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ב"ה שבת שלום  
פרשת וירא

## A Place Among the Nations

### Our European "Friends"

Caroline B. Glick

Tuesday morning, the European Court of Justice (ECJ) released an anti-Semitic bombshell. It decreed that all EU member states must affix special labels to Jewish-made Israeli "foodstuffs" produced beyond Israel's 1949 armistice and exported to EU member states. The ruling was made in response to a lawsuit brought before a French court by Psagot winery, located north of Jerusalem.

Psagot's manager Yaakov Berg was represented by a consortium of attorneys led by Brooke Goldstein, the founder and executive director of the Lawfare Project in New York. The focus of the Lawfare Project's work is defending Israel and Jews from discrimination.

Israeli political leaders and American Jewish leaders roundly and rightly condemned the court ruling as anti-Israel, biased and anti-Semitic.

Psagot brought suit before a French administrative court to appeal a 2016 French regulation requiring the special labeling of Jewish-made Israeli foods produced beyond the 1949 armistice lines. Psagot and its attorneys argued before the French court that the French regulation contradicted European law by imposing illegal trade barriers. The French court referred the issue to the ECJ in the form of two questions: does EU law require EU states to impose discriminatory labeling requirements on Jewish-made products from the disputed territories, and, if it doesn't, does EU law still permit member states to adopt such labeling requirements on their own.

In the background of the case was a 2015 "interpretive notice" issued by the European Commission that had instructed all EU member states to apply the special discriminatory labels to all Jewish-made Israeli goods produced beyond the 1949 armistice lines. Senior jurists in and out of government explain that the interpretive notice was a blow to Israel, but it did not legally require EU states to do anything. The notice could only have become legally binding if it had been unanimously adopted by EU states in the European Council.

Israeli lawyers noted at the time that the European demand for discriminatory labels violated international trade law, but this made no impression on European decisionmakers.

The French court's referral to the ECJ was a big deal. It created a means for anti-Israel forces in the EU to render the interpretive notice from 2015 legally binding on all EU states without obtaining unanimous consent. ECJ judgments bind all EU states.

Once the matter was moved to the ECJ for a determination, senior international jurists and Israeli government officials began requesting that Psagot and the Lawfare Project pull their lawsuit. Writing at Arutz 7, former Justice Minister MK Ayelet Shaked, who dealt with the issue during her tenure, revealed Tuesday that she and a senior Justice Ministry official repeatedly urged, indeed "begged," Psagot and its attorneys to withdraw their lawsuit. Speaking to the media Tuesday, Foreign Minister Yisrael Katz said that Foreign Ministry officials submitted similar requests that Psagot withdraw its lawsuit.

In late June of this year, the urgency of the entreaties grew. According to ECJ procedure, before the judges render their verdict, the court's advocate general publishes his recommended verdict. It is rare for the court to rule in a manner that contradicts its advocate general's recommendation. In late June, the advocate general recommended answering that

it is obligatory for EU member states to affix discriminatory labels to Israeli Jewish imports from Israeli territory beyond the 1949 armistice lines. Once his recommendation was published, any residual hope the ECJ would act in accordance with international trade law and reject the proposed discriminatory labelling policy was extinguished.

But then, with or without the advocate general's recommendation, Israel and Psagot never stood a chance of getting justice at the ECJ. Before it is a judicial body, the ECJ is a political arm of the EU whose job it is to uphold EU policies and strengthen EU institutions.

The EU's policy towards Israel has been clear for a very long time. For decades, the EU has been waging a hostile campaign against Israel. The goals of its campaign are to call Israel's right to exist into question, weaken Israel economically and politically, and strengthen Israel's enemies at Israel's expense. The EU wages its campaign through political, diplomatic and economic warfare.

Non-governmental organizations registered in Israel and financed and directed by the European Union and its member states are strategic weapons in this campaign. These European-financed and directed Israeli registered and staffed NGOs routinely submit petitions to Israel's High Court of Justice whose purpose is to stymie the government's ability to implement duly promulgated policies and undermine the IDF's ability to defend the country.

At the UN, EU member states vote against Israel and for its enemies as a general practice. They support UN bodies including the UN Human Rights Committee, UNRWA and UNESCO that routinely and maliciously target Israel.

The EU leverages its trade and scientific cooperation with Israel to normalize boycotts of Israeli companies, institutions and Jewish citizens who operate beyond the 1949 armistice lines.

As for Europe's support for Israel's enemies, led by Germany, the EU refuses to walk away from the nuclear deal with Iran, or reinstate economic sanctions against Iran in light of its open material breaches of the limitations the nuclear deal placed on its nuclear activities.

So too, led by Germany, the EU refuses to designate all arms of Hezbollah as a terror group. This pro-Hezbollah policy has the deadly result of enabling the Iranian-controlled terror group to operate and raise money openly in Europe. Both of these policies, which pave Iran's way to a nuclear arsenal and empower its foreign legion are hostile acts towards Israel.

Then there is the EU's adulation of the Palestinians. EU institutions do not merely legitimize Palestinian terror groups, including Hamas and the PFLP. They enthusiastically embrace them. For instance, the European parliament has repeatedly hosted senior Palestinian terrorists. It has given standing ovations on senior Palestinian officials including Mahmoud Abbas as they revived medieval antisemitic blood libels. Abbas for instance, accused Israeli Jews of deliberately poisoning wells.

In the face of the EU's implacable, long standing and steadily expanding efforts to harm Israel, the notion Israel can reasonably expect to ever receive a fair hearing from any EU body is ridiculous.

Stunningly, even after their defeat at the ECJ, the Psagot winery and its legal team refuse to accept this truth. In an interview Tuesday with JNS news service, Goldstein said that Europe itself is the verdict's biggest loser.

In her words, "The ruling opens the floodgates where consumers in any EU country will be

able to insist that any consideration important to them before they purchase a product – whether social, political, environmental or other – will have to be included on the labeling of any product being imported. Not just from Israel."

This is untrue. The verdict – like the EU's legally unsupported claim that Israeli "settlements" built beyond the 1949 armistice lines are illegal – is not general. It is very specific. It applies only to Israel. The ECJ's ruling will not be applied on behalf of vegans and Tibetans. Everyone knows it was directed against Israel and its Jewish citizens alone. The verdict was political, not legal.

For all that, Justice Ministry and Foreign Ministry officials are wrong to attack the Psagot winery and its attorneys for their willful blindness. They themselves are afflicted by the same impairment.

In their contacts with the EU, its agencies and aligned organizations, government officials act on the basis of the mistaken belief that it is possible to convince the Europeans to abandon their hostile positions against Israel through reasoning and evidence. Perhaps the best example of this misguided Israeli practice is the respect Israel accords the prosecutors at the International Criminal Court (ICC).

ICC investigators are currently preparing charges against Israelis for so-called war crimes on the basis of false accusations submitted by the Palestinians. The Palestinian complaints relate both to the IDF's military activities and to settlement activities carried out by the Israeli government and Israeli citizens.

According to government officials, the reason Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is preventing the evacuation of the illegal Palestinian outpost Khan al-Ahmar despite the fact that the High Court of Justice ordered its dismantlement over a year ago is fear that implementing the court decision will subject Israel to war crimes charges at the ICC.

In September 2018, the Trump administration announced that it was ending all cooperation with the ICC due to its political nature and its institutional hostility towards the United States and Israel.

Following this announcement, the US denied a visa to an ICC prosecutor scheduled to visit the US to investigate complaints submitted to the ICC against US soldiers for actions they allegedly perpetrated in Afghanistan.

Shortly after the policy was presented, the State Department announced it was ordering the closure of the PLO representative office in Washington, DC due to the PLO's refusal to withdraw the complaints it submitted to the ICC against Israel.

Unlike the Americans, Israel continues its dialogue with the ICC prosecutor and permits the prosecutor's representatives to enter Israel in the hopes of convincing the ICC of Israel's innocence. But the fact the ICC is even giving a hearing, let alone proceeding, with its investigations of false accusations against Israel is proof that it is a hostile body. It will never give a fair hearing to Israel.

Just as permitting the inherently hostile ECJ adjudicate issues related to Israeli Jewish exports from Israeli-controlled territory was a mistake that harmed Israel, so Israel's legitimization of the ICC will come back to haunt it.

### The Anarchists

Yotam Eyal

As has happened from time to time, the State of Israel is currently under attack from the Hamas and Islamic Jihad terrorists, an attack that is aimed at our civilian population. The goals of both Hamas and Islamic Jihad is to destroy the State of Israel. The State of Israel has a duty to protect its residents from

those seeking to harm the state and its citizens, and to use all the means at its disposal.

The deplorable situation in Gaza is a direct result of the disengagement plan, a plan that displaced thousands of residents from their homes with the promise that leaving Gaza will ensure our security. At the time, before the disengagement, The Legal Forum appealed to the Supreme Court and brought former senior IDF officers to testify before the court that in their opinions the disengagement would not bring security, but the opposite. However, the words fell on the judges' deaf ears, for they supported the horrific plan. Unfortunately, time has proved that we were right. Although we were not successful in stopping the disengagement plan, the Legal Forum continues to fight for the internationally defined legal rights of the State of Israel, the only framework that can ensure the security of the state in the face of the dangers it faces, both from within and from without.

Israel's existence is under attack, not only militarily, but also socially and politically. Various interest groups from all over the world, especially from Europe, are working tirelessly to dismantle Israeli society from within, and they incite against the residents of Yehuda and Shomron, IDF soldiers and security forces.

Anarchist groups come to Jewish communities in Judea and Samaria, mainly on Saturdays, and provoke the residents and the soldiers who are stationed there. The groups come in cooperation with anti-Zionist organizations and Arab residents of the area, supposedly to harvest olives or do agricultural work in areas they claim to be Arab-owned. Their presence quickly becomes problematic to both the residents and soldiers, and sometimes includes verbal and physical violence towards them.

On Saturday, October 26, a group of about 40 anarchists or activists from France, Spain and other countries arrived at one of the Jordan Valley communities, confronted the residents, and also the soldiers and caused much damage.

Anarchists mainly come to Israel on tourist or student visas. The "Entry into Israel Law" prohibits them from operating against state authorities, including IDF soldiers and the Minister of Interior is authorized to expel them from Israel, despite their visas if they break the law. However, for fear of diplomatic incidents, fear of lawsuits and endless court proceedings from organizations that support the anarchists, the Administration of Border Crossings, Population and Immigration, the entity that is supposed to enforce the law, usually does nothing. Similarly, or possibly as a result the security forces also hesitate to act against the anarchists. The rabbis taught that to be kind to the cruel will cause you to be cruel to the kind and in this case, those who are ultimately harmed are the Jewish residents, the soldiers, and Israeli society as a whole.

Readers might remember a similar situation, the case of Omar Shakir that appeared in these pages just a few weeks ago. In that case, leftists and the courts repeatedly tried to frustrate the application of the law in a classic example of how the left-wing organizations manipulate the legal system to impose a left-wing agenda that is contrary to the will of the voters and their elected representatives of the State of Israel. They act contrary to the law, despite the explicit law that Omar Shakir, a BDS activists cannot stay in Israel. The courts are not blameless in this process, they have a history of choosing to make their own law in the name of protecting human rights, thereby frustrating opposing parties and, in this case, allowing a prominent BDS activist to remain in Israel for more than a year and a half, allowing him to continue to act and cause harm to the State of Israel.

For years, the Supreme Court has actively eroded the state's ability to protect itself from the entry of people seeking to harm it, forbade the revocation of terrorist residency, the barring of BDS activists, prevented the transfer of infiltrators into a third country, and more.

The Legal Forum, in cooperation with local organizations, continues to work to change this. The Legal Forum has a great deal of knowledge and experience working with government agencies. A legal opinion written by Legal Forum Attorney Yotam Eyal has been and is used by decision-makers to support the Minister of Interior's decisions to expel the rioters. We also identified the relevant governmental authorities, mapped out their powers and duties, provide educational and legal tools to law enforcement agencies and created a preliminary plan

of action so that the law enforcement agencies will be able to deal with violations of order more easily.

Preventing the entry of anarchist and anti-Israel groups is an important step in demonstrating that the state has not abandoned the Jewish residents and soldiers. In addition, enforcing Israeli law will signify that the State of Israel will defend itself from those who enter it to oppose it.

## Gaza: Delaying the Inevitable...Again

Martin Sherman

**Delaying the inevitable does not make it less inevitable—only more costly**

*A fool can throw a stone in a pond that 100 wise men cannot get out* — Saul Bellow, (1915-2005)

*The ultimate test of this agreement will be a test of blood. If it becomes clear that [the Palestinians] cannot overcome terror, this will be a temporary accord and...we will have no choice but to abrogate it. And if there is no choice, the IDF will return to the places it is about to leave in the upcoming months*

— Yossi Beilin on the Oslo Accords.

*Everything is reversible*

— Yitzhak Rabin on the Oslo Accords

The targeted assassination of the senior Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) terrorist, Bahaa Abu al-Ata, strikingly underscored two—curiously contrary—things.

### The paradox of Israel: Techno-tactical genius; strategic imbecility

The one is Israel's remarkable expertise and aptitude at the techno-tactical level that enabled such precise intelligence gathering and minimal collateral damage in the deadly accurate strike against the arch-terrorist.

The other is Israel's blatant ineptitude, indeed imbecility, on the strategic level that has made the need for such impressive displays of techno-tactical genius to be employed so frequently, necessary in the first place.

Indeed, in the last three decades Israel has surged from success to success in virtually every field of human endeavor except in what might turn out to be the most vital—securing its long term survival as the nation state of the Jewish people.

Perversely, despite manifesting extraordinary ability in developing the country beyond recognition in terms of its standard of living, its economic output, its national infrastructure, its cultural contribution, and its diplomatic outreach, it has lurched from strategic blunder to debacle with alarming regularity. Ill-considered territorial concessions exposed Israel to predictable—and predicted—dangers, which have gravely undermined its strategic robustness.

After all, as I have been at pains to underscore on previous occasions, warnings of the perils entailed in relinquishing territory to Arab control were disdainfully dismissed as "Right-wing scaremongering".

But even for many of the skeptics and opponents of the misguided approach that aimed at mollifying brutal tyrannical regimes with an ill-advised concoction of territorial withdrawal and political appeasement, today's grim realities have outstripped their gravest fears.

### Withdrawal & War: Direct causal link

Indeed, the very notion that a second-tier terror organization could paralyze almost half the country, at will, for days on end, would have seemed inconceivable when the dogma of land-for-peace and its corollary of Palestinian self-government, first began to dominate Israeli strategic thinking—particularly with regard to Gaza.

For, while it might be a matter of speculation as to what dangers Israel might have had to face had it avoided withdrawal from, and evacuation of, Gaza, there can be no argument as to severity of the dangers it is presently facing, having evacuated and withdrawn from it.

Indeed, there is a direct line of causal links between the decision to withdraw the IDF from territory in Gaza and to permit the deployment of armed terrorist militias in the hapless coastal enclave—first in 1994 with the triumphant arrival of Yassar Arafat and then in 2005 with Israel's evacuation of the entire Strip—and the current turmoil.

By providing the forces of Judeophobic terror a territorial base, on which to develop the means to assault the Jewish state from the skies, on the ground, beneath the ground and from the sea, Israel has been forced to invest enormous efforts to devise solutions for problems that should have never arisen in the first

place.

Without the IDF deployed throughout the Strip—a deployment facilitated in large measure by the presence of thriving Israeli communities there—the Gazan terror groups were free to pursue the production, procurement and stockpiling of weapons and to develop military infrastructure previously unimagined.

### Reluctance to recognize recalcitrant realities

The latest round of rocket fire against Israel has once again renewed the debate on what solution there is for Gaza—if any.

By chance, this was precisely the topic I focused on in last week's column, just a few days before Tuesday's violence erupted.

In it, I pointed out that virtually all conceivable policy alternatives have been tried—unsuccessfully—except for the one that actually address the root of the problem.

This has been studiously avoided by pundits and policymakers alike and only raised in conversation in derisive tones—less it be (mis)taken as a proposal worthy of serious consideration.

At the very foundation of the Gaza problem, is the ill-founded notion that it could be solved by foisting self-government on the Gazan-Arabs. It has been the foolhardy attempt to implement this notion—despite desperate warnings of the consequences—that has led to three decades of trauma and tragedy for Jew and Arab alike. Pigheaded persistence with the same policy rationale will invariably reproduce the results of the past, with increasing costs and intensity.

As I pointed out last week, negotiated transfer of self-governance to Gaza failed, which led to an even more bizarre attempt to confer self-governance unilaterally—which has precipitated the current situation of continuous and increasingly lethal Judeocidal violence.

### Reluctance (cont.)

This perennial failure to resolve the hostility has endured despite massive international support that made Gaza one of the highest per capita recipients of foreign aid on the face of the globe, only to have the bulk of it (mis)appropriated and channeled into efforts to produce the means to assault Israel—or to pad the pockets of well-placed cronies of the regime.

Some have suggested demilitarization of Gaza, apparently oblivious of the fact that Gaza is already supposed to be demilitarized under the Oslo Accords, and give little clue as to why future demilitarization is likely to be any more effective than in the past—or by whom it will be enforced and how such enforcement is to be effected.

Others have suggested that Hamas should be left to rule Gaza, but should be weakened so as to reduce its ability to harass Israel. This, of course, begs the question of how a "weakened" Hamas (never mind a demilitarized one) could contend with more even radical and extreme adversaries—such as the ascendant PIJ—especially with the backing of Iran.

To arrive at an effective policy formula, Israel must abandon the flawed assumptions that have underlain previous endeavors and confront the unpalatable realities head on.

### Implacable enemy not potential peace partner; crucible not victim

As I have repeatedly urged in the past, there are at least two widely held and wildly misleading assumptions that must be discarded.

Firstly, after a quarter-century and more of gut-wrenching Israeli concessions and obsequious good will gestures, Israel must come to the conclusion that the Palestinian-Arabs in general, and the Gazan-Arabs in particular, can no longer be assumed to be prospective peace partners, but implacable enemies—as they themselves declare themselves to be.

Secondly, it is time to discard the assumption that the Palestinian-Arab public in general, and the Gazan public, in particular, is the hapless victim of their despotic leadership. Quite the opposite! The public at large is the very crucible in which that leadership was formed and from which it emerged.

Thus, barring some dramatic metamorphosis that will radically transform the Gazan public into something it has not been for many decades and shows little sign of becoming in any foreseeable future, if a new leadership emerged from the same public, it is highly unlikely to emerge with characteristics that are significantly different from its predecessor.

Indeed, Israel would do well to desist from the self-

delusion that some Palestinian-Arab will pull its “chestnuts out of the fire” for it and somehow disprove what is becoming increasingly undeniable—that for Israel to leave Gaza and expect the Gazans to manage their affairs peaceably and productively, was a gigantic mistake. The thirty year experiment has failed—disastrously and definitively. It is well past the time to abandon it.

### Counterproductive calm

Attempts to create calm are, in many ways, counterproductive—for during periods of calm, instead of devoting energy and effort to the development of their society and economy, Hamas and its more radical offshoots/affiliates have focused on enhancing armaments and military infrastructures for the next round of aggression against the hated “Zionist entity”.

And, as the Gazan terror groups, whether Hamas or some more extreme successor, hone their abilities and enhance their arsenals, life for the Jewish population in the South will become increasingly more harrowing and hazardous. With their families continually exposed to escalating dangers, their livelihood regularly disrupted, the quality of life constantly degraded, less stressful places of abode further north will become increasingly appealing.

As time goes on, a danger of depopulation of the Negev by the Jews could become a very tangible prospect and soon the Israeli leadership will have to contend with the grim possibility that there will either be Arabs in Gaza, or Jews in the Negev—but in the long run, there will not be both.

Indeed, during the last round of fighting, there have been increasing calls from residents for more forceful responses, and increasing expressions of impatience at their absence. The Israeli leadership will do well to heed these calls.

### At the risk of being repetitive

Given the proven failure of negotiated and unilateral attempts to resolve the Gaza problem, given that beneficent economic aid has proven ineffective, demilitarization unenforceable and weakening of Hamas likely to install an even more recalcitrant regime, we are left with the following logical chain:

- The only way Israel can ensure who rules – and does not rule – Gaza is for Israel to rule it itself.

- The only way for Israel to do this without “ruling over another people” is to relocate the “other people” outside the territory it is obliged to administer.

- The only way to effect such relocation of the “other people”, without forcible kinetic expulsion, is by economic inducements i.e. by means of a comprehensive system of enticing material incentives to leave and daunting disincentives to stay.

This, of course, will entail Israel retaking—and keeping—control of Gaza with all the cost and sacrifice that this will unavoidably imply. But the blame for the blood and treasure that will be expended on that endeavor must rest entirely on those who urged Israel to leave the Strip in the doomed quest for peace in exchange for land.

Martin Sherman is the founder & executive director of the Israel Institute for Strategic Studies

## Why I am AGAINST the Iron Dome

Shmuel Sackett

Life in Israel, this past week, has been full of pressure and tension. According to news reports “over 400 rockets were fired into Israel” and if not for the Iron Dome, many of those rockets would have landed on Israeli homes, causing tremendous damage and possibly even loss of life. Everybody is singing the praises of the Iron Dome and how it saved us... yet I am 100% against this device and, if I could, would dismantle every unit and send it back to where it came from. Sounds crazy... so let me explain.

I will get right to the point. The Iron DOME has to be replaced with the Iron FIST. Instead of sitting and catching 86% of rockets shot at Israeli cities (according to official sources) the IDF needs to issue a simple, yet very powerful statement: Israel’s new system – the Iron Fist – automatically fires back 100 rockets for every one rocket that is fired at us. This is Day #1. Starting with Day #2 – the Iron Fist fires back 200 rockets and by Day #3 its 300-for-1 and so on. Furthermore, the rockets fired by the Iron Fist will not be towards empty fields and abandoned buildings but exactly to the same kind of areas where the enemy shot at us. If populated cities were targeted, then populated cities will be the return address. The Iron Fist will work with the same “rules and regulations” in sending back deadly rockets as Hamas, Islamic

Jihad and Hezbollah followed when they fired the rockets in the first place.

One second... I know what you’re about to ask: “What will the world say?” To answer that question, I can be either politically correct or not. Let’s go with the Non-PC answer first: The world screams anyway, no matter what we do, so who cares? The job of the IDF is to protect Jews in Israel and not to answer anti-Semites who scream around the world. Therefore, we will do whatever it takes to make sure Jews in Israel are safe and if the world doesn’t like it, they can condemn us in the UN... oh, yeah – they do that anyway...

And now for the nice PC answer: We are not interested in war. We want to live in peace with our neighbors and have therefore worded this declaration very carefully. We will not start a war, nor will we shoot even one rocket at any location at all. The entire decision as to what happens is in the hands of our neighbors. If they shoot rockets – then and only then will we return fire to the same kind of location from which they began the hostilities. Yes, we will fire 100-to-1 but that is only because they started the violence. The moment they stop, we will stop as well.

In summary, while the Iron Dome is a great defensive system, this back-and-forth will never end, because it is exactly that; a defensive system. They will continue to shoot rockets and our families will continue to run to bomb shelters hoping the Iron Dome will “make the catch”. Life cannot continue like that, with hundreds of thousands of Jews experiencing serious trauma. If you have ever run to a bomb shelter, you know what I’m talking about. It’s absolute horror as parents scream at kids to come in from the outside, babies are woken up, people run around the house making sure everyone is in the protected room... and that’s if the entire family is at home. What happens if your 7-year-old is at karate class or you are driving with 3 kids in the car? It’s absolute chaos with parents and children screaming and crying... and that’s with the Iron Dome protecting us.

The Iron Fist takes the game to their field, not ours. It puts the pressure and stress on them as we hit back 100 times for every punch they threw at us. It’s a system built much more on offense than defense and, that’s the only language the players in the Middle East understand. It’s time to change the rules.

## Palestiniism and the Hurt/Help Principle

Victor Rosenthal

After Israel killed a military commander of the Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) organization in Gaza, PIJ responded with (as of 18:00 Wednesday afternoon), 400 rockets aimed at Israeli civilians. This skirmish in the hundred year war against Jewish sovereignty in Eretz Yisrael will certainly not be the last. If you are wondering why they do this, knowing that the IDF will strike back painfully, destroying infrastructure and killing their people, and knowing that there is zero chance that it will cause the Jews to abandon their homeland, there is an answer. It is an answer that explains much in the history of the conflict, as well as many otherwise inexplicable events.

The answer is to be found in one of the first principles of Palestiniism and its corollaries.

But first, what is Palestiniism? It is the belief that the Palestinian Arabs were unfairly victimized, dispossessed, colonized, raped, punished, expelled, murdered, degraded, castrated, etc. by the Zionist Jews who created the State of Israel, which continues to do all these things to them. Palestiniism holds that this is the single greatest injustice in the world today, and only the replacement of the world’s only Jewish state by an Arab state can rectify it.

I can’t prove it, but I’m sure that although most Palestiniists would demand that Israel be replaced by a Palestinian state, if Israel were to disappear, the Palestinian Cause itself would fade away. That is, it is not actually about obtaining justice for this particular group of Arabs as much as it is about getting rid of the Jewish state.

Since it is impossible to establish the truth of Palestiniism by historical analysis (because it is not true), it must be accepted on faith. It is therefore more like a religion than a hypothesis.

So what is the principle of Palestiniism that causes them to fight pointless battles? I like to state it this way: for Palestiniists, it is always preferable to hurt Jews than to help Arabs. Ironically, Jews are more important to them than Palestinians, in a negative

way of course.

There is no end to examples. For example, economic resources in the hands of Hamas – even aid specifically intended to improve the conditions of life in Gaza – are always redirected toward offensive weapons to use against Israel. Instead of providing clean water, electricity, or waste treatment facilities, Hamas prefers to dig attack tunnels, manufacture rockets, and raise armies. Back in 2007, six people were killed when the bank of a lagoon full of human waste collapsed. But on the same day, Qassam rockets were fired at Israel.

Historically, the hurt/help principle explains why Palestinian Arab leaders did not accept any of the several offers of statehood they received, starting with the Peel Commission in 1937. It explains why the Arab states (more Palestinian than the Palestinians themselves) forced the 1948 refugees into camps and refused to allow any solution other than reentry into Israel, even for the great grandchildren of the original refugees. It explains why the PLO and the UN refused to allow refugees in Gaza to move into new neighborhoods built for them by Israel after 1967. It explains the persistence of UNRWA and the whole massive edifice of Palestiniist institutions created by the UN. Of course, the ultimate expression of the principle is suicide terrorism, where the terrorist sacrifices him or herself in order to murder Jews.

One corollary is that any action or policy that hurts Jews is good, even if it will also hurt Arabs. So Palestinians cheered when Saddam’s scuds or Hezbollah’s rockets hit Israel, even though they could not be aimed precisely enough to kill only Jews.

Another corollary is that the more unhappy, angry, and unfree Palestinians are, the better it is, at least as long as the anger can be directed at the Jews and Israel.

As you have probably noticed, you don’t have to be a Palestinian or even an Arab to be a Palestiniist. In fact, it’s better not to be, since then you don’t have to suffer the consequences yourself. You can call for a two-state or even one-state solution from your home in Berkeley or North Tel Aviv while enjoying the benefits of living in a free society, when – if you got your way – Palestinians would live under a corrupt, oppressive, dictatorship run by the PLO, Hamas, or some even worse regime. Ask the Arab citizens of Israel whether they prefer living as a minority in the Zionist entity that they constantly criticize for being “racist” or to join their relatives in the PA areas or Gaza Strip; the great majority are satisfied with their lives in Israel.

Nevertheless, Palestiniism is the religion of the UN, the EU, the human rights establishment, most academics in the humanities and social sciences, Jeremy Corbyn and Bernie Sanders, and many of those who call themselves “progressives.”

Failure to understand the hurt/help principle has led to well-meaning attempts to end the conflict ending in massive debacles. The most egregious example is the Oslo accords, where there was an expectation that legitimization and massive amounts of aid would improve the economic condition of the Palestinians, and that they would then concentrate on building their own state instead of attacking ours. Of course, the opposite happened. To this day, there are proposals to end the simmering war with Gaza by improving the economy there, all of which ignore the fact that their economy is a disaster because they insist on keeping the war simmering (and sometimes, like today, boiling).

But it is a mistake that we keep making, over and over. Shimon Peres imagined a New Middle East, where economic cooperation overrode political conflict; but without ending Palestiniism, economic improvements – if they are possible – simply translate into weapons for more conflict.

If the conflict will ever end – and it’s hard to be optimistic – Palestiniism, with its phony history and promise of sweet revenge for the eternally aggrieved, will have to be discredited, and the mechanisms created to perpetuate it will have to be dismantled.

There is one bright spot: for the first time in decades, an American administration has taken steps to defund UNRWA, the UN machinery that nurtures Palestiniism while stimulating the growth of the “refugee” population (its soldiers) geometrically. This structure, created by antisemitic European hypocrites and Israel’s Arab enemies, is astronomically expensive and only the participation of the US, the world’s largest economy, has made it

possible.

It could be that Donald Trump's greatest contribution to the survival of the State of Israel could be in killing UNRWA, something far more important in the long run than the location of the US Embassy.

## In Other News ...

### A Bastion Against Colossal Ignorance

Arlene Kushner

Last week, J Street – which is not pro-Israel, no matter its claims – held a conference in Washington D.C. There is a great deal to say about that conference, including the fact that, to his shame, Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-NY) participated as a speaker – apparently having decided to do so after he determined which way the Democratic wind was blowing. But I am going to leave him aside here.

At the conference a panel discussion was held on the growing rift between Israel and American Jews. One of the participants was someone identified as Rabbi Ayelet Cohen; I don't know where – in what progressive venue – she studied. She is associated with the New Israel Fund – another group that is ostensibly pro-Israel but most decidedly is not.

I came across a statement about Israel that Cohen made during the panel discussion that is so vile, so off-base, that it must be addressed.

Not remotely do I imagine I might ever change her thinking. But I believe supporters of Israel must be armed with solid information in dealing with persons such as her, and perhaps more significantly, with those who are on the fence and might be influenced by the likes of her.

She said, in part (emphasis added):

“For many of us, and we see this in many communities of North American Jews, across movements, affiliation, across religious connection, people who were deeply connected to Israel are tired, they are constantly feeling a need to justify why they feel connected to this place, they're constantly disappointed, experiencing a lot of shame about this place— always hoping that it will rise to the occasion, be something that it's not.

“...It's a lot of work to stay engaged, to keep holding on, to not walk away.

“...It's easier to look away.

“...it's easier to just not talk about Israel. It's too divisive, it's too complicated. Politically engaged congregations have so much to do around immigration and other domestic issues— why talk about something that's going to be so painful, so complicated, and feels further away for a lot of us?

“...I've spoken to some rabbis who have slowly taken Israel out of the Hebrew school curriculum, and no one noticed. As long as we're still talking about social justice and anti-Semitism and highlights of Jewish history and holidays, nobody notices that Israel isn't in there.”

The position of Ayelet Cohen and others who think as she does is clear: They are grievously disappointed in Israel – disappointed to the point of shame – that Israel does not adhere to their sense of what Israel should be.

This is not news. They have substituted progressive positions for Jewish values and imagine that are behaving Jewishly in embracing these positions. The emphasis on the issue of “immigration” – the number one progressive cause these days – is a case in point, but of course there others, such as universal right to abortion.

These progressives lack either the capacity or the desire to understand Israel's positions, Israel's needs and Israel's rights. Their focus is on “Palestinian rights.” Palestinians Arabs, after all, are seen as the underdogs and are people of color to boot – making them, by progressive standards, the party inherently worthy of support. This rabbi and a host of others have forgotten Hillel's admonition, “If I am not for myself...”

But let's look at why Jews should care about Israel: **The Land of Israel is our religious inheritance**, dating back almost 4,000 years.

God said to Abraham (Abram): “Go from your land, from your people and from your father's house to the land I will show you.” (Genesis 12:1)

This promise of the land extended to Abraham's son Isaac, and to his grandson Jacob: “The land that I gave to Abraham and to Isaac, I will give to you, and to your offspring after you I will give the land.”

(Genesis 35:12)

When the Hebrews were enslaved in Egypt, God instructed Moses to say to them: “I am the Lord. I will free you from the labors of the Egyptians and deliver you from their bondage ... I will bring you into the land which I swore to give to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and I will give it to you for a possession.” (Exodus 6:6-8)

The Book of Joshua describes Joshua leading the people across the Jordan to enter the Land.

Every Jewish child in every religious school should learn these texts, and learn, as well, that the land that is alluded to is the modern Land of Israel.

**The People of Israel have returned.** For those of a liberal/progressive mind-bent—who might not take seriously, or literally, the promise of God that this is our land—there is this to consider:

For 2,000 years, from the time of the Destruction of the Second Temple, the people were dispersed to lands far and wide. Yet God promised that we would return.

Before the people entered the Land, Moses, prophesying, told them:

“Then Hashem, your God, will bring back your captivity and have mercy upon you and He will gather you from all the peoples to which Hashem your God has scattered you...Hashem your God will bring you to the Land that your forefathers possessed and you shall possess it.” (Deuteronomy 30:1-5)

There are multiple allusions in the prophets as well to the return. With the creation of modern Israel, we see this return happening: People from over 70 countries have made Israel their home since 1948. Historically, there is absolutely no precedent for this astounding phenomenon.

This is a proof in modern times. The Ingathering of the People has huge theological significance for those who have eyes to see it: it is a nes, a miracle.

**The historical connection of the Land of Israel to the Jews, going back more than 3,000 years, is beyond dispute.** Additional archeological evidence of this is uncovered regularly. From a purely historical perspective, this is our land.

For some 3,000 years, the only time the land of Israel has been an independent nation, a sovereignty, is when it has been governed by Jews. In the 2,000 years of exile, until the founding of the modern state of Israel, the area of Israel was only an appendage, a province, attached to one larger empire or another, from the Roman Empire to the Ottoman Empire.

**Israel has thrived in the face of apparently insurmountable odds.** Our fledgling nation won the War of Independence in spite of predictions that it could never happen. Then, Israel won the Six Day War, when the Arab nations were aligned against her, and, after this, the Yom Kippur War.

But Israel has not only won wars, she has prospered and thrived beyond anything that might remotely have been expected. In 71 years we moved from the ashes of the Shoah to becoming a first world nation that is a leader in technology and medical advancement.

**Israel is a blessing to the nations of the world.** This is certainly with regard to those technological and medical advancements. The list of technologies developed in Israel, from which the modern world benefits, is impressive: the cell phone, voice mail technology, the first PC anti-virus software, etc. The medical advances, particularly with regard to cancer, are enormous.

But beyond this, Israel reaches out to help others on a regular basis. Israelis are first on the scene when there are disasters – setting up field hospitals, helping to rescue people, and more.

Israel even sends trained medical clowns from the Israeli non-profit Dream Doctors to ease the fears of children in times of trauma. Said Dream Doctors Executive Director Tsour Shriqui in late October 2019: “This is Israel. It's part of our DNA to be there first to help in a time of crisis.”

Israeli experts teach drip irrigation to African farmers and provide various other sorts of expertise to struggling nations—such as how to use solar energy to pump clean water. Israel instructs others in anti-terrorism techniques, as well. Israel is much sought after by African nations for this critical expertise.

During the Syrian civil war, Israel brought in wounded Syrians, notably children, for badly needed medical care. The IDF even set up a maternity hospital on the Syrian side of the border to provide a

place for Syrian women to deliver.

Israel treats children from a host of nations, including some that have no diplomatic ties with Israel. Via Save-a-Child's-Heart, Israel provides heart surgery (with doctors working as volunteers) for those with life-threatening conditions. Thousands of children have been treated. Another Israeli non-profit brings Israeli ophthalmologists into the third world to do surgery on a volunteer basis.

Alan Dershowitz has observed: “No country in the history of the world ever contributed more to the welfare of humankind in such a short period of time.”

**The IDF is the most moral army in the world.** In times of conflict, we give warning to enemy civilians before attacking. Our soldiers have been killed when an operation has been halted to avoid hitting those civilians.

Additionally, Israel has an extraordinary policy (probably unique in the world) of receiving into its ranks, as full soldiers or volunteers, persons with various disabilities, including autism. The goal is to provide these people with a sense of worth and inclusion.

**Israel is a liberal democracy.** Whatever the weaknesses of that democracy, it is the only one in the Middle East and it is a bulwark of freedom.

Arab citizens of Israel have fuller human and civil rights – freedom of speech, right to petition the courts, etc. – than the residents of any of the surrounding Arab nations or the Palestinian-Arab administered areas.

Israel's Arab citizens have full equity with Jewish citizens in terms of civil rights – they vote and select their own representatives in the Knesset, they are accepted at all schools of higher learning, they receive the same medical care as Jews in the same hospitals, receive the same welfare benefits.

**Jews the world over are more secure because of Israel.** Had Israel existed in the 1930s, we would not have lost 6,000,000 of our people in the Shoah. People today are complacent and tend to discount the effect that a powerful Israel with a strong standing army has on those who would destroy us.

**The presence of Israel in the volatile Middle East is enormously important from a security and defense aspect.** Israel supplies the West, and especially the US, with invaluable Intelligence. Many lives have been saved because Israel warns other countries about impending terror attacks.

The US relies on Israel in multiple regards; the Pentagon in particular understands Israel's value. Israel's actions – e.g., working against Iranian entrenchment in Syria – frequently serve American interests in the area. Additionally, the US relies on the Israeli development of certain military equipment, and cooperates extensively with Israel in the area of cyber-security.

US naval ships routinely dock in Haifa; US Air Force planes re-fuel at Israeli bases; and hundreds of millions of dollars of military and medical equipment are stored in Israeli territory for ready access.

The observation of the late Alexander Haig, former Supreme Commander of NATO and Secretary of State, some years ago, that “Israel is the largest American aircraft carrier in the world that cannot be sunk, does not carry even one American soldier, and is located in a critical region for American national security” still has great relevance.

**The continuity of the Jewish People lies with Israel.** The progressive Jews of America are not reproducing their numbers; many are assimilating or marrying out. Israel has the highest Jewish birthrate in the world, and almost all marry Jews. Jews in America who are non-religious easily assimilate into a non-Jewish culture. In Israel, those who are non-religious are still within a Jewish atmosphere. Research shows that many of those who describe themselves as non-observant still keep something – perhaps lighting Chanukah candles, or attending a seder. This is supported by the Jewish cultural environment.

There is more Jewish study – from serious text study to informal lessons – going on in Israel than anywhere else, now or ever.

**Israel is the only Jewish state in the world.** This means going according to Jewish time and sharing a pervasive sense of common Jewish culture and values.

Being Jewish is normative here. There is nowhere else in the world where this is true.

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