



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*

Commentary...

Can We Ever Get Angry?

By Gabriel Danzig

[Last] Thursday morning we heard of yet another massacre of civilians, this time on a Jerusalem bus. At least 14 were killed, in additions to dozens of wounded. Every one of them an innocent creature, not involved in terrorism, in violence or in warfare. The massacre occurred on the same day that we scheduled an evening in memory of our close friend Gila Kessler. Several months have passed since we lost her, and little has changed. The killings continue, and the reactions remain muted.

In Israel there is a peculiar custom when one of these massacres occurs. On Israel Radio, most of the time is devoted to counting the dead and wounded, and reporting on the severity of the wounds. This goes on for hours, and there is little time for anything else. Almost no time is left for considering the range of legitimate reactions to these massacres. Instead, there some time is devoted to a discussion about caring for the victims and their families not only physically but also emotionally. They have to learn to accept the losses and go on with what is left of their lives.

But is that the only appropriate or healthy reaction to a occurrence of this sort? When a slaughter comes about not as a result of a natural disaster or a human accident, but as a result of deliberate murder, other reactions may be more appropriate.

There are situations in which anger is not only appropriate, but is demanded by the simplest considerations of human dignity. Rape, the murder of one's loved ones, verbal and physical abuse, these are things which demand anger as the appropriate reaction.

To accept slaughter passively, without becoming angry, is a sign not of mental health, but of a psychological handicap. What would it take to make Israelis angry, if they cannot muster anger at the slaughter of their innocent friends and relatives?

In civilized countries, things are not so. The British have to be among the most civilized nations on earth, but when the Germans attacked them, the British responded with anger. They were not angry at their prime minister, Winston Churchill, nor even at the former prime minister, Neville Chamberlain, who had signed foolish and debilitating agreements with Hitler but who still merited an extraordinary eulogy from Churchill himself.

They were angry at the Germans. This was not just the simple people. Churchill himself referred to the Nazis as Nazis, using the English pronunciation of the "z" in order not to dignify them with any sign of respectfulness. He referred to Hitler as a madman, as a guttersnipe, and in doing so he spoke more accurately than he would have had he used more respectful titles. History has borne his judgment out.

In the United States too, anger is sometimes expressed. Some months ago after a particularly heinous massacre of Israelis, President George W. Bush said, "I am furious. I am just as angry as the Israelis." Of course, what he ought to have said was, "I am just as angry as the Israelis ought to be." Because in fact the Israelis almost never get angry.

In Israel, you will not hear many people speaking disrespectfully or angrily about the Palestinians. That is considered undignified behavior. Some advocate expelling Yasser Arafat from the region, but that of course is a practical suggestion, not a slur.

But there is every reason in the world to speak disrespectfully of Arafat, that human monster who is responsible for more murder than almost anyone alive

commentators could envision on this terrible day.

In the history of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict there is no parameter that has been less significant than Jewish anger. The IDF is a serious factor here, and so are the various Palestinian terror groups, but Jewish anger is almost never seen. Even after a terrible slaughter like the Jerusalem bus, you will rarely hear any talk of revenge, or even of hatred towards the Palestinians.

You might hear criticism of the government for not doing enough. But hatred of the Palestinians? Almost never. You might get the impression that the Palestinians have nothing to do with this conflict at all.

There are reasons for all of this. Some think that Palestinian violence is understandable, even if it is not justified. Others think that our main goal has to be to show our moral superiority to Palestinian terrorists and their supporters. But when a war is forced upon you, it is impossible to aim at such modest goals.

After so many years of demonstrating our moral behavior to the world, we have gotten no closer to achieving peace, and have not even managed to win the sympathy of the world for our cause. In a war one needs to survive, and in order to do that one has to be able to explain why harsh measures are justified, not to deny that harsh measures are ever used.

Only when we start to do that will we be able to convince the Palestinians that we are serious about protecting our lives and our families, and that peace is a better option not only for Israelis, but for everyone involved. When it is directed towards the proper object anger can have good effects. That is part of growing up, and it is a lesson that Israelis need to learn soon. (Jerusalem Post: Nov. 24) *The writer is a classicist at Bar-Ilan University, specializing in political thought.*

I'm Moral, You're Moral

By Joel Rebibo

My son's tenant wasn't such a bad guy. He just had this problem with wife-beating and drugs. And he wasn't paying the rent. And he refused to vacate the apartment when the lease expired.

In one conversation, when I indicated that we might have to force him out, he threatened to barricade himself in with gas canisters and blow himself - and the apartment - up. In another conversation he mentioned that he had served 12 years in prison. For murder.

The lawyer said we could get get him evicted, but it would cost thousands of dollars and take two years. By that time my son, who is in school and supporting a wife and two young children, would be bankrupt. The rent covered his mortgage, and the bank was calling him about his mounting overdraft.

At one point during this saga, it occurred to me that my son's situation was exactly the same as the one Israel is facing with the Palestinians. Israel has a tiny "apartment" - 28,500 square kilometers can hardly be called "Greater" anything - and a tenant who refuses to pay the rent, i.e., stop terrorism, as stipulated in the Oslo Accords.

What's more, this tenant is causing serious damage to the property, drilling recklessly for water, pillaging priceless antiquities on the Temple Mount and elsewhere, and raising its children to become suicide bombers.

Just as my son was starting to drown financially as a result of his

This issue is dedicated by
Brian & Cheryl Bigman
in honour of the Bar Mitzvah of their son
Tzvi Chanan (Andrew) Bigman.
Mazel Tov!

Mark Shaw -- author, journalist,
and criminal defense lawyer-- will speak on his book
"Miscarriage of Justice: The Jonathan Pollard Story."
BAYT, Sunday, December 1, 8 p.m.
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recalcitrant tenant, Israelis have seen wages erode and unemployment rise because terrorism has scared away tourists and investors and imposed prohibitive defense costs. The economy, just about everyone warns, is in danger of collapse.

And just like my son was becoming obsessive about his tenant - the neighbors were calling to complain about the screams from the apartment and the unsavory types who came for drug parties - Israelis are depressed and resigned to the "situation."

It's not just that the national mood has been at rock bottom for so long; it's that no one sees any possibility of it improving - ever.

Israel, too, has no recourse in court. The world knows Yasser Arafat is a terrorist, and yet remains silent. No one, neither the United Nations nor the World Court, will take an honest look at the contract and conclude that this tenant must be evicted before he does further harm to the property and its owners.

My son faced two choices: Give up, and let the tenant stay in the hope that someday he'd decide to pay some rent; or throw him out and bring in another tenant who'd pay the rent and maintain the apartment.

Israel faces the same two choices: Concede defeat and give the Palestinians ownership of the apartment; or throw out the terrorists and their supporters and bring in a tenant who will pay the rent - i.e., fight terrorism.

The first option is advocated by the Israeli Left, which calls for a unilateral withdrawal from Judea, Samaria and Gaza, the division of Jerusalem, and the construction of a security fence.

There are two problems with this solution: It won't provide security, and it is immoral.

In the best of circumstances, a security fence will only slow down the terrorists - until, as the not-so-funny joke goes, they steal it - and it provides no protection from the missiles the Palestinians already have and the even more advanced ones they will surely obtain after gaining sovereignty.

In the long term, rewarding the terrorists with statehood will only encourage further terrorism. Arafat has never hidden his intention to "liberate" all of "Palestine," not just Judea and Samaria, which, when he started the PLO, wasn't even in Israel's possession.

Morally, Israel has no right to give up Judea, Samaria and Gaza, just as my son has no right to give up the apartment that my wife and I, his in-laws and his grandparents worked hard to pay for.

Israel was deeded to the Jews in the Bible and paid for in the cash and even more precious blood of generation after generation.

That leaves only one choice: getting rid of the tenant.

The problem is that while polls show more and more Israelis privately favoring transfer, they are afraid to discuss it openly.

A prestigious high school in Jerusalem refused to hold a memorial for assassinated tourism minister Rehavam Ze'evi because it would also have had to discuss his philosophy of transfer. And Justice Minister Meir Sheerit of the Likud rejects transfer outright, saying, "It is unacceptable to us in every form. We want to live with the Arabs in peace and quiet."

We also wish we could fly, but we have no choice but to build cars and roads.

The point isn't to start loading people up on trucks tomorrow. Rather, it is to recognize the reality that the Palestinians, after rejecting Ehud Barak's generosity at Camp David, have no intention of living in peace with Jews in Israel.

Removing enemies who threaten your citizens - physically, financially and spiritually - is not immoral. Creating a Palestinian state that will be a corrupt dictatorship and terrorize Israel and the rest of the world is - not to mention the Palestinians themselves, who have suffered more under Arafat's rule than they ever did under the "occupation."

GDP per capita in Judea and Samaria fell from almost \$3,000 in 1993 to \$2,000 in 2000, and is continuing its free fall due to the Palestinian miniwar.

It isn't immoral to point out that the Palestinians already have a state. It's called Jordan, which is 70 percent Palestinian.

There's nothing immoral about evicting terrorists and those who support them.

And there's nothing wrong with saying: This partnership hasn't worked out; we'll offer you financial incentives to go elsewhere.

A public debate on transfer isn't immoral; it is the sign of a healthy society that values its survival. And unlike the perennial "peace talks," it signals the Palestinians that they can forget about ever getting a Palestinian state in the Land of Israel.

The deal is off because murder and murderers will never be rewarded.

My son's ordeal has ended. For weeks, the tenant insisted that he wouldn't leave because he had nowhere else to go, and we responded just as insistently that he had no choice but to leave because the lease had expired and we had another tenant due to move in (a white lie). We sweetened the deal by offering to pack him up and move him.

And one day, when we said, "We'll be there on Thursday to move you," he said, "Okay." And I, my son, another son and a friend showed up with a truck and moved him out.

My son now has a tenant who is a young Torah scholar, a father of two young children. He pays the rent every month like clockwork, and keeps the place immaculate.

My son can go back to studying, working, raising his family and leading a very productive and contributing life.

Israel deserves no less. (Jerusalem Post Nov 21)

The writer is a Jerusalem-based journalist.

The Evil of Perverse Jewish Guilt By Jackie Mason

When the horror of the September 11 attack happened in America, the US immediately attacked Afghanistan with all its might. There were no Jews in the US who proudly called themselves "leftist" on the subject. If you heard one Hollywood-drenched extremist liberal who protested America's super bombs over Afghanistan, he was immediately drowned out as a maniac, a spy or a traitor.

Why is it that when Israel suffers the loss of hundreds of innocent lives on a daily basis, Jews all over the world suddenly become divided between "Left" and "Right"?

What is the sickness that these leftist Jews suffer from?

What kind of mental paralysis or perversion creates such warped behavior?

The same qualities that have made the Jews the greatest humanitarians in history ironically have made us the world's easiest victims. We feel so uncomfortable about the thought of hurting anybody that even if a suicide bomber could be hurt while killing 100 Jews, there are thousands of Jewish "leftists" who are convinced that it is our own fault. Somehow if we were compassionate enough we would find a way to solve the problem without making a murderer suffer just because his only crime is killing Jewish people.

This historically profound Jewish "guilt trip" has turned the most intellectual Jews into idiots. If the violence committed against the Israelis was happening to any other people, is it conceivable that the same leftist Jews would be justifying it?

Hypothetically, if Canada sent suicide bombers into America wantonly killing people, would Jewish university professors' brains calcify enough to justify it?

Somehow, only when Jews are involved, the "guilt trip" creates a vacuum in the brain in which no form of reason could exist. They'll create any fantasy to blame Israel. "It's our own fault - you can't occupy another country for so long without suffering the consequences" is the most sickening of the "leftist" perversions of reality. This proves that the same Jews who read enough to hold PhDs in ancient history are somehow incapable of ever reading a newspaper.

The problem is not that they don't know the truth. The problem is that Jews don't want to hear or see the truth. Because if they didn't suffer from an uncontrollable need to blame other Jews, they would find it impossible to ignore what every breathing person knows: that Ehud Barak offered the Palestinians 98% of their land back and that the pleasure of having their own home meant nothing to them compared to the thrill of killing our people.

This same kind of Jewish guilt seems even to have paralyzed the minds of the Israelis. Otherwise, why did it take so long for successive governments of Israel to see through the fraudulent charade of Yasser Arafat? Through all the years that he was a partner in crime, we blindly chose to see him as a partner for peace. How many times did Israeli prime ministers travel the world for peace conferences with Arafat while he was masterminding the murder of our own people in Israel?

Why did the president of the United States of America, George W. Bush, stop talking to Arafat while the heads of our country still wonder and waiver and flounder about his usefulness to the peace process?

Why did Prime Minister Ariel Sharon suffer the rejection of the Israelis for so many years while being vilified as a "hard-liner" or even "warmonger"?

And why are there so many Israelis who even now accept the anti-Semitic attacks on the part of the Europeans accusing Sharon of undermining the "peace process" by viciously "going too far"?

The answer is that the real "warmongers" are the so-called "peaceniks." The best way to needlessly lose Jewish lives is to be so blinded by Jewish guilt that you can't see a murderer for what he is. He came to kill, and he doesn't deserve conversation. He deserves elimination! (Jerusalem Post Nov 15)

The writer is a US comedian and newspaper columnist.

The Election Victory must Go to Sanity By Evelyn Gordon
Only by virtually wiping Mitzna's Labor off the map can Israelis prove to the Rantisis of the world that terror does not pay.

Israeli leftists are hailing Amram Mitzna's decisive win in last week's Labor Party leadership primary as a victory for peace and sanity. But Hamas spokesman Abdel Aziz Rantisi put it rather more accurately: Mitzna's victory, he declared last Thursday, is proof of the effectiveness of Hamas's campaign of terror. Mitzna, as several Palestinian commentators noted, is offering something no leader of a major Israeli party has ever offered them before: not only negotiations under fire, but withdrawal under fire.

He explicitly promised that his first move as prime minister, should he ever reach this post, would be to evacuate all the Gazan settlements. He also promised to immediately resume negotiations with Yasser Arafat - disregarding Arafat's failure to honor every previous agreement with Israel and without even demanding that the Palestinians stop the violence in the interim - and to evacuate most West Bank settlements within a year of taking office, with or without an agreement.

In other words, what Israel had previously offered in exchange for an end to the conflict Labor is now offering free of charge - with not even a temporary halt to the violence required in exchange. It is hard to imagine a more ringing endorsement of terror's efficacy.

The theory behind Mitzna's appeasement policy, and that of the Labor voters who elected him, is that the Palestinians are murdering Israelis only because they want Israel out of the territories - and that therefore the violence will stop once this is achieved. Unfortunately, there are two serious problems with this theory.

The first is that, as repeated Palestinian opinion polls have shown, about half of all Palestinians view their goal as "the liberation of all of historic Palestine," which includes the pre-1967 State of Israel - and most of the murderers belong to that half.

As Rantisi unabashedly explained in July, when asked about reports that Hamas was considering a cease-fire: "Everyone knows that we want to take back all of Holy Palestine, from the sea to the Jordan [River]. We were only suggesting the possibility of a temporary cease-fire - only temporary - were Israel to agree to withdraw immediately to the 1948 borders. "Later, we will concern ourselves with erasing those borders permanently."

The second problem is that if terror proves an effective means of obtaining Israeli concessions, not only will Hamas and its ilk have no incentive to abandon this tactic, but other Palestinians - including the sizable majority that still insists on a "right of return," which most Israelis view as a death knell for the Jewish state - would have a strong incentive to adopt it.

Nothing illustrates this better than Israel's one previous attempt at appeasing a terrorist organization: its unilateral withdrawal from Lebanon in May 2000 in response to the casualties inflicted by Hizbullah over the previous 18 years.

Hizbullah, of course, did not cease its attacks after the ostensible pretext, Israel's occupation of South Lebanon, had been removed. It merely created a new pretext by claiming a piece of territory (Shaba Farms) to which it had never previously laid claim, and then continued kidnapping and killing Israeli soldiers.

Even worse, however, the Palestinians responded to this evidence of terror's efficacy by launching their own terrorist war against Israel a mere four months later. Palestinian militants said quite openly that their decision to start the intifada had been inspired by Hizbullah's success. The net result is that in the two-and-a-half years since Israel withdrew from Lebanon it has suffered more casualties than Hizbullah inflicted during the previous 18 years - and, unlike in Lebanon, most have been civilians.

Yet, astonishingly, a majority of the Labor Party now wants to repeat this stunning failure.

The most worrisome part of Labor's decision is that even its expected defeat in the upcoming general election may not be enough to undo the damage.

Two years ago there was a nearly wall-to-wall consensus in Israel that territorial bargaining chips should be conceded only in exchange for a peace agreement. If, a mere two years - and almost 700 deaths - later a respectable minority now advocates full withdrawal without even a lull in the violence in exchange, it would be hard for the terrorists not to conclude that they are on the right track.

And the 25-30 seats currently projected for the Labor-Meretz bloc (Meretz has also taken up the banner of unilateral withdrawal) is a very respectable minority indeed.

Mitzna's sweeping 53.6 percent of the vote in the Labor primary represented a mere 35,453 voters - less than 1 percent of the country's total electorate of some 4.5 million. For the sake of Israel's future, the rest of this electorate must now decisively reject his message of appeasement.

For only by virtually wiping Mitzna's Labor off the map can Israelis prove to the Rantisis of the world that, after all, terror does not pay. (Jerusalem Post Nov 26)

Eradicate, Don't Interpret, Terror By Sherri Mandell
Israelis must not buy into the twisted story of a correlation between hopelessness and killing.

My daughter called me crying from school. Her 13-year-old schoolmate Hodaya had been killed that morning on her way to school in a terrorist attack on a bus in Jerusalem. I heard sobs from her, and, in the background, schoolchildren crying out in sadness.

And yet as a country, we sit, day in and out, attacked almost each hour by terror.

The truth no one wants to admit is this: A suicide bomber is not an aberration, but the apotheosis of all that is authored by the Palestinian Authority. He is the hero of the Palestinian story.

It is difficult for many of us to believe that such a cruel "hero" could be purposefully created and celebrated. We want to deny the evil of such a creation. So we indulge in believing the twisted story of a causal relationship between despair and terror, as if there were a correlation between hopelessness and killing.

In this interpretation, terrorists kill because they have no choice.

Many Israelis also buy this apologetic plot line. One mother whose daughter was killed by a suicide bomber on Jerusalem's Ben-Yehuda Mall said, "The guy who killed my daughter was crazy enough to kill himself as well because he had nothing to lose; he had nothing to live for because of the occupation."

The character of the terrorist created in this distorted version of reality is crazy and hopeless, pathetic. This interpretation would be absurd if it weren't so dangerous. My 13-year-old son, Koby, was stoned to death by terrorists not because his murderers had no hope - but precisely because they had hope.

A more nuanced reading of terrorism would discern that terrorists are not hopeless, but ruthless. The terrorist is not in despair, but indoctrinated with an ideology of evil where meaning in life is equated with the destruction of Jews.

In fact, many terrorists are educated in universities where violence is taught as the master narrative of the Palestinian people.

America gives credence to the Palestinian text of hate when the US talks about its road map, about the need for each of the two sides to take steps to calm the situation - as if the intifada were a cycle of violence and not violence perpetuated by a Palestinian leadership inciting its population with the murderous intent to destroy Israel.

When Secretary of State Colin Powell justifies the targeted killing of al-Qaida operatives in Yemen at the same time condemning Israeli targeted killings of terrorists, he supports Palestinian terror.

When Bush calls for a tough stance against Iraq while countenancing the killing of innocent Israelis, he encourages terrorism.

When the European Union calls for the Palestinian Authority to desist from killing Jews in Israel proper while allowing the killing of Jews in the territories, it sanctions murder.

It is time to stop trying to understand and analyze the cruel behavior of the Palestinians. What is needed is a Palestinian narrative coming from its own leadership that can encourage its people to adopt a strategy of hope and compromise rather than the infantile language of victimization, rage and violence.

It is unlikely to come into being in the foreseeable future. Instead, the "Quartet" must make one condition, and one condition only in its "road map": No progress can be achieved until the Palestinians renounce terror.

We cannot allow ourselves to engage in the deceit that the text of terror has more than one interpretation. Terror should not be interpreted. It should be eradicated. (Jerusalem Post Nov 26)

The writer is the author of Writers of the Holocaust and co-director of the Koby Mandell Foundation's Healing Retreat, a therapeutic program for bereaved mothers and widows of families struck by terror.

Hamilton, Madison & Jay in Jerusalem By Peter Berkowitz

How do you say The Federalist in Hebrew?

Whatever may be going on in the cultural and intellectual life of other countries in the Middle East, here in Israel--in the midst of a bloody and protracted war, with its civilian population under constant threat of deadly terrorist attack, in the wake of the collapse of Ariel Sharon's national unity government and the calling of new elections, and as a severely ailing economy takes its daily toll--they have just held a remarkably well-attended conference on The Federalist.

Why The Federalist--Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, and John Jay's authoritative exposition of the principles of the American Constitution--in Israel? And why just now?

The immediate occasion for the conference was the publication of the first

Hebrew translation of *The Federalist*. Both conference and translation are initiatives of the Shalem Center (disclosure: this magazine's editor sits on the center's board). Founded in Jerusalem eight years ago by a small group of enterprising intellectuals led by Yoram Hazony and Dan Polisar, late '80s Princeton graduates and then-recent immigrants to Israel, Shalem has in a short time grown into a respected and influential institution. It publishes a magazine in Hebrew (*Techelet*) and English (*Azure*) on Jewish politics and thought; it supports senior scholars from Israel and abroad (including Michael Oren, author of the New York Times bestseller *Six Days of War*); it takes strong stands on divisive public policy issues (such as the battle over the tendentious accounts some Israeli textbooks offer of the alleged injustice at the heart of the Zionist enterprise); and, last but not least, it is engaged in translating classics of political thought into Hebrew. *The Federalist* is only the latest on a list that includes Friedrich von Hayek's *The Road to Serfdom* and Edmund Burke's *Reflections on the Revolution in France*.

Shalem, plainly, is a think tank with a point of view, and its success has rounded to the benefit of liberal democracy in Israel. For by the late 1990s when Shalem began to make its presence felt, Israel had gone more than 50 years (stretching back before the creation of the state) without a conservative party that drew sustenance from and argued for ideas. Which means that for more than 50 years, the Left in Israel had faced no serious challenge on the plane of ideas. And as most any classic of liberal thought will tell you (but many left-liberals in Israel seem to have forgotten), a dominant party deprived of a worthy opposition to prod and provoke it inevitably grows self-righteous, sluggish, and stale.

The appearance of *The Federalist* in Hebrew also comes at a time when debate about whether Israel needs a written constitution, and if so what kind, has begun to spread beyond the small circle of Israeli academics who had long championed the idea. Many on both the right and the left in Israel share the sense that the political system is in a state of disrepair, too vulnerable to the demands of the ultra-orthodox and to manipulation by tiny fringe parties, haphazard in its protection of individual rights, and unclear about the role of the Supreme Court and the status of judicial review. Given this emerging consensus, it was wise of the Shalem Center to seek out the left-liberal faculties of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and Tel Aviv University to co-host the *Federalist* conference. And it was wise of the universities to agree to the project.

More than 600 Israelis—students, faculty, journalists, judges, and senior citizens—attended. The conference, which opened in Jerusalem and concluded the next day in Tel Aviv, was covered by Israeli television and featured in the newspapers. Panels ran the gamut from the diverse historical origins of the thought of Hamilton and Madison to the place of *The Federalist* in the history of political philosophy; from *The Federalist's* teaching on international law to its opinions about judicial review; from a survey of constitutional experiments around the world to a jampacked final session on the challenge of constitutional reform in Israel.

Of course, the question on everybody's mind concerned the relevance of *The Federalist* to the case of Israel. Opinions differed. The historians, taking a strange pride in the contemporary irrelevance of their knowledge, downplayed the possibility of drawing from *The Federalist* inspiration and insight for today. Those of us with a background in the history of political philosophy insisted on *The Federalist* as a source of both insight and inspiration. Not every aspect of *The Federalist*, of course, is equally enduring. And certainly the American Constitution cannot simply be transplanted to another nation, for institutions must be designed with a view to culture and circumstances. Nevertheless, we maintained that *The Federalist's* defense of the American scheme of constitutional government will prove relevant anywhere a people, undertaking to govern itself, bases this endeavor on an appreciation of the importance in human conduct of self-interest, a commitment to the political doctrine that all legitimate power stems from the consent of the governed, and a belief in the moral premise of the natural freedom and equality of all.

The speech by Ruth Gavison, bringing the final session to a close, was a highlight of the conference. Small and slight in build, fierce and dominant in argument, Gavison, a professor of law at Hebrew University and a founder of the Association for Civil Rights in Israel, has been a prominent member of the Israeli Left for more than two decades. In recent years she has established herself as a leading critic of the left-liberal activism of the Israeli Supreme Court as well as an eloquent proponent of serious discussion of constitutional reform with various representatives of the Israeli Right about shared values and common goals. Her allies on the left have grown increasingly troubled. As in the United States, the sight of a liberal who respects the people and who embraces not merely the idea of diversity, but the reality of diversity, in particular political and intellectual diversity, can be very disconcerting for those we are generally accustomed to calling liberals. The spirit of Gavison's exemplary liberalism, which permeates her introduction to the Hebrew *Federalist*, was very much on display in her rousing speech to the conference.

Three lessons from her remarks—as it happens, pertinent in the U.S. context

as well—stand out. First, democracy has weaknesses and disadvantages, and constitutions should be designed with a view to crafting arrangements, consistent with democracy, to counteract or mitigate those weaknesses. Second, government's first duty, which is the protection of individual rights, is not achieved only by a Bill of Rights. It is also, and perhaps primarily, achieved through artful institutional design, involving mechanisms for the channeling of self-interest such as the separation of powers, checks and balances, an independent judiciary, and systems of representation. And finally, if they are going to be legitimate and effective, constitutions cannot be imposed from above, however elegantly designed, however much they may reflect what some band of professors believes the people would embrace were they to give the matter due consideration. Rather, as the record of 1787 and 1788 suggests, constitutions must be based on actual agreement, hammered out by flesh and blood representatives of the rival and conflicting groups that constitute political society, and ratified by the people.

But as important as what *The Federalist* has to teach about liberal democracy in Israel is what the desire of Israelis on the right and left to learn from *The Federalist* teaches about liberal democracy in Israel. Vigorous public discussion of the principles of self-government is a mark of a liberal democracy's health. It is a cause for admiration that despite the tumult and terror all around, such discussion flows rich and raucous in that small, spectacular sliver of liberal democracy in the Middle East called Israel.

The writer teaches at George Mason University School of Law and is a research fellow at Stanford's Hoover Institution. (Weekly Standard Dec 2)

Mom, Dad, You Did it Right By Danny Cohen

[The letter before you speaks for itself. Anything we said would only detract from it. Nevertheless, we wanted to add a few words of explanation.]

Our Danny, a deputy company commander in the Nahal Brigade, was 22 when he fell in a battle in Hebron while going to rescue injured under fire. He was an only son after two daughters. He was named after his uncle, Danny Teichler, who fell in the Yom Kippur War, and who was also an only son. Danny excelled in a unique enjoyment of life, and he shared that joy with everyone who knew him. We loved him and respected him very much, but only after his death, through conversations with his friends, did a clearer picture begin to emerge of the depth from which he drew upon all of his attributes.

A few days after Danny's death, inside an album of his army photographs, we came across a letter marked "Personal, Secret, Please Do Not Open." We hesitated as to whether it was intended for the present time; after several days we opened it with trepidation. We feel it is right for us to share the text of the letter, since it contains a message for all of us: "Behold I have placed before you this day the choice between life and goodness, or death and evil - and you shall choose life" (Deuteronomy, Chapter 30, 15-19). Instead of dwelling on our wounds and drowning in them, we hope to continue in the joy of life, and to fill it with meaning and substance. - Nava and Yehuda Cohen]

Dear Mom and Dad,

Why, why do we live? Does any one person have a purpose?

The world exists for something that is still to come, still to come about, and every one of us is an essential part of the development of the world and of humanity toward that higher purpose.

If so, what is required of each individual - indeed, the purpose of life - is to be a part of the puzzle in the best possible way that he can.

For someone who follows the path of a religious Jew it is to fulfill the Jewish religion as effectively as he can, so as to create future generations better than him by influencing his descendants, or his surroundings.

I, it would seem, belong to those who are destined to influence their surroundings, and you to those who have had an influence - with the additional Hebrew meaning of "plenty" - on their children.

So I just wanted to tell you that I am pretty happy with what I have managed to achieve during the limited time I have been allotted, and that I feel I've been a pretty good mouthpiece for the way you have educated me. I can't think of a better way to bring up a child than the way you raised me (okay, so maybe you spoiled me a little too much...)

From my small experience I have seen that, usually, the people who break down irrevocably in the face of bereavement are those who harbor feelings of guilt.

Knowing you both (especially Mom), despite the fact that you have no reason to, you are likely to regret things you did or didn't do, or things you did or didn't say.

So just know that you really have done everything right, and that, brief episodes aside, for more than 20 years I have been very happy, and just want to say thanks! Danny (Jerusalem Post Nov 28)
