

## Mideast Peace Can Start With Economic Growth

By Daniel Doron The Wall Street Journal March 12, 2009

Last week, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton told Israeli Prime Minister-designate Benjamin Netanyahu that the U.S. does not want to be restricted by "old formulas" when it comes to the peace process. As she works on a new approach, she may want to ask why costly diplomatic efforts have not led to Israeli-Palestinian peace but to ongoing war.

Though billions of dollars in "aid" have flowed into the Palestinian territories, there is still no Palestinian state, nor security for Israel. With no effective restrictions on this aid, Palestinian leaders used it to bolster terrorist groups and fight Israel, rather than build their society.

In order to succeed -- finally -- peace efforts need to create positive incentives. An economic peace process can create such a reality, as it has in the past until political obsessions interrupted it.

Following Israel's conquest of the West Bank and the Gaza strip in 1967, Gen. Moshe Dayan wisely let the Palestinians manage their economic affairs. His "open bridges" policy facilitated the free movement of goods and people, and brought prosperity to the private sector. Hundreds of thousands of Palestinians were employed in Israel for much higher wages than under Jordanian and Egyptian rule. Living standards quintupled and agriculture, manufacturing, education, health and the status of women and children rapidly improved. Arabs enjoyed freedom of movement in Israel, yet there were practically no incidents of terrorism. Israelis shopped and ate in Arab towns. Their spending provided a lion's share of a skyrocketing Palestinian GDP.

This informal peace process was resisted, however, by traditional Palestinian elites. Modernization threatened their beliefs and their privileged status. Then, in 1987, an economic recession and harsher interference by Israeli bureaucracy in Arab life ignited an *intifada* that was taken over and politicized by the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO). Yasser Arafat's PLO killed whatever economic cooperation remained.

Today, many policy makers advocate a total separation between Israel and the Palestinians. But the latter cannot develop a prosperous economy and a viable state in economic isolation. Separation will result in economic ruin, as has already happened in Gaza. Israel and the West Bank are simply too small and too geographically integrated to support two economically divided entities. The fates of Israelis and the Palestinians are economically intertwined.

Jerusalem provides a good model of economic integration. The city has a large population of Israeli Jews and Palestinian Arabs living in close proximity. The latter are ardent Muslims, and most Jews in Jerusalem do not belong to the peace camp. Yet despite strenuous efforts by Palestinian terrorist organizations to inflame the city with repeated attacks, income from tourism has been so rewarding that Jerusalemites coexist without too many problems.

Wide-scale prosperity can come to the West Bank and Gaza by providing direct aid to Palestinian families still living in refugee camps. Unlike previous failed attempts, when aid was given to a corrupt Palestinian Authority, refugee families should get cheap loans and/or grants. Infrastructure construction should be allotted by competitive bidding to small and medium-sized Palestinian firms, not to politically connected mega-contractors. And to further perpetuate economic growth, the monopolies that now strangle both the Israeli and the Palestinian economies (often the same ones) must be broken.

For centuries, civilized Europeans slaughtered one another and political solutions were unable to stop the carnage. Then the creation of a European economic community shifted political priorities and peace came to reign. A similar process can lead, again, to peaceful developments in the Middle East. With no viable alternatives it's certainly worth trying.

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## History's oldest hatred By Jeff Jacoby The Boston Globe March 11, 2009

Anti-Semitism is an ancient derangement, the oldest of hatreds, so it is strange that it lacks a more meaningful name. The misnomer "anti-Semitism" - a term coined in 1879 by the German agitator Wilhelm

Marr, who wanted a scientific-sounding euphemism for Judenhass, or Jew-hatred - is particularly inane, since hostility to Jews has never had anything to do with Semites or being Semitic.

Perhaps there is no good name for a virus as mutable as anti-Semitism. "The Jews have been objects of hatred in pagan, religious, and secular societies," write Joseph Telushkin and Dennis Prager in "Why the Jews?," their classic study of anti-Semitism. "Fascists have accused them of being Communists, and Communists have branded them capitalists. Jews who live in non-Jewish societies have been accused of having dual loyalties, while Jews who live in the Jewish state have been condemned as 'racists.' Poor Jews are bullied, and rich Jews are resented. Jews have been branded as both rootless cosmopolitans and ethnic chauvinists. Jews who assimilate have been called a 'fifth column,' while those who stay together spark hatred for remaining separate."

There was Jew-hatred before there was Christianity or Islam, before Nazism or Communism, before Zionism or the Middle East conflict. This week Jews celebrate the festival of Purim, gathering in synagogues to read the biblical book of Esther. Set in ancient Persia, it tells of Haman, a powerful royal adviser who is insulted when the Jewish sage Mordechai refuses to bow down to him. Haman resolves to wipe out the empire's Jews and makes the case for genocide in an appeal to the king:

"There is a certain people scattered and dispersed among . . . all the provinces of your kingdom, and their laws are different from those of other peoples, and the king's laws they do not keep, so it is of no benefit for the king to tolerate them. If it please the king, let it be written that they be destroyed."

When the king agrees, Haman makes plans "to annihilate, to kill and destroy all the Jews, the young and the elderly, children and women, in one day . . . and to take their property for plunder."

What drives such bloodlust? Haman's indictment accuses the Jews of lacking national loyalty, of insinuating themselves throughout the empire, of flouting the king's law. But the Jews of

Persia had done nothing to justify Haman's murderous anti-Semitism - just as Jews in later ages did nothing that justified their persecution under the Church or Islam, or their repression at the hands of Russian czars and Soviet commissars, or their slaughter by Nazi Germany. When the president of Iran today calls for the extirpation of the Jewish state, when firebombs are hurled at synagogues in London and Paris and Chicago, it is not because Jews deserve to be victimized.

Many Jews are no saints, but the paranoid frenzy that is anti-Semitism is not explained by what Jews do, but by what they are. They are the object of anti-Semitism, not its cause. That is why the haters' rationales can be so wildly inconsistent and their agendas so contradictory. What do those who vilify Jews as greedy bankers have in common with those who revile them as fiendish Bolsheviks? Nothing, save an irrational obsession with Jews.

At one point, Haman lets the mask slip. He boasts to his friends and family of "the glory of his riches, and the great number of his sons, and everything in which the king had promoted him and elevated him." Still, he seethes with rage and frustration: "Yet all this is worthless to me so long as I see Mordechai the Jew sitting at the king's gate." That is the unforgivable offense: "Mordechai the Jew" refuses to blend in, to be just like everyone else. He goes on sitting there - undigested, unassimilated, and therefore unbearable.

Of course Haman had his ostensible reasons for targeting Jews. So did Hitler and Arafat, so does Ahmadinejad. Sometimes the anti-Semite focuses on the Jew's religion, sometimes on his laws and lifestyle, sometimes on his professional achievements. Under it all, however, it is the Jew's Jewishness that the anti-Semite cannot abide.

With all their flaws and failings, the Jewish people endure, their role in history not yet finished. So the world's oldest hatred endures too, as obsessive and indestructible - and deadly - as ever.

## The Path of Realism or the Path of Failure

By Elliott Abrams The Weekly Standard March 2, 2009

Repetition of failed experiments is not a sign of mental health or a path to scientific progress, nor is it a formula for Israeli-Palestinian peace. Yet that is the road we may again take, unless the lessons of the Bush years are learned.

As an official of the Bush administration I made three dozen visits to the Middle East in the last eight years, and in February, as Israelis voted, I made my first visit as a private citizen in nearly a decade. After lengthy discussions with Israelis and Palestinians, it seems to me obvious that it is time to face certain facts, facts that President Bush actually saw clearly during his first term: We are not on the verge of Israeli-Palestinian peace; a Palestinian state cannot

come into being in the near future; and the focus should be on building the institutions that will allow for real Palestinian progress in the medium or longer term.

In a historic speech on June 24, 2002, President Bush said, "My vision is two states, living side by side, in peace and security." How were we to get there? He was specific:

There is simply no way to achieve that peace until all parties fight terror. Peace requires a new and different Palestinian leadership, so that a Palestinian state can be born. I call on the Palestinian people to elect new leaders, leaders not compromised by

terror. I call upon them to build a practicing democracy based on tolerance and liberty.

If the Palestinian people actively pursue these goals, America and the world will actively support their efforts. If the Palestinian people meet these goals, they will be able to reach agreement with Israel and Egypt and Jordan on security and other arrangements for independence. And when the Palestinian people have new leaders, new institutions and new security arrangements with their neighbors, the United States of America will support the creation of a Palestinian state, whose borders and certain aspects of its sovereignty will be provisional until resolved as part of a final settlement in the Middle East. □□□□. A Palestinian state will never be created by terror. It will be built through reform. And reform must be more than cosmetic change or a veiled attempt to preserve the status quo. True reform will require entirely new political and economic institutions based on democracy, market economics and action against terrorism.

This was the announcement that the United States was breaking totally with Yasser Arafat--the single most frequent foreign visitor to the Clinton White House--and would henceforth consider him a terrorist rather than a negotiating partner. Six months later the "Roadmap," a plan for progress toward these goals, was drafted. Even its formal name, "A Performance-Based Roadmap to a Permanent Two-State Solution to the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict," suggested its conformity to President Bush's speech. Its preamble stated in part, "A two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict will only be achieved through an end to violence and terrorism, when the Palestinian people have a leadership acting decisively against terror and willing and able to build a practicing democracy based on tolerance and liberty."

The Roadmap did not call for leaping directly from the status quo--the Palestinian Authority, or PA, established after Oslo--to statehood. Instead it called for an interim phase "focused on the option of creating an independent Palestinian state with provisional borders and attributes of sovereignty, based on the new constitution, as a way station to a permanent status settlement." The text here reiterated the need for Palestinian leaders "acting decisively against terror, willing and able to build a practicing democracy based on tolerance and liberty."

After Arafat's death in November 2004, his lieutenant Mahmoud Abbas became president of the PA, and efforts to achieve some of these required reforms began. But there began as well a distancing by the United States and the international "Quartet" that had sponsored the Roadmap (the United States, United Nations, European Union, and Russia) from the tough and clear standards that had been set out. It is as if those standards were meant to record

disgust with Arafat, but with his passing the familiar insistence on rapid progress--and more Israeli concessions--returned.

More and more speeches, including American speeches, called for rapid agreement on a Palestinian state, for a final status agreement, for elimination altogether of that interim phase. Worse yet, at the Annapolis Conference, announced in July 2007 and convened that November, the president announced that the goal was a final status agreement by the end of 2008. This left only 13 months, which was itself astonishing for a problem as old and complex as the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. It seemed to ignore the June 2007 Hamas takeover of Gaza, and, as the end of 2008 coincided with the end of the president's own term, it seemed to substitute the American political calendar for a realistic assessment of facts on the ground, just as the Clinton administration had done.

And it failed. Those of us within the Bush administration who had protested the Annapolis plan and the announcement of the 2008 goal were sadly proved right. Historians may puzzle over the causes of the failure, and perhaps more so over what led the president to turn away from the tough-minded realism toward this conflict that he showed during his first term. But the lesson for 2009, for the new administration, must be that there are actually only two alternatives: realism and failure.

Judging by the standards set forth in President Bush's still remarkable 2002 speech, the PA has made some genuine progress. Under U.S. tutelage, training of Palestinian security forces has begun largely under the radar, at a training center in Jordan. But it is working: Sixteen hundred police from the West Bank have gone through the course, and there are plans to double that number. The newly trained forces are not exactly crack troops, but they are a far cry from the divided and ineffective gangs created by Yasser Arafat. Their success was visible during the recent Gaza war, when they acted in parallel, and sometimes in concert, with Israeli forces to prevent Hamas violence and terrorism in the West Bank. Order was maintained.

Much of the credit goes to PA prime minister Salam Fayyad, a U.S.-trained economist whose integrity, candor, and effective administration of the PA have made him a favorite of the United States and all other donors. Fayyad, a former finance minister (who brought order from chaos in the PA's finances and continues to fight PA corruption), has presided over continuing economic growth in the West Bank and maintains a working if unfriendly relationship with Israeli officials. Fayyad is well aware of the history of his sometime partner, sometime foe in Jerusalem, the government of Israel, and indeed of the history of the entire Zionist enterprise: Institutions were built over long decades to prepare for Israel's independence despite the

uncertainty of when it would arrive. The Zionists struggled to be ready, hoping thereby also to bring the day closer. That is Fayyad's task for the Palestinian people, as he appears to see it.

He gets remarkably little help, from either Arab states or the West. The willingness of oil-rich Arab leaders to supply Palestinians with endless amounts of rhetoric and precious little cash is not new, though the high oil prices of recent years made it all the more obscene. But Fayyad has also had less help from the West than one might expect. The shift away from realistic efforts to build Palestinian institutions and toward international conferences like Annapolis put President Abbas in the limelight, not the pragmatic work of Fayyad and his ministers. So Abbas traveled from capital to capital, as he continues to do, safely removed from the difficult work of building the basis for an independent Palestine. If the West Bank had a factory with a thousand jobs for every such trip, for every photo op with a smiling foreign leader, and for every international conference, the Palestinians there would be thriving.

What are the chances that such meetings will produce a final status agreement in 2009? None. Despite the pressures for progress after Annapolis, little progress was made in 2008, and if anything conditions are worse now. In 2008, Israeli-Palestinian negotiations were frequent at two levels: Prime Minister Ehud Olmert met with President Abbas, and Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni met with Palestinian chief negotiators Ahmed Qurei ("Abu Ala") and Saeb Erekat. I am unaware of the achievement of any actual agreement on any important issue on either track.

On the toughest issues, such as Jerusalem and refugees, there was, unsurprisingly, no meeting of the minds. It is unlikely negotiators will do better this year. It has been true for decades that the most Israel can offer the Palestinians is quite evidently less than any Palestinian politician is prepared to accept. Those who say "the outlines of an agreement are well known" and thereby suggest that an agreement is close are precisely wrong: Is it not evident that to the extent that such outlines are "well known," they are unacceptable to both sides or they would have led to a deal long ago? In addition, any possible deal would take years to implement: Israel would need that time to remove settlers from lands that would become part of Palestine, while the Palestinians would need to win the fight against terrorism. So any deal would be a so-called shelf agreement, where Palestinian leaders would be compromising on Jerusalem, borders, and refugee claims in exchange not for a state, but for an Israeli promise of a state at some indeterminate future date. No Palestinian leader jumped at that in 2007 or 2008, and none will in 2009.

Meanwhile, whatever the strengths and weaknesses of the PA as an institution, Fatah as a party is moribund. Its reputation for incompetence and corruption remains what it was when Arafat was alive, for there has been no party reform despite endless promises. At one point in 2008, when Ahmed Qurei--one of Arafat's closest cronies, famed for permitting corruption, renowned for opposing the rise of any newer and younger leaders in Fatah--was formally charged with organizing and implementing party reform, tragedy gave way to farce. But if democracy is impossible without democratic parties, the collapse of Fatah is no joke; it suggests that a future independent Palestine would either be run by Hamas and other extremists and terrorists or become a one-party "republic" on the model of Tunisia or Egypt.

There is more. Prime Minister Olmert, who was intent on trying for an agreement by the end of President Bush's term, will be gone, and his successor will not be as enthusiastic to make the concessions Olmert reportedly offered the Palestinians. President Obama has not committed himself to achieve an agreement in 2009 in the way that President Bush did in 2007 and 2008. The Palestinian political leadership under President Abbas and his Fatah party is weak, even increasingly illegitimate as the presidential election date prescribed in the Palestinian law was ignored and Abbas's term in office extended. And, of course, it is impossible to see how a comprehensive final status agreement between Israel and the PA can be reached when the PA itself has now lost control of 40 percent of the Palestinian population, the 1.4 million Palestinians living in Gaza.

First, there is the question of who can actually negotiate with Israel on behalf of the Palestinian people. The Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) is still recognized by the Arab League and the United Nations as the "sole legitimate voice of the Palestinian people" though it never won a free election to attain that status. Israel's past negotiations, in the Oslo Accords of 1993 and ever since, have all been with the PLO--not formally with the PA, which was created at Oslo to exercise certain governmental functions in the Palestinian territories. When Israel negotiates with Abbas, it is in his capacity as chairman of the PLO, not in his role as president of the PA. But now the PA governs only one part of Palestinian territory. Hamas governs the other part--and Hamas is not a member of the PLO. In the 2006 elections 44 percent of Palestinians voted for Hamas, moreover, and it maintains a majority in the Palestinian parliament (a possible problem should that body ever meet). So, for which Palestinians do Abbas, the PA, and the PLO actually speak? While Israel rightly refuses to negotiate with a terrorist group like Hamas, or with the PA or PLO should it include Hamas in its ranks, it remains true

that the PA and PLO no longer have a strong claim to represent all Palestinians and may now lack the ability to enforce any deal with Israel they sign.

Second, the lesson of Gaza to Israelis is identical to the lesson of south Lebanon, and a cautionary tale regarding withdrawal from the West Bank: "Land for peace" concessions have failed and become "land for terrorism." Until there is far better security in the West Bank, few Israelis would risk withdrawing the Israel Defense Forces and Shin Bet from operating there.

And third, the terrorist groups Israel is dealing with, such as Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad, used to be local; now those groups have the full backing of Iran, both directly and through Syria and Hezbollah. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is now part of a broader struggle in the region over Iranian extremism and power. Israeli withdrawals now risk opening the door not only to Palestinian terrorists but to Iranian proxies. How could Israelis, or Palestinians for that matter, take such a risk--especially when the new American administration has not defined its policy toward Iran, except for some vague and (to Arabs and Israelis alike) worrying phrases about outreached hands and sitting across negotiating tables, and the U.S. military option is invisible?

Taken together, these factors suggest that a final status agreement is not now a real-world goal. What is? A return to the realistic assessments and policies that marked Bush's first term. In practice, this suggests an intense concentration on building Palestinian institutions in the West Bank.

There is much to build on, with security force improvements well under way, the economy in decent shape, and a reliable and trustworthy leader in Prime Minister Fayyad. Neither the United States nor Israel has done nearly as much as it can to promote progress on the ground, allowing Palestinians in the West Bank freer movement and helping create more jobs and a better standard of living. After the Gaza war, Israel appears prepared to do more, and should be asked to do so; Israel has a strategic interest in the success of the Palestinian Authority in the West Bank and of moderate forces in Palestinian society more generally. Arab states should be pressured intensely to provide the funds needed to meet the PA payroll and undertake sensible investment projects, for example in housing and agriculture. The United States and the Quartet should take some time away from endless meetings and speeches and resolutions calling for immediate negotiations over final status issues, and turn instead to making real life in the West Bank better and more secure. If there is ever to be a Palestinian state, it will be the product of such activities, not of formulaic pronouncements about the need for Palestinian statehood now.

It is also time to rethink the recent commitment to leaping all at once to full independence for the Palestinians, and even to break the taboo and rethink that ultimate goal itself. Immediate and total independence was not the plan when the Roadmap was written in 2002 and released in 2003. Then, it was understood that "an independent Palestinian state with provisional borders and attributes of sovereignty" was a necessary way-station. Given Hamas control over Gaza, which makes a united independent Palestine impossible for now anyway, a West Bank-only state with provisional borders and only some of the attributes of sovereignty makes far more sense as a medium-term goal. It might also allow postponing compromises on Jerusalem and refugee claims that no Palestinian politician could now make, for those issues could be left aside for another day, while the delays are blamed on Hamas and its rebellion in Gaza.

How that episode will end is entirely unclear, given Israel's reluctance to reoccupy and rule Gaza, and Egypt's reluctance to enforce strict controls on the smuggling of weapons. One Israeli official told me that Egypt had agreed to stop the smuggling through the tunnels. But will they really do it? I asked him. Oh, he replied, "now you are asking if we can get an agreement to implement the agreement. That's different." While Iran is able to sustain the Hamas terrorist regime in Gaza, negotiations over a full final status agreement are little more than staking territorial claims to a mirage.

But one is free to wonder as well whether Palestinian "statehood" is the best and most sensible goal for Palestinians. When I served under Secretary of State George Shultz in the Reagan administration, we were expressly opposed to that outcome and favored some links to Egypt and Jordan. On security and economic grounds, such links are no less reasonable now; indeed, given Hamas control of Gaza and the Iranian threat to moderate Arab states as well as to Israel, they may be even more compelling. As we've seen, President Bush in 2002 stated that the Palestinians should "reach agreement with Israel and Egypt and Jordan on security and other arrangements for independence."

Now, even the mention of Egyptian and Jordanian involvement will evoke loud protests, not least in Amman and Ramallah, and perhaps U.S. policymakers should think but not speak about such an outcome. There are many and varied possible relationships between a Palestinian entity in the West Bank and the Hashemite monarchy, and if none can be embraced today, none should be discarded either. One Arab statesman told me when I asked him about a Jordanian role that there "must absolutely be an independent Palestinian state in the West Bank--if only for 15 minutes," and then they could decide on some form of federation or at least a Jordanian security role for the area. If the greatest Israeli,

Jordanian, and Egyptian fears are of terrorism, disorder, and Iranian inroads in a Palestinian West Bank state, a Jordanian role is a practical means of addressing those fears.

Israel's next government, which Israel's president has asked Benjamin Netanyahu to form, must soon take up these matters with the Palestinians, Arab neighbors, the EU, and above all with the United States. The new Obama administration has not yet worked out a policy toward Iran or toward the Israel-Palestinian conflict, but that may be a hopeful sign. Thinking is better than assuming or reacting or misjudging. As the new

team reviews the playing field, it would be well advised to look not only at what its predecessors did in the second Bush term, but also at what they did in the first term--when a gritty realism prevailed over visions, dreams, and endless conferences. For, again, it seems to me there are at present only two paths forward--the path of realism and the path of failure.

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## Peace processing 101

By Clifford D. May The Washington Times February 22, 2009

There's an old joke about three guys stranded in the desert, dying of thirst. They have a can of water - but can't open it.

One guy, an engineer, uses a stick as a lever and a rock as a fulcrum and ... nothing. The second guy, a physicist, does some calculations, drops the can from a predetermined height at a carefully considered angle and ... still nothing. Finally, the third guy, an economist, looks at the can and says: "OK. I have the solution. Assume a can opener."

A similar joke could be told about those who have worked on what we call - with more hope than precision - the "peace process" in the Middle East. Diplomats and negotiators have urged Israel to give up land (Gaza, for example) for peace. They have focused on negotiating easy issues figuring that would "create momentum" for a comprehensive settlement down the road. They have attempted to "build confidence" among the warring parties, as if the conflict were just a big misunderstanding. And they have assumed leaders who did not exist as a way to conjure a preferable reality.

Each of these approaches has failed, and if those who will be handling the Middle East portfolio in the Obama administration want to understand why, they should spend a little time listening to the extraordinary Palestinian journalist Khaled Abu Toameh. Recently, he gave a wide-ranging interview to a group of Americans visiting Israel, including Michael J. Totten who posted a transcript on his indispensable Web site. <http://www.michaeltotten.com/archives/2009/02/a-minority-repo.php>

Among other things, Mr. Toameh makes clear how stupid experts can be. In the 1990s, for example, peace processors "gathered all these PLO fighters from around the world, released thousands of PLO fighters from Israeli prisons, gave them uniforms and guns, and called them security forces. And the result was the people who had never received any basic training, people who had never finished high school, became colonels and generals in Yasser Arafat's [Palestinian] Authority."

Arafat stole billions of dollars donated by Americans and Europeans to aid Palestinians. Some of the money went into foreign bank accounts and to Arafat's wife who was living large in Paris. Some went not to build Palestinian hospitals and schools, but instead for bars, restaurants and a gambling casino - across the street from a refugee camp. "The fact that Arafat was crooked didn't surprise us Palestinians," Mr. Toameh says. "We were only surprised by the fact that the international community kept giving him money and refused to hold him accountable when he stole our money."

Arafat's corruption and misrule, followed by the vacillation and weakness of his successor, Mahmoud Abbas, helped radicalize Palestinians and pave the way for Hamas to win elections under the banner of "change" and "reform."

But based on its militant interpretation of Islam, Hamas also is committed to "resistance" - another way of saying its non-negotiable goal is the extermination of what it sees as the infidel state of Israel.

"Hamas is not going to change," Mr. Toameh says. "All these people who believe that Hamas will one day change its ideology, that pragmatic leaders will emerge in Hamas, these people are living under illusions. Hamas is not going to change. To their credit we must say that their message has been very clear. It's the same message in Arabic and in English. They're being very honest about it."

After so many missteps, what is possible now? Mr. Toameh thinks it's time to think small, to look for ways to manage the conflict, rather than attempt to solve it with some grand design similar to those presented with elaborate ceremony in past years at such venues as Annapolis, Taba, Camp David, Oslo and Madrid.

This conflict is not just about Palestinians and Israelis or even Arabs and Jews. "Iran, Syria, Hezbollah, al Qaeda, Islamic Jihad, the Muslim Brotherhood, all these people are playing a very negative role in this part of the world," Mr. Toameh says. "Iran wants to fight to the last Palestinian."

He does offer some advice: "If I were an Israeli Jew I would go to the Palestinians and say, 'Listen, folks. I'm prepared to give you a Palestinian state and the Israeli majority approves of that, not because we love the Palestinians, but because we want to be rid of the Palestinians.' There's a majority of Jews today who want to disband most of the settlements and take only 2 percent of the West Bank. In the wake of these positive changes that have happened inside Israel, all you need is a strong partner on the Palestinian side. There is some hope, but only if there is a strong partner on the Palestinian side."

And, Mr. Toameh is quick to acknowledge, there is not such a strong partner at the moment.

There could be in time, however, and working toward that goal would be a useful task for the peace processors.

But simply "assuming" the Palestinians have decent leaders and the Israelis have a Palestinian interlocutor willing and able to cut a deal that will lead to peace is as futile as wishing for water - or a can opener - in the desert.

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## Obama's National Intelligence Crackpot

By Bret Stephens The Wall Street Journal March 10, 2009

**What does the Jewish lobby have to do with China's dissidents?**

On Thursday, The Wall Street Journal published a letter from 17 U.S. ambassadors defending the appointment of Charles Freeman to chair the National Intelligence Council. The same day, the leaders of the 1989 protests that led to the massacre at Beijing's Tiananmen Square wrote Barack Obama "to convey our intense dismay at your selection" of Mr. Freeman.

If moral weight could be measured on a zero to 100 scale, the signatories of the latter letter, some of whom spent years in Chinese jails, would probably find themselves in the upper 90s. Where Mr. Freeman and his defenders stand on this scale is something readers can decide for themselves.

So what do Chinese democracy activists have against Mr. Freeman, a former U.S. ambassador to Saudi Arabia? As it turns out, they are all, apparently, part-and-parcel of the Israel Lobby.

In a recent article about Mr. Freeman's nomination in the Huffington Post, M.J. Rosenberg of the left-wing Israel Policy Forum writes that "Everyone involved in the anti-Freeman effort are staunch allies of the lobby." Of course: Only the most fervid Likudnik mandarins could object to Mr. Freeman's 2006 characterization of Mao Zedong as a man who, for all his flaws, had a "brilliance of . . . personality [that] illuminated the farthest corners of his country and inspired many would-be revolutionaries and romantics beyond it." It also takes a Shanghai Zionist to demur from Mr. Freeman's characterization of the Chinese leadership's response to the "mob scene" at Tiananmen as "a monument to overly cautious behavior on the part of the leadership."

Mr. Freeman knows China well: He served as a translator during Richard Nixon's historic 1972 visit to Beijing. More recently, Mr. Freeman served on the advisory board of CNOOC, the Chinese state-

owned oil giant. Is this also a qualification to lead the NIC?

But the Far East is by no means Mr. Freeman's only area of expertise. For many years he has led the Middle East Policy Council, generously funded by Saudi money. It's a generosity Mr. Freeman has amply repaid.

Thus, recalling Mr. Freeman's special pleading on behalf of Riyadh during his stint as ambassador in the early '90s, former Secretary of State James Baker called it "a classic case of clientitis from one of our best diplomats." Mr. Freeman has also been quoted as saying "It is widely charged in the United States that Saudi Arabian education teaches hateful and evil things. I do not think this is the case." Yet according to a 2006 report in the Washington Post, an eighth grade Saudi textbook contains the line, "They are the Jews, whom God has cursed and with whom He is so angry that He will never again be satisfied." Maybe Mr. Freeman was unaware of this. Or maybe he doesn't consider it particularly evil and hateful.

Whatever the case, Mr. Freeman has been among the Kingdom's most devoted fans, going so far as to suggest that King Abdullah "is very rapidly becoming Abdullah the Great." No sycophancy there.

Not surprisingly, Mr. Freeman was a ferocious critic of the war on terror. Not surprising, either, was his opinion about what started it: "We have paid heavily and often in treasure in the past for our unflinching support and unstinting subsidies of Israel's approach to managing its relations with the Arabs," he said in 2006. "Five years ago we began to pay with the blood of our citizens here at home."

This is not a particularly original argument, although in Mr. Freeman's case it becomes a kind of monomania, in which Israel is always the warmonger, always slapping away Arab hands extended in peace. Say what you will about this depiction of reality, there's also a peculiar psychology at work.

Then again, as Middle East scholar Martin Kramer points out, Mr. Freeman's recent views on the causes of 9/11 contradict his view from 1998, when he insisted that al Qaeda's "campaign of violence against the United States has nothing to do with Israel." What changed? Mr. Kramer thinks Mr. Freeman was merely following the lead of his benefactor, Citibank shareholder Prince Al-Waleed, who opined that 9/11 was all about U.S. support for Israel, not what the Kingdom teaches about the infidels.

Is Mr. Freeman merely a shill? That seems unfair, even if it's hard to square his remorseless "realism" in matters Chinese with the touching

solicitude he feels for Israel's victims (who, by his count, must be numbered in the tens of millions). James Fallows of the Atlantic has argued that Mr. Freeman's "contrarian inclination" would serve him well in the NIC post. But the line between contrarian and crackpot is a thin one, and knowing the difference between the two is a main task of intelligence.

Adm. Dennis Blair, the Director of National Intelligence who asked Mr. Freeman to serve, is testifying today in Congress. Somebody should ask him if any of Mr. Freeman's views quoted above meet the definition of "crackpot," and, if not, why?

### **Time to Call It Quits** By The Washington Post editorial March 11, 2009

**The Justice Department should drop its misguided prosecution of two former AIPAC officials.**

Attorney General Eric H. Holder Jr. should put an end to a criminal case that should never have been brought.

The matter involves Steven J. Rosen and Keith Weissman, two former officials for the American Israel Public Affairs Committee, or AIPAC. The two were indicted in 2005 during the Bush administration and charged with conspiracy to disclose national security secrets to unauthorized individuals under the archaic Espionage Act. Those said to have received such information include Israeli officials, other AIPAC personnel and a reporter for The Post.

The government has the right to demand strict confidentiality from government officials and others who swear to protect its secrets. The Justice Department errs egregiously and risks profound damage to the First Amendment, however, when it insists that private citizens -- academics, journalists, think tank analysts, lobbyists and the like -- also are

legally bound to keep the nation's secrets. The prosecution in effect criminalizes the exchange of information.

If principle alone is not enough to convince Mr. Holder of the need to drop this case, he should also consider the difficulty his prosecutors face in making the charges stick. Recent rulings have strengthened the hand of the defendants by allowing them to rely on classified documents and to call former Bush officials, including former secretary of state Condoleezza Rice, as witnesses. The trial court has also determined that in order to prevail, the government must prove beyond a reasonable doubt that the defendants passed along information they knew to be closely held by the government, that they did so knowing it could damage national security and that they acted in bad faith. These are exceedingly high hurdles to clear.

A trial has been scheduled for June in the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia. Mr. Holder should pull the plug on this prosecution long before then.

### **Lost in the blur of slogans**

**By Ishmael Khaldi** The San Francisco Chronicle March 4, 2009

For those who haven't heard, the first week in March has been designated as Israel Apartheid Week by activists who are either ill intentioned or misinformed. On American campuses, organizing committees are planning happenings to once again castigate Israel as the lone responsible party for all that maligns the Middle East.

Last year, at UC Berkeley, I had the opportunity to "dialogue" with some of the organizers of these events. My perspective is unique, both as the vice consul for Israel in San Francisco, and as a Bedouin and the highest-ranking Muslim representing the Israel in the United States. I was born into a Bedouin tribe in Northern Israel, one of 11 children, and began life as shepherd living in our family tent. I went on to serve in the Israeli border police, and later earned a master's degree in political science

from Tel Aviv University before joining the Israel Foreign Ministry.

I am a proud Israeli - along with many other non-Jewish Israelis such as Druze, Bahai, Bedouin, Christians and Muslims, who live in one of the most culturally diversified societies and the only true democracy in the Middle East. Like America, Israeli society is far from perfect, but let us deals honestly. By any yardstick you choose - educational opportunity, economic development, women and gay's rights, freedom of speech and assembly, legislative representation - Israel's minorities fare far better than any other country in the Middle East

So, I would like to share the following with organizers of Israel Apartheid week, for those of them who are open to dialogue and not blinded by a hateful ideology:

**You are part of the problem, not part of the solution:** If you are really idealistic and committed to a better world, stop with the false rhetoric. We need moderate people to come together in good faith to help find the path to relieve the human suffering on both sides of the Israel-Palestinian conflict. Vilification and false labeling is a blind alley that is unjust and takes us nowhere.

**You deny Israel the fundamental right of every society to defend itself:** You condemn Israel for building a security barrier to protect its citizens from suicide bombers and for striking at buildings from which missiles are launched at its cities - but you never offer an alternative. Aren't you practicing yourself a deep form of racism by denying an entire society the right to defend itself?

**Your criticism is willfully hypocritical:** Do Israel's Arab citizens suffer from disadvantage? You better believe it. Do African Americans 10 minutes from the Berkeley campus suffer from disadvantage - you better believe it, too. So should we launch a Berkeley Apartheid Week, or should we seek real

ways to better our societies and make opportunity more available.

**You are betraying the moderate Muslims and Jews who are working to achieve peace:** Your radicalism is undermining the forces for peace in Israel and in the Palestinian territories. We are working hard to move toward a peace agreement that recognizes the legitimate rights of both Israel and the Palestinian people, and you are tearing down by falsely vilifying one side.

To the organizers of Israel Apartheid Week I would like to say:

If Israel were an apartheid state, I would not have been appointed here, nor would I have chosen to take upon myself this duty. There are many Arabs, both within Israel and in the Palestinian territories who have taken great courage to walk the path of peace. You should stand with us, rather than against us.

**Ishmael Khaldi is deputy consul general of Israel for the Pacific Northwest.**

## Anti-Semitism in now a creature of the left

By Jonathan Kay *The National Post (Canada)* March 2, 2009

People speak of anti-Semitism as if it were a monolithic evil. But it's not. There are two distinct strains of Jew hatred. Unfortunately, our society is still fixated on fighting the one that went out of style four decades ago.

The difference between the two begins with the way Jews are depicted. Look at the images on this page. The one on the left, a poster published in German-occupied Poland in 1941, exemplifies the Jew-hatred spouted by the Nazis. (The caption reads: "Jews and Lice: They cause typhus.") The image on the right, a poster circulated on Canadian campuses this week to mark "Israel Apartheid Week," typifies the more recent variant.

Aside from the obvious — the language and style of illustration — what crucial difference do you notice?

In the Nazi poster, the Jew is a piece of filth — a rogue pathogen within gentile society. The image perfectly captures Hitler's view of Jews as a "bacillus infecting the life of peoples."

Now look at the image on the right. Aside from retaining the general sense that the Jew (or, to give the fig leaf its due, "the Jewish state") is a scourge upon the world, everything has changed. The Jew is no longer diseased and wretched. Just the opposite: He is an omnipotent, teched up superman, murdering a defenseless Palestinian child from above.

In this latter detail — the use of a child victim to communicate the extent of the Jew's evil — the anti-Israeli propaganda of today is similar to the posters and textbooks of the Nazi era, which often showed shadowy Hebrews menacing German

children. But the Nazis usually took care to personalize the Jew as a craggy, hook-nosed ghoul — an image meant to further the idea that Jews were so genetically inferior as to be literally inhuman. Aside from editorial cartoonists in the Arab world (many of whom faithfully copy Nazi-era stereotypes to this day), anti-Semitic propagandists of our own age typically omit the Jew's features altogether in favour of a faceless, Star-of-Zion-emblazoned tank or helicopter. As in the Nazi era, the Jew isn't fully human — but now he's an all-powerful Nazgul instead of a pitiful Gollum.

What explains this radical transition in the presentation of anti-Semitic propaganda? Three factors.

The first is ideology: When the Nazis went down to defeat, they took with them the intellectual basis of "germ-theory" anti-Semitism — the toxic notion that certain races or groups are genetically inferior or parasitical. In our era, to compare Jews to leeches is to announce oneself as a bigoted creature from society's discredited fringe.

The second reason is tied up with the history of Israel itself: After the Jews established their own state in 1948, it became impossible to typecast them as mere parasites contaminating foreign hosts. This was especially true after the Six-Day War of 1967, in which Israel scored a crushing military victory against Egypt, Jordan and Syria — not the sort of maneuver you'd expect from typhus-stricken old men.

The third reason is political: The leaders who find anti-Semitism useful today aren't extreme nationalists such as Hitler, Stalin or Mussolini

(though Hugo Chavez admittedly has been wandering into that territory). Instead, they are radical Muslims — and their allies in Western activist groups, who speak the tropes of anti-colonialism, anti-imperialism, anti-Americanism, anti-racism and all the other fashionable antis. In this left-wing intellectual climate, disparaging any race or religion per se is off limits. The preferred tactic is to disparage the allegedly colonial, imperialist, racist etc. nature of their actions.

In keeping with our society's obsession with victimhood, the propaganda strategy against Israel now is entirely passive aggressive. While the Nazis loved to dwell on the virility and superhuman indomitability of Aryans, the Jews' enemies now are represented in propaganda by 5-year-olds carrying teddy bears. (For more in this vein, watch the 60-second promotional movie on the Israel Apartheid Week web site, in which you will see a cartoon mock-up of Gaza's population that contains no men of military age — just a bunch of sorrowful kids, mummies and granddads.) The moral dimension of the conflict — terrorism versus counter-terrorism, a society seeking peace versus one that seems addicted to war — has been replaced by a sentimental Marxist-inspired tale of the virtuous oppressed rising up against an evil oppressor.

Broadly speaking, in other words, the locus of anti-Semitism has moved from the right side of the political spectrum to the left. Here in Canada, you still do see a few isolated anti-Semites of the Nazi persuasion here and there — David Ahenakew is one rare example. But for the most part, the neo-Nazi movement is confined to a few self-parodic Internet chat rooms (many of whose members, we've learned in recent years, are actually bored human-rights bureaucrats looking to stir up hate-speech charges). These days, the hatemongers targeting Jews' right to live peacefully spout the mantras of "social justice" and "peace studies," not racial purity. Their movement is dominated by the sort of leftists and minority activists whom the Nazis (neo or otherwise) would have up against the wall in a heartbeat if they had the chance. (Running down through the published list of 11 speakers at the University of Toronto's Israel Apartheid Week, for instance, you will find no fewer than three Canadian aboriginal activists. Who knew these people were such experts on the Middle East?)

It also must be admitted that the anti-Semitism of today is a lot more subtle than the old-fashioned variety: Except in clear cases of blood libel such as the IAH poster, it's often hard to tell where legitimate criticism of Israel ends and Jew-hatred begins. As a result, Jews themselves — middle-aged university professors and career feminists, most typically — are often drawn into radicalized campaigns against Israel, and sometimes even can be seen marching gullibly arm-in-arm with Kafiyeh-clad protestors chanting for Jewish blood in Arabic.

It's a disgusting spectacle, especially when you hear their maudlin rhetoric — "massacre," "crime against humanity," "genocide," "holocaust," etc. If these words may be applied to the unintentional killing of several hundred Gazans during a counterterrorist operation, how does one describe the wholesale slaughter of tens or hundreds of thousands in places such as Chechnya and Darfur? ("Mega-massacre"? "Giga-genocide"?)

You don't have to be anti-Semitic to pervert language or logic in this way, but it certainly helps. And I can see why many of my correspondents want universities to ban Israel Apartheid Week, or at least the most vicious IAW propaganda.

Though I personally don't care much for censorship, one might even think that this is the sort of issue in which our country's human rights commissions (last seen defending a Muslim woman's right to appear masked in court) might take an interest. But you'd be wrong.

Our entire human-rights establishment was built in the 1960s and 1970s on the assumption that anti-Semitism would always be a creature of the extreme right. And to this day, the dinosaurs who run the nation's HRCs — along with their allies in the identity-politics industry — persist in the ridiculous notion that the main threat to Jews emanates from drunken old fossils like Ahenakew, or the eight unemployed hamburger-flippers who get together in Calgary every year to exchange badly rehearsed Hitler salutes.

They treasure this conceit for an obvious self-serving reason: Vilifying Nazis is easy. Taking on politically correct Muslims and campus lefties on parade is hard. Anti-Semitism thrives when lazy people look the other way. That much, at least, hasn't changed.

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**Listen to and ask questions of an Israeli politician, Moshe Feiglin, a Likud Party leader, at Shomrei Emunah Congregation, 6211 Greenspring Avenue in Baltimore on Sunday March 15 at 8:00 pm.**