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From the PA Media...

Hamas Election Video: Armed Struggle until Destruction of Israel

By Itamar Marcus and Barbara Crook

In a new Hamas pre-election video, the terror organization again declares that it will not give up its armed struggle until Israel is destroyed.

The Hamas message likewise celebrates its love of death as superior to the Israeli love of life. It also expresses support for those Israeli Arabs that wish to destroy Israel "from the interior." Hamas looks forward to a day when its flag will fly over not only Jerusalem, but over all Israeli cities, including Acre and Haifa.

The release of the new video on the Hamas website, reiterating its goal of destroying Israel, coincides with two polls this week showing Hamas turning into a major political force, with between 32% and 45% of Palestinians saying they will vote for Hamas in January's parliamentary elections. What are the implications for peace, should nearly 50% of the Palestinian Authority parliament be open supporters of Israel's destruction?

It will be interesting to see if the continuing Hamas election campaign calling for Israel's destruction will prompt a change in United States or European Union policy. The US State Department has made clear that while it continues to transfer hundreds of millions of dollars of support to the PA, it will make no demands on it to prevent the Hamas from participating in the upcoming elections. The EU and United Nations have also agreed that Hamas can participate in the elections.

The following are the words on the new Hamas video:

"We succeeded, with Allah's grace, to raise an ideological generation that loves death like our enemies love life. We will not abandon the way of Jihad and Shahada [Martyrdom] as long as one inch of our holy land is in the hands of the Jews.

"Congratulations to our people of 1948 [Israeli Arabs] on the liberation of Gaza. You wish to destroy them [the Israelis] from the interior. We will never forget you, and never leave you. A day will come when our flag will fly above all the quarters of our land. Our flag will fly on the minarets of Jerusalem, and the walls of Acre, and the quarters of Haifa." [Hamas website, Dec 12, 2005] (Palestinian Media Watch Dec 12)

Commentary...

Red Star of David Wall Street Journal Editorial

After almost six decades of rejection, Israel saw the road cleared yesterday for its emergency and disaster relief organization to join the International Red Cross. The price of admission was relinquishing its symbol, the Red Star of David.

Instead, the Red Cross approved a new "neutral" symbol -- a Red Crystal, which Israel must adopt to become a member, possibly next spring. The Star of David may still be used at home, and on foreign missions it can be put inside the Crystal, provided the host country agrees.

Israeli diplomats are celebrating the Crystal as a great victory. If that's a victory, we'd hate to see a defeat. Even this compromise, which was opposed

ISRAEL NEWS

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by most Muslim countries, ת"ס
came only after the American Red Cross withheld its contributions to protest Israel's exclusion from the international body.

Some Crystal backers argue that the Red Cross carries no religious symbolism. Under this rewriting of history, Swiss Red Cross founder Henry Dunant adopted the inverse design of his homeland's flag without any religious motivation. But the Swiss flag dates back to the Holy Roman Empire and of course has strong Christian connotations. This cannot have escaped the deeply religious Dunant who, by the way, was also a fervent Zionist.

Irrespective of Dunant's intentions, the Red Cross came to be seen as a Christian symbol. That's why Muslim countries refused to adopt it, and instead chose the Red Crescent, the only other recognized symbol. It's a disgrace that the Star of David, which symbolizes the faith that spawned both Christianity and Islam, is excluded. (Wall Street Journal Dec 9)

Eliminating Israel Politely By Daniel Pipes

There is a right way and a wrong way, strangely, to call for the elimination of Israel.

The secretary-general of the United Nations, Kofi Annan, provided an example of both ways in recent weeks. When the president of Iran, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, stated on October 26 that "the regime occupying Jerusalem must be eliminated from the pages of history," Mr. Annan replied by expressing "dismay." Again on December 8, when Ahmadinejad called for Israel to be moved to Europe, Annan responded with "shock."

But dismay and shock at Ahmadinejad's statements did not prevent Annan from participating on November 29, just between the Iranian's outbursts, in a U.N.-sponsored "International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People." Anne Bayefsky of "Eye on the UN," reports that Annan sat on the dais with an Arabic-language "Map of Palestine" nearby that showed a Palestine replacing Israel. It cartographically achieved exactly what Ahmadinejad called for: the elimination of the Jewish state.

Annan's contradictory actions result from the fact that, since 1993, explicit calls for the destruction of Israel have become offensive, but implicit ones have become more acceptable. The latter include:

- * Demands for a Palestinian "right of return" (demographically overrunning the Jewish state with anyone claiming to be a Palestinian);
- * Declaring a "jihad to liberate Jerusalem";
- * Commemorating the creation of Israel as Al-Nakba ("the disaster");
- * Proposing a "one-state solution" (i.e., no more Israel);
- * Tributes to "all those of who have given their lives for the cause of the Palestinian people" (including suicide bombers); and
- * Maps that do not show Israel.

Fatah and Hamas together display this dichotomy. Both aspire to eliminate Israel, but they have chosen different paths to get there.

Fatah's tactics have been opportunistic, duplicitous, and inconsistent since 1988, when Yasser Arafat nominally condemned terrorism and began the "peace process" with Israel -- even as he simultaneously sponsored suicide terrorism and promoted an ideology totally rejecting Israeli legitimacy. This transparent deception enabled Fatah to gain great benefits from Israel, including a self-governing authority, a quasi-military force, vast Western subventions, and near-control of one border.

Hamas, by contrast, consistently has rejected Israel's existence, which has won it ever-larger segments of Palestinian Arab public opinion (the latest poll shows it ahead of Fatah in the forthcoming elections, 45% to 35%). But this overt rejectionism also has made it anathema to Israel and others, limiting its

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effectiveness. As a result, Hamas in recent months has started showing more flexibility; for example, it generally has honored a cease-fire with Israel and is moving in the direction of entering the diplomatic process. This brings advantages; the "Conflicts Forum" and others, with some success, are presenting Hamas as a newly legitimate interlocutor.

Palestinian Islamic Jihad might find itself the only purely rejectionist organization against Israel.

Why do such distinctions in style matter? Because the Fatah approach seduces Israelis enough to work with them; Arafat-like euphemisms, inconsistencies, subterfuges, and lies encourage them to make "painful concessions." Contrarily, the Ahmadinejad-PIJ approach crudely confronts Israel with overt and brutal threats that cannot be rationalized away. Blatant calls for Israel's disappearance make Israelis bristle, acquire new armaments, and close down diplomatically.

These ploys might strain credibility – surely the Israelis realize that the former is no less lethal than the latter?

Actually, they do not. Since 1993, Israelis have shown themselves, in the words of the philosopher Yoram Hazony, to be "an exhausted people, confused and without direction," willing and even eager to be duped by their enemies. All they need are some overtures, however unconvincing, that they will be freed from war, and they barely can restrain themselves from making concessions to mortal enemies.

Thus does enlightened world opinion condemn Ahmadinejad, sensing he went too far and will cause Israelis to retreat. If he would only tone down his comments and politely call for Israel's elimination by, for example, endorsing a one-state solution, all would be well.

Thus have Israelis effectively defined which anti-Zionism is acceptable and which is not. Kofi Annan's record of both condemning and endorsing Israel's elimination merely reflects the etiquette of destruction established by Israelis themselves. (New York Sun Dec 13)

Sami al-Arian: Genocidal, Anti-American Islamist Hero By Joel Mowbray

When former college professor—and alleged terrorist—Sami al-Arian was unexpectedly acquitted Tuesday on eight counts and received a hung jury on the other nine, many Muslims could barely contain their glee. "People are just jubilant," Ahmed Bedier, the Tampa chapter director of the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), told the New York Times. The not guilty verdicts were a "wonderful and a tremendous victory," according to a statement released by Muslim-American Society (MAS) President Mahdi Bray.

While in many cases it might be reasonable to forgive a defendant acquitted by a jury of his peers, it is not with al-Arian. Regardless of whether or not the jury believed his actions constituted a specific legal violation by acting "in furtherance of" terrorist attacks, there is no mistaking what is in al-Arian's heart.

As a result of the trial, al-Arian has been forced to admit that he did, in fact, have an intimate working relationship with Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ). Why? Because he was caught on tape coordinating with them, again and again and again.

Al-Arian also admitted that he wrote a letter—which he allegedly attempted to send, but could not do so successfully—to a Kuwaiti legislator urging him to support the families of suicide bombers in order to provide "support of the jihad effort in Palestine so that [suicide] operations such as these can continue." He wrote the letter just weeks after President Clinton had signed an executive order banning financial and material support of PIJ. Again, this is only known because the government introduced it as evidence during trial.

Support for al-Arian, though, has long pre-dated the six-month trial. Then again, so has the evidence against him.

Dating back to September 1995, the Tampa Tribune wrote dozens of articles investigating al-Arian's affiliations with terrorist organizations and leading terrorists themselves. While the university severed its relationships with the think tanks founded by al-Arian, it did not attempt to fire him. That only happened after 9/11—in a much different political environment.

Throughout the 90's, the body of evidence against al-Arian grew. An organization he founded, the Islamic Conference of Palestine (ICP) hosted an annual conference that played host to what the Tampa Tribune dubbed a "militant all-star team": Islamic Jihad founder Abdel Aziz-Odeh, Sheik Omar Abdel Rahman (spiritual leader of the 1993 World Trade Center bombers), leading Hamas official Mohammed Sakr, and high-ranking Sudanese terrorist Hassan Turabi. The paper also reported that ICP publications had "articles [that] solicited contributions for the Islamic Jihad and Hamas."

At the 1990 ICP conference, Al-Arian addressed the crowd of 200 people

in St. Louis called for "true armed jihad against the enemy in Israel." At an ICP conference the next year in Chicago, the supposedly mild-mannered professor riled the crowd with a fiery rallying cry: "Advance, advance until Jerusalem! Victory is to Islam!"

But al-Arian didn't want to stop at Jerusalem. At a Cleveland ICP conference in 1991, he exhorted the audience to accept nothing less than a "Palestine" that spans from "from the river to the sea"—meaning from the Jordan River to the Mediterranean Sea, or all of the West Bank, Gaza, and Israel. And his bloodthirst was not confined to Jews in the Middle East. His sights were also set on his adopted home country. In that same speech, he said, "Let us damn America. Let us damn Israel. Let us damn their allies until death."

None of this has been denied. It can't be. Al-Arian was on candid camera at each of these conferences, courtesy of counterterrorism expert and former journalist Steven Emerson, who first exposed Islamic militancy in the U.S. in his PBS documentary "Jihad in America." Al-Arian was one of the "stars," yet he continued to enjoy substantial support in the Muslim community.

Al-Arian didn't have to do too much to mollify his boosters. When confronted on CBS' 48 Hours about his saying "Death to Israel" on camera, he lamely responded, "'Death to Israel' means death to the system. It's like saying 'death to apartheid.'"

Without sitting in the jury box or in the deliberation room, there is no way to determine exactly why the 12 men and women decided that al-Arian's actions did not constitute a violation of the law. But it wasn't because most of the allegations weren't true; they were. Al-Arian's lawyers did not deny that he was an exuberant cheerleader of murdering innocent Jews, nor did they deny that his inner circle included many known terrorists.

So while this jury felt there wasn't enough to convict al-Arian of providing material support for terrorism, there is more than enough evidence for leading Muslims to know better than to embrace him. While some organizations have stayed silent or have not been as exuberant in their support—Muslim Public Affairs Council Executive Director Salam Al-Marayati said simply in a statement, "We congratulate Mr. Al-Arian and his family for enduring this painful ordeal"—others have been less restrained.

American Muslim Alliance Chairman Dr. Agha Saeed hailed the verdicts as "a Great Day for Justice in America," and claimed that the entire trial was nothing more than a "witch hunt against [a] legitimate Muslim leader." Saeed's giddiness is particularly significant, as he is also the chairman of the American Muslim Taskforce for Civil Rights and Elections, which is comprised of 11 national organizations, including CAIR, MPAC, MAS, and the Islamic Society of North America.

More important is the long-term reaction of the politically active Muslim community and leaders of the prominent organizations. The obvious response would be to shun al-Arian, but the early reaction to the verdicts is not encouraging. Almost none of the leaders of Muslim organizations stated the self-evident truth that no matter what the jury found, al-Arian represents the very vitriol and thirst for violence that must be condemned.

Should al-Arian become a hit on the Muslim speaking circuit—and he may well—then what should be made of those who attend and the public figures who either support or at least condone his appearances? The answer, much like the true nature of al-Arian's character, is obvious. (FrontPageMagazine.com Dec 12)

Nobel Naches By Judy Lash Balint

Jerusalem--Nobel laureate Yisrael Aumann lives about ten minutes walk away from me. I share a publisher with his brother, Moshe, a renowned expert on Christian-Jewish relations. That's about as close as I get to the Nobel aura...but tonight, Israelis kvelled as the 75 year old wearing a white knitted kippa to match his white beard and starched formal shirt, rose to receive the Nobel prize in economics for 2005.

As the TV cameras panned the crowd in the Stockholm auditorium (thank heaven he didn't have to go to Oslo to receive his prize) it wasn't hard to pick out the Aumann delegation. First of all it was the largest cheering section in the hall. Secondly, the men were all wearing white knitted kippot, while the modestly dressed women sported colorful, shiny headcoverings.

The Aumann clan spent Shabbat in the Swedish capital, honored by the local Jewish community. The ceremony started well after the close of Shabbat, and kosher food was ordered for the banquet. Despite the fact that Aumann, born in Germany, was educated in the United States and not in Israel (like almost all of the previous 8 Israeli Nobel prize winners) it was still unquestionably a great moment of kiddush Hashem.

Not surprising then, that the British newspaper, The Guardian, couldn't

help report on the Israeli "intellectuals" who have garnered 1,000 signatures on a petition demanding that the Nobel committee withdraw its prize to Aumann on the grounds that he's a "warmonger."

The effort is actually being led by one Shraga Elam, an Israeli living in Zurich, long known for his anti-Israel diatribes.

While Elam grovels amongst the slime of Europe's Israel bashers, I think I'll walk over to the Aumann home and hang up a sign welcoming our new Nobel laureate back home to Jerusalem to thank him for the much-needed infusion of Jewish pride and the honor he's bestowed on Israel. (NaomiRagen.com Dec 11)

Full of Hot Air By Sarah Honig

It's common business practice for companies to probe likely customer reaction by dispatching press releases and announcing ambitious plans. Feedback indicates marketplace appeal and spurs actual development of new products.

Nowhere have there been more enthusiastic or successful practitioners of such trial ballooning than on Israel's Left. Eventually the gullible public bought into much of what was in the past capriciously tested on the farthest fringes of left field and hawked with the active connivance of bosom buddies in the media.

Whatever we fell for hardly made us better off. Far from it. Indeed, trial balloons we failed to instantly pierce gave us nothing but grief, ongoing risk and disaster - Oslo being the most notorious of them.

That balloon - originally stitched together by Ron Pundak and Yair Hirschfeld, who conducted the preliminary contacts on behalf of Shimon Peres and Yossi Beilin - seems indestructible despite all the bombs, bullets and assorted deadly projectiles that riddle it. Perforated, scorched and bloodstained, it still hovers overhead, haunts us and threatens our existence.

That's why any other trial balloons this same crew sends up should send chills down our spines. What may seem dismissible, even ridiculous just now, may sooner than later become accepted official policy - regardless of its catastrophe-potential.

Therefore, never - but never - downplay any recommendation coming from the quarters most preferred by reckless opinion-makers and trendsetters. Follies they cheer as prudent and high-minded will in time be imposed upon us.

If Beilin thinks that convicted terrorist murderer Marwan Barghouti - sentenced to five life terms and 40 additional years - deserves freedom as a freedom-fighter and political leader, odds are that Barghouti won't rot even for the remainder of one lifetime behind bars. Beilin & Co. have the power to implement their proposals.

Particularly worrying is the fact that this isn't their first Barghouti-balloon. In 2004 Pundak - director-general of the Peres Peace Center - already agitated for Barghouti's release. In a gushing letter he wrote Barghouti that his "imprisonment is a terrible mistake."

Nobody so much as rapped his knuckles.

THE CALLOUS indifference to Barghouti's victims and gross contempt for Israel's courts was rendered tolerable and respectable.

Once that initial pro-Barghouti trial balloon wasn't shot down, Beilin could try again. When his bunch hobnobbed with Arafat's envoys, they could at least claim that never-prosecuted Arafat was a legitimate negotiation partner. They could even claim faith in Arafat's ability to transform miraculously overnight from carnivore to herbivore. They could claim sincere trust that the noxious concoction they brewed in Oslo would bring peace.

But they deserve no residual benefit of our doubt after their misguided misadventure was exposed as calamitous. Barghouti, moreover, commissioned atrocities after Israel agreed to surrender nearly all its Six Day War gains. The freedom he was supposedly fighting for was offered on Israel's silver platter, yet spurned violently.

Barghouti's trial was public and prolonged, with all due-process perks. He was given every break, while the world's press avidly highlighted his high jinks. Despite these, it was proven beyond a doubt that Barghouti ordered and financed terror outrages. The documents, recordings and checks submitted into evidence were sufficient for conviction, even without his fiery rhetoric, warnings, bluster and boasts about his ghoulish escapades.

If Barghouti is Beilin's peace partner, then who needs such peace? We'd live longer without it. Why boost a murderer's morale and bolster the cynical masquerade that presents him not as the slayer of innocents but as a prisoner of conscience?

It's tempting to relegate all this to the realms of clinical psychology, but Beilin et al. aren't off their rockers. They're out to salvage Oslo no matter what the cost in Israeli lives.

Hence, the fact that Barghouti garnered 96% of the votes in the Fatah primaries suffices for Beilin to rehabilitate him as a legitimate leader. If no peace partner exists on the other side to resuscitate Oslo, then Beilin can declare Barghouti one.

It's not that the whopping support Barghouti amassed isn't significant. It certainly is. But not in the way Beilin contends. The homicide contractor's massive landslide doesn't determine that he's the man we must talk to; it shows there's no interlocutor because the Arab street adulates terror.

Consider how Israeli opinion reacts to the exceedingly rare instances of a lone Israeli on a killing spree. There's wall-to-wall denunciation and genuine revulsion from Israel's entire political arena. Israeli society doesn't underpin or condone, much less applaud murder.

Not so in Barghouti-land, where terrorists win elections, are glorified and proclaimed shahids, and where frenzied thousands vow vengeance and bloodshed in their name. Arab youngsters are indoctrinated in the cult of death, aspiring to emulate suicide bombers. Arab media, schools and mosques encourage and inculcate such reverence. After instances of the worst carnage, like the Pessah Seder massacre in Netanya, candies are distributed to jubilant crowds. Effigies of burning buses are staple features of school pageants and summer camps devoted to training future Barghoutis.

PA leaders must be prodded from abroad to condemn mass slaughter, and when they at last grudgingly murmur something, they deplore the damage to Palestinian interests - not the bloodletting.

Is this the grassroots popularity via which Beilin seeks to justify pardoning Barghouti? His trial balloon promotes nothing even remotely beneficial. It's what the trade calls vaporware - products which despite the promise and the hype aren't in reality feasible. In other words, like his balloon, Beilin - be it due to deliberate duplicity or a negligent degree of optimism - is full of hot air. (Jerusalem Post Dec 9)

Unsafe passage Jerusalem Post Editorial

By signing - under intense pressure from the Quartet - the post-disengagement Rafah agreement on November 15 with the Palestinian Authority, Israel committed itself not only to an international crossing on the Gaza-Egypt border, but to facilitating the movement of goods and people between the Palestinian territories.

Specifically, Jerusalem promised that by December 15 it would allow bus convoys to transit Gaza and the West Bank. This is not the first time Israel has promised such "safe passage" to the PA. And it's not the first time the PA has made it impossible to implement the arrangement.

Sure enough, Prime Minister Ariel Sharon is having second thoughts about the Thursday deadline - and for good reason. The daily prospect of some 1,800 Palestinians traversing between Gaza and the West Bank is worrisome in the context of the grim security situation and Israel's sense that the PA is not living up to the spirit of Rafah.

Israel entered into the Rafah agreement with trepidation. But Washington's arm-twisting convinced Jerusalem that cameras and computer data streams would give Israeli security personnel capability to monitor what was happening at the Gaza-Sinai crossing.

While the issue is disputed, Israel is convinced that the PA is foot-dragging by not providing the promised real-time flow, and that members of al-Qaida and other Islamist terror groups have been allowed to enter Gaza.

The agreement also requires the PA to prevent the movement of weapons and explosives into Gaza. Yet large amounts of these have flowed in from Sinai, at least before the crossing was formally opened. On Saturday, the IDF uncovered a tunnel near the northern Strip apparently intended for a terrorist infiltration. On Friday a navy patrol boat intercepted the third infiltration attempt by sea, in just 10 days, from Egypt to Gaza.

Part of the problem is the agreement itself - which does not actually require the PA to stop any terrorist just because Israel insists it do so.

Then there is the overall environment. Can Israel abide by a paradoxical situation in which bus convoys of Palestinians traverse the country even as Palestinian missiles are being launched from Gaza, or as Palestinian attackers stab soldiers at checkpoints outside Jerusalem, or as suicide bombers slaughter shoppers lining up to enter a Netanya mall?

Sharon told US envoy David Welch that if the Palestinians persisted in their violent ways, Israel would not permit the bus convoys and would even cease tariff cooperation at the Karni and Erez crossings, forcing the PA to pay for goods shipped via Israel.

The US is having none of this. Having pressured Israel into a bad agreement in the first place, Washington now insists Jerusalem stick to it. It says Jerusalem is exaggerating Palestinian non-compliance; that the video and data issues are merely technical and anyway on the way to being solved.

The backdrop to the bus convoy issue is the Quartet's creditable desire to improve the Palestinian economy. The thinking of the US, UN, EU and Russia is that popular frustration, and with it the appeal of Islamist terrorism, could be reduced by improving the lives of ordinary Palestinians.

The World Bank complains that Israel's repeated closures have made it difficult for Palestinians to do business among themselves and with the outside world. The Bank argues that the Palestinian economy has not bounced back to its 1999 pre-intifada levels, and blames Israel. (In fact, according to its own data prepared in advance of a donors' conference set for London in the coming days, unemployment in the Palestinian areas is down, to 22 percent in 2005, the gross national product is up and average income rose in 2005 by some 12%.)

But the Bank's complaint is misdirected. Had the PA fulfilled its road map obligations and dismantled the terrorist infrastructure, the Palestinian economy and population would not be hampered by closures. Like the security fence and checkpoints, closures are self-inflicted by Palestinian violence.

Clearly, the Rafah agreement alone will not stop terrorists from entering Gaza. Israel is depending on its own and European moral suasion to do that. But the Palestinians must understand that the full implementation of the Rafah deal cannot occur in a vacuum, and the US ought to appreciate this, too. Convoys and Kassams cannot flow at the same time. (Jerusalem Post Dec 11)

Israel Vs. Iran: Can the International Community Get in on this Fight?

By Saul Singer

What a perfect arrangement: The only country that every country has a right to condemn can be relied upon to do the world's dirty work. This is the underlying mindset as the West contemplates a nuclear Iran.

When push comes to shove, the Israeli air force will take care of the problem, so the world can go into spasms of righteous indignation while enjoying the fireworks.

There are, however, a number of flies in the ointment of this convenient scenario. Journalists and policymakers, like generals, tend to fight the last war, so everyone has in mind the 1981 Osirak operation, where Israel dealt a fatal blow to Saddam Hussein's dreams of mass destruction by destroying his nuclear reactor. But the Iranians are not idiots, and they have taken into account the possibility of an Israeli air strike in designing their program.

A new report by the U.S. Army War College, with a chapter on Israel drafted by former IDF Brig.-Gen. Shlomo Brom, finds that Israel cannot launch a sustained air campaign that will reliably destroy a series of hardened, well-defended, and dispersed targets. In order to avoid the airspace of intermediate countries, Israeli aircraft would have to fly more than 900 miles — refueling over the Red Sea and Indian Ocean.

But let's say, by some miracle, it could be done. And let's even say, as Brom speculates, that Iran would not be able to tell Hezbollah to launch the thousands of missiles pointed at Israel's north because Israel would retaliate against Syria, possibly toppling that regime.

Still, the question remains, why is little Israel being left to fight the world's war? The answer is not just that life's unfair. The real answer is that the enlightened post-modern European refusal to lift a finger — let alone a gun — to defend itself is consigning us all to a dark age of terrorism and war.

The irony here is that it is precisely those who claim to believe not in a borderless world ruled by international law who are ushering in a new Hobbesian era. How is one to explain Europe's obsession with the United Nations on the one hand, and its emasculation of the principles on which that organization was founded?

If Europe, through the U.N. and in partnership with the U.S., simply followed the U.N. Charter, we would be living in a very different world today. That charter (Ch. 1, Art. 1, Para. 1, first sentence) states the U.N.'s purpose: "To maintain international peace and security, and to that end: to take effective collective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to the peace, and for the suppression of acts of aggression or other breaches of the peace..." (emphasis added).

Does this ring any bells? Is there a state that is a greater threat to international peace than Iran? How much terrorism does a state have to sponsor, how many member states does it have to threaten with destruction, and how far does it have to get in obtaining the ultimate means to carry out such threats before the collective obligations of free nations under the Charter are remembered?

The nations that wrap themselves most tightly in international law are actually those responsible for turning that law, and its aspirations for the world, into a dead letter. As in the case of Iraq, by refusing to join the U.S. in effective non-military collective action against Iran, Europe is making military action or an Iranian victory inevitable.

It is in this context that I found it difficult to watch European ambassadors placing a wreath on the spot where a suicide bomber killed five Israelis, including 38-year-old Eliya Rozen, outside a mall in Netanya. On Tuesday, at his wife's funeral, Gadi Rozen spoke of their three children's questions when he told them their mother was dead. Roi, the five-year-old asked, "Who will be my mother?"

What wreath will these ambassadors lay if Israel gets hit by a nuclear weapon? Or if Israelis are killed in a war to destroy Iran's nuclear program? Or if 9/11s continue to multiply, including in Europe, because al Qaeda enjoys the tailwind that a nuclear Iran would bring?

Perhaps it is pointless to appeal to European sympathies for Israel when these same nations won't even defend themselves. Most bizarre, however, is that Europe, by refusing to impose draconian sanctions on Iran, is guaranteeing either a huge victory for the terror network or military action by the US or Israel. In other words, under the cloak of international law, Europe is bringing either the aggression of its enemies or unilateralist defensive actions of exactly the sort it claims to most want to prevent.

Those diplomats, no doubt, had the best of intentions. But with all due respect, spare us the wreaths. Join us and defend yourselves. We are not your hired hitmen; don't depend on us to save you. Take your beloved international law seriously and throw the book at Iran.

It may not be too late, with common will, to force Iran to back down without firing a shot. And if it is too late for peaceful means, that shot should be fired together, legally, in the name of international peace and security. (National Review Dec 12)

The writer is editorial-page editor of the Jerusalem Post and author of Confronting Jihad: Israel's Struggle and the World After 9/11.

Frame Elections as a Retreat Referendum B Aaron Lerner

While Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's plans to carry out a major retreat in Judea and Samaria after the elections certainly appeal to the elements in the Left now supporting his Kadima party, the Israeli public overwhelmingly rejects his scheme.

Turn the upcoming Knesset elections into a referendum on unilateral withdrawal, instead of a personality contest, and Kadima will plummet.

That's the challenge facing the national camp. And it remains to be seen if the personalities running the campaigns of the national camp parties will realize that the retreat issue is their only solid hope to whittle down to natural size the support this essentially one-man party enjoys.

Play the corruption card? Polls show the public knows full well that Sharon is corrupt, but they don't care.

Highlight commitment to social-welfare policy? Make this the defining issue of the campaign and you are just another "me, too".

Remind voters about the leftists in Kadima? It may convince some voters to "come home," but Sharon is running as the man on the horse who does what he wants, when he wants to, and who couldn't give a damn what anyone else says (or, for that matter, what he himself may have said before), so the composition of his party is of secondary importance.

Israel loves this ultimate "man on the horse". But Israel doesn't want the retreat Sharon is planning.

A poll of a representative sample of 500 adult Israeli Jews carried out by Smith Research & Consulting on 29-30 November and sponsored by the Zionist Organization of America (ZOA) found that 67% oppose carrying out a significant unilateral withdrawal from Judea and Samaria, if it is not possible to advance in negotiations with the Palestinian Authority on the basis of the Road Map after the elections because the PA fails to fight terror. Among those who indicated that they plan to vote for Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's Kadima party, 54% oppose and 37% support carrying out a significant unilateral withdrawal under those circumstances.

And the public sees retreat as a defining issue.

A follow-up question found that, of those who oppose unilateral withdrawal under those circumstances, 75% responded that they would not vote for a party that would support such a move. Hammer the message home that a vote for Sharon is a vote for retreat and there is nothing he can say that will convince voters that this isn't the case.

Ironically, the very thing about Sharon that appeals to Israelis - that he does what he wants, when he wants to, and couldn't give a damn what anyone else says or what he himself may have said before - would then be his Achilles heel. (IsraelNationalNews.com Dec 14)

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