On this front, Israel could certainly do better – but that would not change the fact that there is thus far no evidence of Palestinian willingness to live in peace with us.

And until there is, no "change of strategy" on Israel's part will end the violence. (Jerusalem Post Nov 11)

Devaluing Democracy By Jonathan Rosenblum

The anniversary of the Rabin assassination invariably triggers countless laments over the state of Israeli democracy. Last Thursday, for instance, one talk show discussed a recent poll showing that a majority of Israelis value a strong leader more than democracy. Such surveys prove, in the eyes of Israel's elites, that the hoi polloi are no more fit for self-rule than they were thought to be in ancient Athens.

Rather than pointing fingers, however, our cultural elite should consider its own role in devaluing democracy. By cynically manipulating the terms "democracy" and "the rule of law," they have convinced most Israelis that these concepts are mere covers for the preservation of elite power. The old elites, as Professor Ruth Gavison told Ari Shavit nearly four years ago, "aggrandize the power of the Supreme Court... to curb the democratization of [Israeli society]."

The settlements are often portrayed as hothouses that nurture violent proto-fascists. Yet those eager to place the settlers outside of the realm of legitimate opinion are not exactly disciples of John Stuart Mill's free marketplace of ideas themselves. In no other democratic country do the cultural elites expend so much energy attempting to suppress opinions with which they disagree. Israel's self-styled civil libertarians manifest more concern that too much information might confuse the lower orders than with the public's right to know.

Thus the open-skies policy for the allocation of the radio band advocated by the 1997 Peled Commission was never implemented. Thus Professor Mordechai Kremnitzer, chairman of the Israeli Press Association, who once decried the bombing of Radio Palestine as an infringement of press freedom, sees no need for a station like Arutz 7.

Like Yossi Sarid, who opposes "sectoral" stations, Kremnitzer dismisses the perception of hundreds of thousands of Israelis that Israel Radio and Army Radio, which maintain a monopoly on radio news, are themselves sectoral stations, representing the views of the cultural elite to which Kremnitzer and Sarid belong.

Also accused of having failed to absorb democratic values are Jews hailing from Arab lands. Yet can one blame them for being skeptical of the "rule of law" when they compare the enormous resources devoted to the prosecution of Aryeh Deri to the lackluster investigation of the 1999 Barak election campaign?

Knesset member Isaac Herzog claims to believe that what State Comptroller Eliezer Goldberg dubbed "the greatest election scam ever" was perfectly legal. But if so, why did he create dozens of fictitious non-profit organizations, which issued fake receipts, and why did he refuse to answer police investigators and urge other witnesses to forget certain conversations?

As Gavison has said, the accumulation of cases has simply grown too large to convincingly deny that there is "an element of persecution" - i.e., discrimination - in the criminal justice system. Consider the closing of the file on Meretz whip Zehava Gal-On, despite a witness who said Gal-On ordered, as head of the Center for Peace, preparation of a false report to the EU on an NIS 80,000 conference that never took place, and another witness who said she requested fake price estimates to retroactively support the false report.

The Supreme Court, the State Attorney's Office, and the media view themselves as a holy troika defending democratic values against the barbarians at the gate. But Attorney-General Elyakim Rubinstein's report on Cmdr. Moshe Mizrahi, head of the Police Investigations Department, raises the age-old question: Who will guard the guardians?

Three years after allegations against Mizrahi first surfaced, Rubinstein now confirms that Mizrahi maintained massive dossiers marked "political" collected in the course of wiretaps of leading politicians. That material included political polls commissioned by parties and discussions of political strategy. In addition, Mizrahi ordered the filming of intimate sexual encounters and retained the pictures. Nevertheless, Mizrahi has received continued support from State Attorney Edna Arbel and leading journalists. Arbel originally recommended against investigating Mizrahi, and last week, after Rubinstein recommended his dismissal, her letter disputing her superior's recommendation was leaked.

Readers of Haaretz, the self-styled paper "for those who think," could have learned almost nothing of the attorney-general's report. Haaretz devoted more copy to Arbel's defense of Mizrahi than to Rubinstein's 68-page report. A reader of Haaretz would never have known that Mizrahi hid from his superiors the existence of the political files, or that those he ordered to transcribe the wiretaps repeatedly complained that the transcriptions went far beyond the scope of court orders, or that material from Mizrahi's files appeared in the reporting of Yediot Aharonot's Mordechai Gilat (who now recommends Mizrahi for the Israel Prize). Abandoning the traditional civil libertarian solicitude for personal privacy and concern with encroaching government, Haaretz demanded that Police Insp.-Gen. Shlomo Aharonishky and Internal Security Minister Tzahi Hanegbi hasten to express their full confidence in "the system." Surveying this spectacle, it is hard to gainsay the conclusion of Ma'ariv editor Amnon Dankner: "In Israeli public life, it is no longer important what you do, but to which club you belong."

Nothing, however, undermines the public trust democracy requires faster than the feeling that the playing field is uneven and one side gets to make all the rules. (Jerusalem Post Nov 10)

National Paralysis By Daniel Doron

How can they get away with it? How can the leader of a union federation that accumulated over NIS 130 billion in debt in workers' pension funds entrusted to its care appear in public and claim that he is launching a mega strike to save these ruined pension funds?

How can he and his cohorts (more likely his true bosses), the thuggish heads of the public monopoly unions, people who have despoiled the Israeli economy in order to garner special privileges, pretend that they are launching their destructive campaign to protect the weaker workers, whom they have been constantly harming? Why does the public, and especially the hundreds of thousands of workers whose future is imperiled, those who found that their savings were either squandered or stolen (like the construction-union workers), put up with the Histadrut's attempt to regain control of their pension funds in order to continue exploiting them for their political and personal purposes?

For that matter, how is it that Israelis generally, unlike the rest of humanity, don't care enough about pocketbook issues, issues that in most democracies are the most politically contentious? Why did less than 50 percent show up for municipal elections, where the issues are really of immediate concern: how much tax to pay (usually exorbitant amounts) and what they get in return (usually waste and corruption).

Israelis pride themselves on not being freiers - suckers - yet they work more than half their working lives to pay taxes to politicians who openly squander their hard-earned incomes. They pay heavily for "free" health and educational services that are so deficient that they must supplement them with costly gray education and health care.

The banks rob them blind with usurious interest rates on overdrafts, with high fixed rates on mortgages and low interest payments on savings.

Public monopolies make them pay dearly for water, electricity, transportation etc. Private monopolies overcharge them by 30% to 50% on practically everything they consume, including cheap imports, and this from heavily taxed salaries. Yet the consumer seems to bravely bear all these burdens. Why?

The answer seems obvious. They are simply too exhausted by their effort to survive, and too confused by prevailing myths to mount an effective opposition against the massive power of the government, the Histadrut and the plutocratic

monopolies.

They complain a lot, they feel very despondent but they cannot seem to find a way to protect themselves by action. The chief cause of their exhaustion is of course the security situation. They take in their stride the personal, social and economic toll exacted by road accidents. But they apparently cannot bear the uncertainty of the conflict with the Palestinian Arabs. After each disappointment, they anxiously ask *mayihyeh?* - What is going to happen? As if bitter national conflicts are given to immediate solution the way our utopians promise.

When reality brings a rude awakening, when Israelis start realizing that the Arab-Israeli conflict will probably not be resolved in less time than it took the more civilized France and Germany to resolve their conflict, they get as deeply depressed as they earlier waxed euphoric. Still many Israelis keep climbing the roller coaster of the Oslo-Geneva false hopes, exhausting themselves like so many manic-depressives. In addition, most families find it close to impossible to make ends meet. Breadwinners have to scurry between various jobs while accumulating huge overdrafts. You can understand why most have no energy left to liberate themselves from our debilitating economic system.

But even if they had the strength to fight, they probably would not know what to fight. They realize that our system is dysfunctional, but they have been led to believe by a leftist educational system and media that Israel's economic problems cannot be resolved before "the occupation is over" and a Palestinian state is established.

They have also been convinced that Israel has great economic problems because it has become "too capitalistic" (even though the economy is the most concentrated and uncompetitive in the West) because it is plagued by "cutthroat competition" and by "terrible Thatcherite excesses" that impoverish the poor and create a dangerous "income gap."

So until a Palestinian state is established, our public-opinion molders argue, until wealth is redistributed by means of heavy taxation, and an extensive welfare system is amply financed (beyond the 33% of the budget that transfer payments already consume) there can be no economic improvement.

Sadly, even some of the most ardent proponents of economic reform, like Haaretz columnist Nehemia Strassler, promote this misconception.

Sure, peace with the Palestinians would greatly help. But after Oslo, how can a reasonable person assume that when xenophobia wins huge political support among the hate-indoctrinated Arab masses the mere formation of another Arab state will enhance peace rather than war and terrorism?

And why not engage in desperately needed reforms while we wait for the messianic hope of a Palestinian state to be realized? Can we not break up our ruinous bank duopoly until Yasser Arafat is crowned head of a peaceable Palestinian state?

The anti-reform peace argument is fortified by the crypto-Marxist ethos that still dominates in Israel, especially among the chattering classes.

All the social sciences and humanities departments in Israeli universities (financially supported, of course, by American Jewish capitalists!) preach religiously a rabid anti-capitalist, pro-Marxist line, indoctrinating rather than educating their students. Indoctrination starts, however, already in high school. Inspired by their university mentors, teachers use Ministry of Education-approved textbooks that posit that the Industrial Revolution was a disaster because it increased poverty and inequality.

Luckily, a prophet named Marx liberated the oppressed masses just as Moses freed the Jews from Pharaoh. The Bolshevik revolution failed, these texts teach, because Russia was not socially ready for it, lacking a middle class and a true proletariat, while its peasants were not educated enough to grasp Marxian economics. The Soviet Union, it is further claimed, built the Iron Curtain to protect itself from monopolistic American incursions into European markets and from an aggressive American cold war.

Of the few hundred top-rated students, from all faculties whom I have taught in the last three years, only a handful have heard about Adam Smith and The Federalist Papers or read Milton Friedman or Friedrich Hayek. They all knew Marx, of course, and were well versed in postmodernist claptrap. Few had a notion what economics was all about, surprisingly not even those who studied economics. They studied it technically, but knew little about the ideas behind the discipline. During the 30 years that the Hebrew University's library has had a copy of Friedman's Capitalism and Freedom, it has been borrowed about 17 times!

So poor Binyamin Netanyahu. He has to shoulder the whole burden of economic reform and overcome the enormous resistance from the so-called social lobby and from the plutocrats and the Marxists in business, in the media and academia practically by himself with little or no public support. If only we had in Israel an active civil society, the majority pro-reform forces would not have had such deadly paralysis inflicted on them.

The writer is president of The Israel Center for Social and Economic Progress, an independent pro-market policy think tank. (Jerusalem Post: Nov 5)

The Alliance is Dead By Mark Steyn

Here's a roundup of recent items from the world's press you may have missed:

Item 1: In the past two weeks, two Toronto-bound El Al flights had to be diverted to other airports after credible terrorist threats were made about using surface-to-air missiles against them. The Canadian transport minister, David Collenette, responded by suggesting that the Israeli airline's service to Pearson International Airport might be ended.

Item 2: In the bloody attack on the Baghdad hotel of Deputy Defense Secretary Paul Wolfowitz, much of the death and destruction was caused by French 68mm missiles – "in pristine condition," according to one US officer who inspected the rocket tubes and assembly. Saddam Hussein had evidently acquired these missiles from the French somewhat (to put it tactfully) recently.

Item 3: From *Le Nouvel Observateur*: "In a European Commission poll, 59 percent of Europeans think Israel is the greatest menace to peace in the world."

Item 4: In Britain's *Guardian*, Tariq Ali ended this week's column on the mounting American (and NGO) death toll in Iraq thus: "Iraqis have one thing of which they can be proud and of which British and US citizens should be envious: an opposition."

IN THE days after 9/11, I wrote that one of the casualties of the day's events would be the Western alliance: "The US taxpayers' willingness to pay for the defense of Canada and Europe has contributed to the decay of America's so-called allies, freeing them to disband their armed forces, flirt with dictators and gangster states, and essentially convert themselves to semi-non-aligned."

Two years on, most governments, at least officially, and most commentators, at least in the mainstream press, still don't believe the relationship between America and its allies is in a terminal state. But the above quartet of stories illustrates why it can't be put back together. Collenette's response to terrorists is to take it out on their targets. Terrorists are threatening to use SAMs against El Al? No problem, we'll get rid of El Al. That's a great message to send.

How soon before similar threats are phoned in to similarly jelly-spined jurisdictions in Europe? Pretty soon El Al won't be flying anywhere. But no matter: Air Canada and Air France and Lufthansa will still be flying to Tel Aviv. At least until the anonymous phone calls start hinting at fresh targets.

The threats against El Al came via phone calls from the Toronto area from terrorists claiming to have heat-seeking missiles. Police subsequently found a cache of weapons, including a German-made shoulder rocket launcher that was smuggled into Canada through the ingenious method of dropping it in the mail and letting the post office deliver it.

So there are two approaches to this problem: You can crack down on local terrorist cells and try to get government agencies not to deliver their rocket launchers; or you can ban El Al. Collenette inclines to the latter.

This is a man, by the way, who marked the first anniversary of Sept. 11 by publicly regretting the fall of the Soviet Union because now there is nobody to check America's "bullying."

In the war on terror, the United States believes in preemption; Canada, like many other allies, believes in preemptive surrender. These two strategies are incompatible.

Just suppose that one of those French rockets had killed Wolfowitz. One of the greatest fictions of the interminable debate on Euro-American differences over Iraq is that it's an argument about the means, not the end. If only President Bush had been a little less Texan, less arrogant, less bullying, he could have brought the French and Germans 'round. After all, everyone agrees Saddam is a very bad man.

Not the French and Germans. There's too much evidence suggesting the main reason they were unable to join the Bush side in this war is because they'd already signed on to the other team and they'd decided – if they'll forgive a descent into the ghastly vernacular of the cretinous Yanks – to dance with them what brings you. They're being admirably consistent about this: At the recent Madrid conference, France and Germany both refused to pony up one single euro to Iraqi reconstruction. It was never about the means, only the end.

America and Old Europe have different objectives in Iraq, and those objectives are incompatible.

FIFTY-NINE percent of Europeans think Israel is the biggest threat to world peace. Only 59 percent? What's wrong with the rest of you?

But, hey, don't worry. In Britain, it's 60 percent; Germany, 65 percent; Austria, 69 percent; the Netherlands, 74 percent.

The good news is that Israel won't be a threat to world peace much longer – at least not if Iran's nuclear program carries on running rings around the International Atomic Energy Agency and the ayatollahs fulfill their pledge to solve the problem of the Zionist Entity once and for all.

Let us leave for another day the question of whether Israel is really a bigger global menace than North Korea. The fact is that Sept. 11 bound America to Israel in ways that oblige Washington to regard European distaste for Jews as more than a mere social faux pas.

Given the rate of Islamic immigration to Europe, those anti-Israeli numbers are only heading in one direction. At present demographic rates, by 2020 the majority of children in Holland – i.e., the population under 18 – will be Muslim. What do you figure that 74 percent will be up to by then? 85 percent? 96

percent?

If Americans think it's difficult getting the continentals on side now, wait another decade. In that sense, the Israelis are the canaries in the coal mine.

There is an increasingly compelling demographic logic in Continental hostility to Washington. America's and Europe's world views are now incompatible.

The house journal of the United Kingdom's leftie political-media establishment prints the assertion that Americans and Britons can only envy the vigor of the Iraqi "opposition." So that's what Democratic presidential candidate Howard Dean's doing wrong! He should be loading up ambulances with rockets and firing them into hospitals. That's the way to draw attention to the problem of affordable health care.

When I was in the Sunni Triangle, I met many Iraqis who were grateful to the Americans, some who wanted a more visible US presence on the ground, a few who resented the infidel occupier – but not one who was as gung ho for the Saddamite holdouts and Syrian and Iranian opportunists as the average European columnist.

For Tariq Ali, and for Collenette in Canada, and for most Continental politicians, even on Sept. 11, on the day itself, the issue was never terrorism; the issue was always America. Lesson: Washington and Europe do not agree on the problem, so they're hardly likely to agree on the solution.

It's not about Bush. It's about profound changes in Europe and Canada that cannot be reconciled. The Western alliance is over. (Jerusalem Post Nov 11)

The writer is senior contributing editor for Hollinger Inc.

The Demographic Scare - Disinformation Exposed

The Failure of Demographic Predictions

*In 1900, the leading Jewish historian and demographer, Dubnov, cautioned Herzl against the establishment of a Jewish State: "By the year 2000 there will be only 500,000 Jews in the land of Israel." In 2000 there were 5 million Jews in Israel!

*In 1948, Israel's Chief Statistician, Prof. Bakki, lobbied Prime Minister Ben-Gurion to postpone the establishment of the Jewish State: "By 1968 there will be an Arab majority in Israel (Green Line)." In 1968 there was a 17% Arab minority.

*In 1967, Prime Minister Eshkol was pressured to give away Gaza, Judea&Samaria: "By 1987 there will be an Arab majority west of the Jordan River." In 1987 there was a 37% Arab minority west of the Jordan River.

*In 2003, scare tactics are employed to roll Israel back to the 1949 Green Line: Arab numbers are inflated, Jewish birth rate is deflated, some 500,000 Christian immigrants from the former USSR (mostly relatives of Jewish Olim) and foreign laborers are included in the "Arab column", the effect of wars, terrorism, economy and education is downplayed, Arab emigration is overlooked and Jewish immigration (Aliya) is severely understated.

A Systematic Jewish Majority West of the Jordan River

2003: 60% Jews (over 5 million) and 40% Arabs (3.7 million: 1.2 within the Green Line, 1.5 in Judea&Samaria and 1 in Gaza).

1993: 60% Jews (4.3 million) and 40% Arabs (2.8 million: 973,000 within the Green Line, 1.1 in Judea&Samaria and 750,000 in Gaza).

Growth of Jewish Population - a Systematic Proclivity

The Jewish population west of the Jordan River has grown 164 times since 1882, while the Arabs have grown 6 times.

The Jewish proportion has grown from 9% in 1917 (55,000) to 33% in 1947 (600,000), to 61% in 1950 (1.1 million) and 60% in 2003 (over 5 million).

A Decline in Arab Birth Rate

In 1965: 45 births per 1,000. In 2003: 36 per 1,000.

In 1967 the Arab birth rate was 3 times of the Jewish birth rate. In 2003 it is twice the Jewish birth rate (8 children per family in 1970, 7 in 1985 and 5.6 in 2002).

The Demographic Scare Tactics Ignore Jewish Immigration (Aliya)

Aliya – rather than birth rate – has been the key factor of population growth since the 19th century. There has been Aliya every year since 1888! In 1987, on the eve of the "Soviet Aliya", Prof. De La Pergula contended that Soviet Jews would not immigrate to Israel. One million did. Until 1917 0.2 per 1,000 Jews immigrated to Israel, 1 per 1,000 did until 1947 and 6 per 1,000 did until 1986. The average annual Aliya – since 1948 until the "Soviet Aliya" – was 50,000. It can be increased by improving infrastructures, taxation and bureaucracy.

Demography can be changed by economic and administrative means!

The threatening topography of Judea & Samaria cannot be changed!

This is one of a series of ads being placed in Ma'ariv by the Ariel Centre for Policy Research. (ACPR Nov 9)
