



Jerusalem 3:57 Toronto 4:30

Events...

Friday December 3, 9:00pm

Oneg Shabbat with **David Wilder**
of Hevron at 94 Langtry Place, Thornhill

Quote of the Week...

Bloc Quebecois Mourns Dead Terrorist Mass Murderer

"Mr. Speaker, it was with great sadness last week that we learned of the death of Palestinian leader, Yasser Arafat. Mr. Arafat symbolized the aspirations of the Palestinian people for more than 30 years. In 1988 he said in a speech to the UN, "We reach for the olive branch because it sprouts in our hearts from the tree of the homeland, the tree of freedom". In 1994, Yasser Arafat won the Nobel Peace Prize in conjunction with Yitzhak Rabin and Shimon Pérès for paving the way to signing an accord between his people and the people of Israel. Unfortunately, the Oslo accords that had inspired so much hope in the Israelis and the Palestinians did not culminate in the creation of a viable Palestinian State under international law. On behalf of the Bloc Québécois, I want to express our deep condolences to the Palestinian people. We share their pain and want to reiterate our hope for a fair resolution of the conflict and lasting peace for both peoples. - Francine Lalonde, MP (La Pointe-de-l'Île, BQ) in Canada's Parliament on Monday.

Commentary...

Arafat's Legacy By Charles Krauthammer

He was single-minded, but not about statehood or a real peace.

The outpouring of tributes to Yasser Arafat is marked by two themes: (1) his greatness as creator, sustainer and leader of the Palestinian cause, and (2) the abrupt opening of an opportunity for its success now that he is gone.

The fawning world leaders saying this seem oblivious to the obvious paradox. If he was such a great leader, how is it that he left his people so destitute, desperate, wounded and bereft that only his passing gives them a hope for a fulfillment of their deepest aspirations?

Arafat's apologists explain this by saying that is because he had one weakness: indecisiveness. In the end, he just could not pull the trigger. When offered the deal of the century by Bill Clinton and Ehud Barak at Camp David in 2000, he was somehow too conflicted, too ambivalent to say yes.

Ambivalent? Nonsense. Yasser Arafat was supremely decisive and single-minded. He was not complex and, regarding Israel's fate, never conflicted. Indeed the reason for his success, such as it was -- creating the Palestinian movement from which he derived fortune, fame and reverence -- was precisely his single-mindedness. Not about Palestinian statehood -- if that was his objective, he could have had his state years ago -- but about the elimination of Jewish statehood.

That was the theme of his entire life. Yes, he signed interim deals to get a foothold in Palestine. But that was always with the objective of continuing the fight from a better strategic position. It was never to conclude a lasting compromise or real peace with Israel.

That is why he died so far from his promised land. This promised land was never the West Bank and Gaza. Arafat founded Fatah in 1959 -- eight years before Israel even acquired these territories. His objective then, and until the day he died, was a Palestinian state built on the ruins of an eradicated Israel.

Bill Clinton was astonished when Arafat rejected the offer of a West Bank and Gaza state, turning down the opportunity to be its George Washington. Americans never understood that Arafat saw himself completely differently: as an anti-imperialist revolutionary in the mold of Ho Chi Minh, Mao Zedong and Fidel Castro. Like them, his motto was "revolution unto victory." Total victory. No half loaf. And given Israel's stubborn refusal to die, Arafat's cause became sustaining the struggle -- the revolution -- indefinitely, almost as an end in itself.

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

It is for this reason that, while Arafat's death does open a first chance for peace since he took over the Palestinian movement four decades ago, that chance remains remote. Why? Because the revolution continues. Arafat made sure it would survive him. He created Palestinian nationalism and shaped it in a revolutionary mold that will take years, perhaps decades, to undo.

It is a legacy in two parts: means and ends. The means? Violence. Arafat invented modern terrorism: airplane hijackings, kidnappings and the spectacular mass murder, like the Olympic massacre of 1972. Others had tried it. Arafat perfected it. He turned terrorism into a brilliantly successful political instrument, a vehicle to international recognition and respect. The man who murdered more innocent Jews than anyone since Hitler died an international hero. The president of France bowed to his casket. The secretary general ordered U.N. flags to fly at half-staff.

Arafat also bequeathed a legacy of ends: uncompromising, irredentist ends. He didn't just reject any settlement that would leave Israel intact, thereby setting a precedent that any successor dare not violate. He also raised a new generation to ensure that rejection. Deploying every instrument of propaganda -- television, radio, newspapers and, most importantly, schools and summer camps for children -- his Palestinian Authority fed his people a diet of such virulent anti-Semitism and denial of the Jewish connection with the land that no successor will even be in position to contemplate breaking Arafat's rejectionist precedent.

Arafat's most cherished achievement was to so poison the well that the revolution -- until total victory -- continues long after he is gone. As soon as he died, the most murderous terrorist wing of his Fatah movement, the al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades, changed its name to the Yasser Arafat Martyrs Brigades.

They understood their master. Which is why the prospects for peace upon his death are far more distant than the naifs (who got him wrong all through his life) now insist. Arafat's legacy -- the romanticization of violence, the rejection of Israel, the indoctrination of a new generation in intolerance and hatred -- will require a long time to undo. It will require years, perhaps even generations. It will require brave new Palestinian leaders who are the very antithesis of Yasser Arafat. (Washington Post Nov 15)

Last Words for Arafat By Ezra Levant

Canada's respect for serial murderer misplaced

While the Western media are turning terrorist Yasser Arafat into a Muslim saint, the other Palestinian bosses are focused on something much more earthly: Where are the secret passwords to Arafat's Swiss bank accounts?

Forbes Magazine ranked Arafat the richest despot in the world, breaking the billion-dollar mark by skimming from humanitarian aid meant for impoverished Palestinians. Will that money be taken over by Arafat's political successors? Or is Arafat's young Parisian wife, Suha, the one with the secret account numbers? That the money might wind up back in the hands of Palestinian hospitals or schools is not an option.

Egypt-born Arafat cared about Arafat, not about Palestinians. If he did, he would've accepted one of the dozen plans for Palestinian statehood offered to him, including the extraordinary one made by former Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak and former U.S. President Bill Clinton at Camp David four years ago. That offer -- Israeli land and U.S. money -- was a capitulation to everything Arafat claimed to want.

Faced with a choice of going legit or terror, Arafat chose the latter and launched the second intifadah riots. Gaza and the West Bank are just the latest neighbourhoods he had trashed, Jordan and Lebanon being the first. But don't let that interrupt the media beatification.

But what about Prime Minister Paul Martin? His official statement said "Chairman Arafat personified the Palestinian people's struggle to see their right to self-determination realized" and praised Arafat's "influence" and "efforts" for a "comprehensive peace."

The word "terrorist" was nowhere in the obituary for the man who masterminded more than a thousand murders, from murdering Israeli athletes at the Munich Olympics to an Israeli school massacre that was the template for this year's butchery in the school in Russia. Martin did call the man "chairman." For a statement issued on Remembrance Day, Martin

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didn't remember much about Arafat's 40-year terror spree.

Martin's words are one thing. But Martin dispatched Foreign Minister Pierre Pettigrew to Arafat's funeral. Who knows what Pettigrew said in private? We can guess, based on what Pettigrew says in public. His first utterances on the Mideast after his appointment were to condemn Jews for living in the West Bank, and to state Israel is the obstacle to peace. Not too different from Arafat's point of view, actually.

Our foreign minister went to the terrorist's funeral. No word as to whether or not he fired off a few AK-47 rounds into the air, or just nodded approvingly. With so many guns being shot and effigies being burned, it's safe to assume Pettigrew didn't inquire into the status of Canadian foreign aid, siphoned off to pay for Mrs. A's shopping sprees in Paris, or why suicide bombing is taught to children in Canadian-sponsored Palestinian schools.

That wouldn't show Canada's famous even-handedness, though.

Speaking of even-handedness, Martin did not send a foreign minister to U.S. President Ronald Reagan's funeral earlier this year. The man who ended the Cold War without firing a shot, the most popular U.S. president in a generation, the one whose free trade treaty with Canada is the main source of our current wealth, the rejuvenator of the greatest democracy in the world, did not earn that respect.

But a gangster, the thief of a billion dollars in humanitarian aid, the serial rejecter of reasonable Palestinian statehood, the murderer of children did earn Canada's highest respects. That says more about our government than it does about Arafat. (Calgary Sun Nov 15)

Arafat the Monster By Jeff Jacoby

Yasser Arafat died at the age of 75, lying in bed and surrounded by familiar faces. He left this world peacefully, unlike the thousands of victims he sent to early graves.

In a better world, the PLO chief would have met his end on a gallows, hanged for mass murder much as the Nazi chiefs were hanged at Nuremberg. In a better world, the French president would not have paid a visit to the bedside of such a monster. In a better world, well-wishers would not be flocking to the hospital grounds to create a makeshift shrine of flowers, candles, and admiring messages. In a better world, George Bush would not have said, on hearing the first reports that Arafat had died, "God bless his soul."

God *bless* his soul? What a grotesque thing to say! Bless the soul of the man who brought modern terrorism to the world? Who sent his agents to slaughter athletes at the Olympics, blow airliners out of the sky, bomb schools and pizzerias, machine-gun passengers in airline terminals? Who lied, cheated, and stole without compunction? Who inculcated the vilest culture of Jew-hatred since the Third Reich? Human beings might stoop to bless a creature so evil -- as indeed Arafat was blessed, with money, deference, even a Nobel Prize -- but God, I am quite sure, will damn him for eternity.

Arafat always inspired flights of nonsense from Western journalists, and his last two weeks were no exception.

Arafat's "undisputed courage as a guerrilla leader," Derek Brown wrote in *The Guardian*, was exceeded only "by his extraordinary courage" as a peace negotiator. But it is an odd kind of courage that expresses itself in shooting unarmed victims and exhorting other people to become suicide bombers -- or in signing peace accords and then flagrantly violating their terms.

Another commentator, columnist Gwynne Dyer, asked, "So what did Arafat do right?" The answer: He drew worldwide attention to the Palestinian cause, "for the most part by successful acts of terror." In other words, butchering innocent human beings was "right" since it served an ulterior political motive. No doubt that thought brings daily comfort to all those who were forced to bury a child, parent, or spouse because of Arafat's "successful" terrorism.

Some journalists couldn't wait for Arafat's actual death to begin weeping for him. Take the BBC's Barbara Plett, who burst into tears on the day he was airlifted out of the West Bank. "When the helicopter carrying the frail old man rose above his ruined compound," Plett reported from Ramallah, "I started to cry." Normal people don't weep for brutal murderers, but Plett made it clear that her empathy for Arafat -- whom she praised as "a symbol of Palestinian unity, steadfastness, and resistance" -- was heartfelt:

"I remember well when the Israelis re-conquered the West Bank more than two years ago," she said, "how they drove their tanks and bulldozers into Mr. Arafat's headquarters, trapping him in a few rooms, and throwing a military curtain around Ramallah. I remember how Palestinians admired his refusal to flee under fire. They told me: 'Our leader is sharing our pain, we are all under the same siege.' And so was I." Such is the state of journalism at the BBC, whose reporters do not seem to have any trouble reporting, dry-eyed, on the pain of Arafat's victims. (That is, when they mention them -- which Plett's teary bon voyage to Arafat did not.)

And what about those victims? Why were they scarcely remembered in the drawn-out Arafat deathwatch?

How is it possible to reflect on Arafat's most enduring legacy -- the rise of modern terrorism -- without recalling the legions of men, women, and children whose lives he and his followers destroyed? If Osama bin Laden were on his deathbed, would we neglect to mention all those he murdered on 9/11?

It would take an encyclopedia to catalog all of the evil Arafat committed. But that is no excuse for not trying to recall at least some of it.

Perhaps his signal contribution to the practice of political terror was the introduction of warfare against children. On one black date in May 1974, three

PLO terrorists slipped from Lebanon into the northern Israeli town of Ma'alot. They murdered two parents and their child at home, then seized a local school, taking more than 100 boys and girls hostage and threatening to kill them unless a number of imprisoned terrorists were released. When Israeli troops attempted a rescue, the terrorists exploded hand grenades and opened fire on the students. By the time the horror ended, 25 people were dead; 21 of them were children.

Thirty years later, no one speaks of Ma'alot anymore. The dead children have been forgotten. Everyone knows Arafat's name, but who ever recalls the names of his victims?

So let us recall them: Ilana Turgeman. Rachel Aputa. Yocheved Mazoz. Sarah Ben-Shim'on. Yona Sabag. Yafa Cohen. Shoshana Cohen. Michal Sitrok. Malka Amrosy. Aviva Saada. Yocheved Dityi. Yaakov Levi. Yaakov Kabla. Rina Cohen. Ilana Ne'eman. Sarah Madar. Tamar Dahan. Sarah Soper. Lili Morad. David Madar. Yehudit Madar. The 21 dead children of Ma'alot -- 21 of the thousands of innocents who died at Arafat's command. *The writer is a columnist for The Boston Globe.* (Boston Globe Nov 11)

Arafat Dies, Israel Yawns By Tom Rose

Will a historic opportunity be missed?

IN ISRAEL, the Arafat deathwatch elicited nothing so much as apathy. Israelis were far more interested in news reports of the overflight of northern Israel by an unmanned Iranian spy drone operated from Lebanon--and slightly more interested in the resignation ultimatum issued, then retracted, by Finance Minister Benjamin Netanyahu--than they were in Yasser Arafat's impending demise.

Those Israelis who did care to hear the latest rumor before it was denied mostly learned it from the Fox News Channel. And the tabloids made hay with the soap opera aspects of the drama, like the public spat between Mrs. Arafat and the triumvirate of Palestinian leaders angling to assume control of Arafat's ill-zion billions. But for the most part, the Arafat story rated less interest in Gion than in Zionsville, Indiana.

Now that it has arrived, the post-Arafat era--which Israelis always said would allow a new start in Israeli-Palestinian relations--seems to have caught many of them simply indifferent. While nonchalance may be a prerequisite for sanity in this volatile region, Israel's collective detachment from an event with such profound implications for the nation must raise questions.

For all their domestic boasting about how well prepared they are for this moment, Israelis seem long on tactics and short on strategy. The defense establishment is more than capable of meeting any tactical military contingencies sparked by Arafat's demise, but the Israeli public and leaders have scarcely debated the strategic challenges it occasions, let alone reached any consensus as to how to proceed.

The agenda for the cabinet meeting of November 7 included an extensive military discussion led by Defense Minister Shaul Mofaz, who warned of "spontaneous violence" inside the Palestinian Authority and an upsurge in attempts to perpetrate terrorist attacks inside Israel--promptly followed by a spirited debate about banking legislation. Not a word about what Israel should do to strengthen the prospects for improving relations with the Palestinians, as they undergo the first leadership change in the history of their national movement.

Curiously, whereas America tends toward global overreach, deliberately seeking to influence events and trends, Israel tends toward regional underreach. Its inclination is to underestimate its power, to see itself as reactive. Not being strong enough to initiate positive changes, Israel limits its range of options to its reactions to the deeds of others. Two thousand years of accusations that the Jews control everything have left Israelis convinced that they can't control anything.

Given all that Arafat destroyed--the lives taken by modern terrorism, the hopes dashed when he led millions of Palestinians to water but would not let them drink--it's hard to imagine that his death could herald anything but better times. Yet finding an Israeli optimist is no easy task. Unlike Americans or Europeans, who assume massive change will result from Arafat's death, Israelis expect more of the same.

Israelis do not necessarily believe movements need leaders to grow in strength or malignancy. All around them are examples of Jewish religious sects, political movements, even Zionism itself, that have survived and prospered in the wake of their founders' deaths. Israel's ultra-Orthodox world consists of dozens of sects, each of which was created by a larger than life personality called a "rebbe." It is characteristic of these sects that they never replace their founding rebbe, they never countenance any change in their core beliefs or values, and they always seem to grow larger. Some have been around for hundreds of years. If these sects of Jews can carry on unchanged without leaders or new policies, why should the PLO not do the same?

Unchallenged is the notion that Israel must have no role in the looming Palestinian power struggle. As a result, a genuine opportunity to influence the future may be slipping away. Rather than stating clearly that it will never allow Palestinian society to descend into total chaos, or permit another dictator to take Arafat's place, Israel seems to be encouraging Egypt to step into the power vacuum.

This strategic void vis-à-vis the Palestinians shows that the Israelis have

not learned the very antiterror lesson they have taught others at great cost: The Palestinians cannot rid themselves of terrorists until they rid themselves of dictators.

The Oslo peace process proved a failure because it embraced the fatal premise that it wasn't freedom the Palestinians needed to build peace with Israel, it was a strong dictator. Whether Israel will now repeat its mistake of 1993, when it actively resuscitated Arafat from his near political death and granted him both a fiefdom and the means to dominate it--or merely allow others to do essentially the same--hardly matters.

Democracy is more than elections, it is a state of mind. Arafat never sought democracy. Instead of working to earn Palestinian popular support, he extorted it by violence. Arafat's death should offer a chance for something better. (Weekly Standard Nov 22)

The writer is the founder of Israel Capital Ventures, a Jerusalem based private equity fund, and former publisher of the Jerusalem Post.

Do as I Say, Not as I do By Evelyn Gordon

Why are Israeli soldiers forbidden to defend themselves the way French soldiers do?

For Israelis, last week felt rather like being in a funhouse: Familiar objects, viewed in international mirrors, were distorted beyond recognition.

The most glaring example was the worldwide amnesia over Yasser Arafat's 30-year career as a leading international terrorist. But the violence in the Ivory Coast also seemed like the funhouse reflection of an all-too-familiar scene.

On November 4, Ivory Coast's government ended an 18-month truce by launching air strikes at rebel forces. Two days later, government forces attacked the rebel stronghold of Bouake, killing nine French peacekeepers and wounding 22.

The government said the peacekeepers were unintended casualties of the attack on rebel forces, but France, rejecting this (plausible) contention, claimed that its soldiers were deliberately targeted. It therefore retaliated by destroying most of Ivory Coast's tiny air force - two planes and five helicopters - and seizing the country's major airports.

Thousands of furious Ivorians, wielding machetes, iron bars and clubs, promptly marched on Houphouet-Boigny Airport to try to retake it. Similar mobs besieged foreigners in several cities.

The French reacted to both developments with tear gas, concussion grenades, rockets and gunfire, both from ground troops ensconced in armored vehicles and from helicopter gunships.

The clashes continued all last week, with Ivory Coast President Laurent Gbagbo doing little to restrain the rioters. By the end of the week, between 27 and 62 people had been killed (depending on whose figures you believe) and over 1,000 were wounded. Almost all the casualties were Ivorian.

Up to this point, the events bear an uncanny resemblance to those of September 2000 - when Palestinians broke a seven-year-old peace treaty by launching multiple attacks on Israeli soldiers and civilians throughout the territories.

The sole difference was that here Israelis were unquestionably the intended victims: One soldier was killed by a bomb; another was shot to death by armed Palestinians attacking Joseph's Tomb (which the Oslo Accords had assigned to Israeli control); a border policeman was shot and killed by his Palestinian comrades during a joint patrol; a civilian was shot to death while shopping in the West Bank.

At the same time, mobs consisting of thousands of rock-throwers, intermingled with occasional gunmen, marched on Israeli army positions throughout the territories. Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat made no attempt to restrain the violence.

And Israel responded exactly as France did. First, it bombed empty PA buildings, causing property damage but no casualties - the equivalent (though admittedly far stupider) of France's bombing of the Ivorian air force. Second, it employed live fire against armed mobs after riot control measures such as tear gas proved ineffective.

And, just as the Ivorians suffered far more casualties than the smaller but better-armed French forces, Palestinians suffered far more casualties than the smaller but better-armed Israeli forces.

THERE, HOWEVER, the similarity ends.

In response to last week's events, the UN Security Council, the European Union, the African Union and various national leaders all condemned the Ivorian government both for launching the violence and for failing to stop it.

The Security Council began discussing an arms embargo on Ivory Coast. No one (except Ivory Coast) accused France of using excessive force; the African Union even praised the French response as having "contributed to the restoration of peace and security."

The response to the "intifada" was the exact opposite.

Rather than condemning the PA for starting the violence, the international community - with the EU, and France in particular, in the forefront - termed the violence a legitimate response to then opposition leader Ariel Sharon's peaceful visit to Judaism's holiest site, the Temple Mount, and blamed Israel for shooting back.

The Security Council (with American acquiescence) passed a resolution "deploring" the "provocation" of Sharon's visit and condemning Israel's "excessive use of force against Palestinians;" the Palestinian violence was not even mentioned.

World leaders also convened two international summits in as many weeks to pressure Israel to offer concessions to the PA to stop the violence. And several European countries slapped a partial arms embargo on Israel while simultaneously increasing financial aid to the PA - undeterred by the PA's use of such funds to buy sophisticated weaponry such as the \$15-million worth of materiel later discovered aboard the arms ship Karine A in January 2002.

The response to the Ivory Coast clashes was, of course, correct. The Ivorian government was clearly the aggressor and deserved to be treated as such.

Nor was the French reaction excessive: The only way a small force can defend itself against a much larger one, however poorly armed, is by using its superior weaponry to ensure that the mob never gets near it. Had the French withheld fire they would have been slaughtered by the Ivorians: At close quarters, clubs and iron bars are quite sufficient for that purpose.

Yet this was equally true of Israeli soldiers confronting numerically superior Palestinian mobs: Had they not used their weapons to keep the mobs at a distance, they would have been slaughtered. At close quarters (even discounting the mobs' rifle-bearing members), rocks are also quite sufficient for this purpose - as the families of several Israeli victims of rock-wielding Palestinians could testify.

And the Palestinians, like the Ivorians, were clearly the aggressors. It is hard to find any rational explanation for the world's double standard in these two cases.

Why should unprovoked but unintentional violence against French soldiers be censured while unprovoked and clearly intentional violence against Israelis is justified? Why are Israeli soldiers forbidden to defend themselves the way French soldiers do?

The international community indignantly rejects suggestions that its attitude toward Israel is tainted by anti-Semitism. But in the face of the radically different treatment meted out to France and Israel under such similar circumstances, such denials sound less than convincing. (Jerusalem Post Nov 16)

These People Deserve a State? By Yosef Goell

I am about a year older than Yasser Arafat was at his death and, I suspect, somewhat more ill than he was before his final collapse. Which is a way of begging indulgence to engage in what many would consider some very politically incorrect contemplations of the true meaning of what transpired around Arafat's death.

What we saw at the Ramallah compound where his body was flown in by two Egyptian military helicopters for burial on Friday afternoon was the true face of the Palestinian people.

There is no doubt that the frenzied mobs of tens of thousands of uncontrollable young men who prevented the unloading of the casket from the helicopter truly mourned their leader. They chose to express that mourning in an ethos of savagery, many frenziedly firing AK-47 assault rifles - whose possession was forbidden them by the post-Oslo agreements signed, and immediately flouted, by Arafat.

A dwindling number of Israelis, but more people in the West, chose to see Arafat as a romantic freedom fighter - an Arab Che Guevara who was the cultural icon of their youthful days.

There have been many movements of national liberation during the past half-century. None of them, perhaps with the exception of the Chechens, have been as murderous as the movement for Palestinian independence that Arafat created and led.

As far as we know Arafat was not part of the al-Qaida network of anti-Western terrorism created in recent years by Osama bin Laden. But he was undoubtedly bin Laden's mentor in the techniques of harnessing large-scale murder and terrorism in the service of such causes.

Arafat and the Palestinian movement he headed first came to the world's notice with the hijacking of Israeli civilian jets and the demolition of European and American ones, and the barbarous murder of 11 Israeli sportsmen at the 1972 Olympics in Munich.

The disappointing reaction of many European commentators who witnessed Arafat's murderous rampage over 30 years was basically a racist one. What else can one expect from Palestinians, and Arabs, whose rage is so deep over memories of European colonialism, new American economic and cultural imperialism and the presence of a Jewish Israel in their midst?

But what transpired on Friday belies that argument. That culture-wide sense of inchoate murderous rage does indeed pervade much of the Arab world. But it is primarily directed inwardly, against universally corrupt Arab regimes. What keeps it in check, however, are exactly those tyrannical Arab regimes.

The pre-funeral rites for Arafat at Cairo's airport were conducted with exemplary order and formal respect. That is because Hosni Mubarak's moderate but effective military dictatorship ordered that it be so, and kept the Egyptian populace away from the airport.

Nor are such armed mobs permitted in the Jordanian, Syrian and other Arab dictatorships.

Arafat's would-be successors, who were aboard the Egyptian helicopters, obviously could not control their followers; as Arafat himself did not, and mostly would not, during the 10 years since Oslo and the past

four years of the "intifada."

The most telling pictures from Ramallah on Friday were of the Palestine Authority's Saeb Erekat vainly trying to force open the door of the helicopter in the face of the mob, then escaping with his other returning colleagues and losing themselves in the crowd.

In that context it is worth recalling that until Friday many were pressuring Israel to permit Arafat's burial on the Temple Mount.

The problem all along was not merely the murderer Arafat but the Palestinian people whom he truly represented and led. It is a population with an unprecedentedly high proportion of violence-prone young men, and parents who have surrendered any hope of controlling them.

Such a population does not deserve an independent state, even if it does hold superficially democratic elections. Such an armed independent state would constitute a great danger to Israel, to the surrounding Arab world and to the stability of the Middle East and the world as a whole.

Other nationalities who are much more deserving of independence, such as the Kurds in our region, are being denied such independence for much crasser reasons of Big Power political interests.

Arafat's greatest achievement was to put the claims of the Palestinians at the head of that list. That totally undeserving claim should and can now begin to be rolled back.

On Friday, someone at the Foreign Ministry leaked a decision to begin a worldwide campaign to blacken Arafat's name after his burial. Such a campaign would be at least 30 years overdue. Today it would be flogging a dead horse.

What is needed instead is to speak the bitter truth about the Palestinian people to the world. (Jerusalem Post Nov 16)

The writer is a retired lecturer in political science and a veteran journalist.

Arafat and 'The Arab Fuhrer' By Sarah Honig

Contrary to popular mythology, Yasser Arafat wasn't the first so-called Palestinian president. His predecessor, however, didn't enjoy comparable worldwide acceptance, and the Jewish state next door wasn't yet one bit taken in.

But the predecessor was far more pivotal - "the Arab fuhrer," as Hitler dubbed Jerusalem's mufti, Haj Amin al-Husseini.

Husseini copyrighted the jihadist pattern of massacres and terror, which Arafat would later adopt and adapt to his own era. There's inextricable continuity between the trailblazer and his follower. The latter cannot be understood without the former.

On October 1, 1948, in the midst of their military onslaught on newborn Israel, the Egyptians installed Husseini as president of the "All-Palestine government" they had established in the Gaza Strip (with Jerusalem its declared capital). It was formally abolished only in 1959.

Husseini's quasi-state was recognized by all then-independent Arab countries, save for Transjordan, which feared his ambitions vis-a-vis its own bit of Palestinian conquest - the West Bank. Husseini is widely considered responsible for the assassination of King Abdullah (the current Jordanian monarch's great-grandfather).

The first Palestinian "president" reached Cairo by the skin of teeth but with much Nazi loot, having fled Germany four days before its collapse. He spent the war years as Hitler's personal guest, luxuriously housed in a confiscated Jewish school on Berlin's Klopstockstr.

He received \$20,000 monthly to disseminate Nazi propaganda to Arabs and recruit Balkan Muslims. Husseini became chummy with Hitler, Eichmann, Himmler, and a long list of SS fiends, visited Auschwitz and Majdanek, blueprinted similar facilities near Nablus for all Mideastern Jews, urged speedier extermination of Europe's Jews, was instrumental in the war-end annihilation of Hungarian Jewry, and personally foiled plans to save 10,000 Jewish children, whose blood indelibly stained his hands.

Arabs welcomed this indicted war criminal ecstatically after he had managed to escape justice. They continued to adulate Husseini even when Nazi oratory became embarrassingly politically incorrect and after they had expediently allied themselves with Moscow and its satellites, which recreated Arafat in the image of an anti-imperialist freedom fighter.

THE NAZI mufti was revered even while Arafat attempted 1983's ultimate hypocrisy of laying a wreath at the Warsaw Ghetto memorial. The travesty of painting the torchbearers of Nazi henchmen as victims - and the descendants of Jewish survivors as their demonic oppressors - was worthy of Goebbels's "Big Lie," but even that cynical pretense didn't impel Arafat to disown Husseini's legacy.

In 1985 - eight years before Oslo and 11 years after Husseini's death - Arafat asserted that "it's an honor to march in the path Haj-Amin carved." More recently, in August 2002, he told London's Sharq al-Awsat radio that Husseini is "our hero." Likening himself to his mentor, Arafat stressed: "I was one of his troops."

The successor was then hardly ignorant of his idol's wartime past. The Nuremberg trials, Third Reich documents, Husseini's radio broadcasts, and numerous WW II photos (available to any amateur Googler) unequivocally attest to his sinister role during the Holocaust's bleakest days. Yet Arafat continued to model himself after the predecessor who exhorted "Arabia's sons" to "slaughter all Jews wherever you find them. Their spilled blood pleases Allah." It's no coincidence Arafat claimed blood ties to his spiritual prototype.

In view of all the conflicting versions he peddled about his origins, it's hard

to separate fact from fabrication. But even if Arafat's Husseini pedigree is fraudulent, the very fact that it could legitimize his leadership speaks volumes about the unabated veneration for the mufti - not despite his Nazi record but because of it. Husseini authentically expressed his people's genocidal inclinations.

Indeed, Arabs were among the first to latch on to Nazi ideology. Husseini's 1936-39 bloody uprising here was funded by Hitler and actively abetted by locally resident German Templars. Undisguised fascist parties proliferated - from Syria's Nationalist-Socialists headed by Anton Saada to Ahmed Husseini's Young Egypt. Throughout WW II Arabs hoarded arms and trained to assist Rommel's invading Afrika Korps. They harbored German paratroopers, spied, and greeted each other with "Heil Hitler" and Nazi salutes. Arab newborns were given names like Hitler, Eichmann, or Rommel.

Precisely because the Arab masses and their mufti were in perfect sync, no new leaf was turned when he faded from center stage. His people were too brainwashed and hate-filled to reconcile themselves to a viable independent Jewish state. At most, they could temporarily countenance lulling it into false security.

The same can be expected now with the departure of Arafat, Husseini's dark disciple. The style, tactics, and rhetoric may change, but not the underlying irredentism, enmity toward the Jewish state, and the desire to defeat it, even if as a last resort via the overwhelming inundation of it by hostile Arabs, euphemistically marketed as "the right of return" (which Arafat, significantly, would not relinquish).

A final footnote: Like Arafat, Husseini requested to be buried in Jerusalem. (Jerusalem Post Nov 16)

The Arafat Paradox By Dore Gold

The very first time I was sent as an envoy to Yasser Arafat, what seemed most striking to me was the enormous gap between the total unreality of his conspiratorial explanations of political events transpiring around him and the extraordinary skill with which he played his weak political hand in order to advance the hard-line ideological agenda from which he never swerved: the elimination of the State of Israel.

This was the Arafat paradox; as he weaved one conspiracy theory after another and lied in the face of foreign leaders, one wondered how he wasn't thrown out of the chancelleries of Europe, rather than being welcomed on a red carpet.

Was this a testament to the strength of his cause for the petrodollar rich portions of the Arab and Islamic worlds - or evidence of his own personal powers as a global player? Will this strength that he exhibited be passed on to those who succeed him as well?

With all his faults, Arafat combined every attribute of leadership for the Palestinians. He was at the same time a military commander, head ideologue of the Fatah component of the PLO, the chief financial officer of its terrorist war chest, and its international spokesman at the UN. It is doubtful that any single individual can retain such concentrated powers in the future. A collective leadership is almost inevitable.

Arafat's secret was that he knew how to read historical trends and exploit them to the fullest for his movement. He began as a sympathizer of the conservative Muslim Brotherhood which opposed the monarchy of Egypt, where he was born. He then shifted leftward, siding with the Soviet Union and its championing of national liberation movements in the 1960s. The apex of his power at the UN in the 1970s came about when the Soviets combined forces with the Afro-Asian bloc against an isolated State of Israel.

However, he was capable of making huge errors, such as siding with Saddam Husseini's invasion of Kuwait in 1990, which lost him both American backing and the financial support of Arab Gulf monarchies as well. Nonetheless, Arafat recovered with the 1993 Oslo Accords, which gave him the territorial base next to Israel for waging "armed struggle" in accordance with his own "strategy of stages" from 1974. The truth of his Oslo deception became all too clear when he launched his second intifada in September 2000, leading to nearly 1,000 Israeli fatalities.

What finally did in Arafat was yet another historical turn which he failed to discern after the 9/11 attacks. Arafat's entire strategy had been based on the legitimacy for his terrorist operations granted by the Nonaligned Movement and its Soviet backers at the UN, and in other international forums. He was forgiven in many circles for ordering airplane hijackings and the murder of the US ambassador to Sudan. But after 9/11 he lost his freedom of maneuver. Allied with Hamas, Islamic Jihad, and Iran, he ended his life as a virtual prisoner in his Ramallah headquarters.

Whether the Palestinians will abandon the legacy he has bequeathed them is the most important question for determining the chances of peace in the future. A realistic assessment might lead one to hope that any new leadership will shake loose from Arafat's terrorist past, but his hard-line political legacy is likely to survive him. (Jerusalem Post Nov 15)
The writer, currently president of the Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs, is a former ambassador to the UN and foreign policy aide to prime minister Binyamin Netanyahu.
