

SUBURBAN ORTHODOX CONGREGATION TORAS CHAIM

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LETTER FROM SAMMY AND MALKA ESTERSON Suburban Orthodox Members RE: OU Mission August 21, 2001

Dear Friends: Over the past week, Malka and I were fortunate to spend a week experiencing the "matzav" (state of affairs) in Israel. We went as representatives with the UO's Solidarity Mission. We were based all week in Jerusalem and traveled daily to areas specifically affected by the Aqsa Intifada, the name of the nearly year long Arab uprising. As frequent visitors and travelers in Israel, Malka and I were astounded to see the paucity of visitors in the major cities. The usually packed downtown areas of the cities were quiet and empty. Many shops were closed. The mood is noticeably not upbeat. Restaurants were likewise empty. Following the Sbarro's blast that killed 15 and severely injured 90+, most locals and visitors now order take-out food and eat at home. Briefly, let me sketch some highlights of our whirlwind trip. We had 150 participants in our group. The average age was about 50, the high majority of the group had been to Israel many, many times before and are staunch supporters of Medinat Yisrael. Stops were made at both the Sbarro restaurant and the Netanya Canyon (mall) where Arab suicide bombers recently murdered their victims.

We visited Laniado Hospital in Netanya to view how the emergency trauma teams operate. The Jerusalem Sbarro Pizza Shop is now boarded up with hundreds of yahrtzeit candles burning, flowers and notes strewn about, and placards demanding revenge, noting psukim, names of the murdered victims, and government slogans plastered over the walls covering the shop's bombed out front facade. People are gathered all hours at this site saying tehillim and paying their private respects. It is like a war memorial. We had the honor of hearing many official government and rabbinic speakers during our stay, including: Natan Shransky, Shimon Peres, Sefardi Rav Rashi Bakshi-Doron (who spent Shabbat with us and addressed us on several occasions), Rav Melchior, the assistant foreign minister, "Gandi", the Secretary of Tourism, Daniel Kurtzer, the new American Ambassador to Israel, Rabbi Berel Wein, Ashkenazi Rav Rashi Lau, Esther Wachsmann, mother of slain soldier Nachman Wachsmann, and several leaders of the Yesha movement, including a recent widow of a murdered yishuvnik killed while driving home from work 2 weeks ago. The overwhelming message from each and every speaker and local we heard from was: Israel needs us NOW. They need our children in their yeshivot and seminaries. They need our physical presence and financial support. They need our influence in our local government. They need us speaking out in favor of Israel on our college campuses. They need us to intelligently refute the propaganda that the Arabs are poisoning the media with. They need our tfillot but they also need us to ACT! The army is stretched to the limits and the security focus is no longer on defense but rather on intelligence gathering and preemptive strikes to avoid terror incidents. The country is scrambling to retrofit busses in certain areas with bulletproof armor to protect the citizens of people in the Yehudah, Shomron, and Azza (Yesha). One major difficulty is transporting kids to local schools in the Shomron because the hotbed of frequent gunfights in Arab populated Ramallah and Bet Jallah force the busses in wide, circuitous routes that take three times the usual travel time. They also are in need of armored vehicles. We stood on the roof of the yeshiva in Bet El where a group of soldiers is stationed with machine guns, sandbags, high power binoculars keeping a watchful eye on midtown Ramallah, a mere few hundred feet from the Bet El yishuv. There is frequent shooting at night at the Yeshiva and many logistical accommodations have been made. The students eat in a makeshift dining hall because the large, beautiful cafeteria gets shot at frequently.

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The message is clear: we must not cease our enthusiasm or be lax in our support of Israel. The slogan of the trip was "yachad shivtai yisrael". We can do our part politically, spiritually, physically, and educationally. Frequent solidarity missions are now being formed for this upcoming year. Think about participating if you can. I understand that local shules and organizations will be mailing out specifics of upcoming trips soon. May we work to see the pasuk "shalom al yisrael" come true soon! Sammy Esterson

NO MORAL EQUIVALENCE By Aron U. Raskas Baltimore Jewish Times August 24, 2001

They packed as a family for their vacation. They walked to the Jerusalem restaurant together, probably smiling and hand-in-hand. The bomb exploded a few tables away. It spewed the nails and screws that were carefully mixed in to cause the maximum harm. The explosives tore through innocent flesh, dismembered young and elderly limbs and forever shattered the family's dreams. The parents were buried the next day alongside three of their children, a 4 year old and 18 month old among them. Ten other lunch customers were buried that same day, a hundred others lay maimed. Nothing justifies their deaths and pain.

In Nablus, the six men climbed the steps to the apartment. They had deliberately selected the seven-story residential building for their meeting. On the agenda were plans for more deadly attacks on Israeli citizens. The Israeli Air Force helicopters rose over the city. The pilots identified their target and carefully guided a small missile through the window. It eliminated the six terrorists inside. No other residents were targeted, no other dwelling units attacked. There was no question why these six men died. The rhetoric from their funerals made that clear. They were the planners and operatives of deadly terrorist acts against Jews - warriors of the Jihad. They were combatants, and then casualties, of the war that they waged.

There is - and there can be - no moral equivalence between these episodes or the many others that have occurred this year. The equivocation from the State Department is immoral and simply wrong. Israel is engaged in an armed conflict, a war, with those bent upon destroying it. Like every other nation, Israel has a duty to protect its citizens. The individuals who guide and participate in armed attacks against Israelis have chosen to become combatants in the conflict that they initiated and perpetuate. Like any commander or soldier at war, they are legitimate military targets not only at the instant of their attacks, but before and after as well. They can not choose or limit the place where they may be confronted. Israel's carefully targeted responses against these combatants are no more illegitimate "assassinations" than the millions of "assassinations" that Allied troops carried out against those seeking their destruction in war. Israel has correctly focused the battle upon those who have chosen to wage it, and seeks to avoid harm to those Palestinians who want no part in this mayhem. Indeed, had Israel unleashed its full fury upon the Palestinians, as most nations would do in these circumstances, Palestinian casualties would be exponentially higher. It is the Palestinian factions, deliberately and cynically waging this war from residential settings and firing from crowds of civilians, that endanger otherwise innocent Palestinians when Israel responds. In stark contrast, the Israelis killed this past year were murdered while engaged in day-to-day activities that citizens of any other country take for granted. The only choices that they made to bring terror and death upon themselves were which restaurant to eat in, which road to take to work or which bus to ride.

The Palestinian bombs and bullets sprayed at cars in drive-by shootings are designed precisely to maim and kill innocent people. Those deaths are routinely celebrated at Palestinian rallies. A generation ago it would have been inconceivable that civilized persons would find any way to justify or otherwise excuse these grotesque and morally indefensible acts. The regularity with which this terrorism is practiced must not lead to its acceptance. There is wrong and there is right in this conflict. It behooves Western civilization to say so. The terrorism being waged by Palestinians is wrong. Palestinians initiated it to force Israel into concessions it was not willing to make in negotiations. These cowardly terrorist acts can never be excused, justified or even compared to Israel's legitimate self-defense. Israel is right to defend its citizens in the manner it has pursued. It did not ask for this war, yet it now has no choice but to engage in it. Soon Israel may have no alternative but to react with more "decisive force." That strategy is the centerpiece of the doctrine once advocated by General Colin Powell. Secretary Powell should draw a lesson from it. **Mr. Raskas is a Baltimore attorney and a frequent writer and lecturer about Israel.**

A WAR AND THEN A WALL By George Will, syndicated columnist reprinted in Jewish World Review August 17, 2001

Among reasonable people, who are now impervious to the diplomats' anesthetizing imbecilities about "preserving" the Middle East "peace process," there is a crystallizing consensus: Israel needs a short war and a high wall. To understand the context of such thinking, consider what USA Today's Jack Kelley saw at the Aug. 9 terrorist bombing that killed 15 at the Jerusalem pizza restaurant. Kelley was 30 yards away when the terrorist detonated a bomb packed with nails: "The blast . . . sent flesh flying onto second-story balconies a block away. Three men were blown 30 feet; their heads, separated from their bodies by the blast, rolled down the glass-strewn street. . . . One woman had at least six nails embedded in her neck. Another had a nail in her left eye. Two men, one with a six-inch piece of glass in his right temple . . . tried to walk away. . . . A man groaned. . . . His legs were blown off. Blood poured from his torso. . . . A 3-year old girl, her face covered with glass, walked among the bodies calling her mother's name. . . . The mother . . . was dead. . . . One rabbi found a small hand against a white Subaru parked outside the restaurant." As with the June bombing that killed 21 at a Tel Aviv disco, children were not collateral victims -- they were the targets. Abdallah al-Shami, a senior official of Islamic Jihad, celebrated "this successful operation" against "pigs and monkeys." That is a familiar rhetorical trope among those whom the calamitous Oslo "peace process" cast in the role of Israel's "partners for peace." In yet another of the constant violations of the Oslo requirement to stop anti-Jewish incitements, this was a recent broadcast from the moral cesspool that is the official television station of Yasser Arafat's Palestinian Authority: "All weapons must be aimed at the Jews . . . whom the Koran describes as monkeys and pigs. . . . We will enter Jerusalem as conquerors. . . . Blessings to he who shot a bullet into the head of a Jew."

Al-Shami boasts that "no border restriction will stop" suicide bombings. It is time to test that proposition, which surely depends on where the border is and what precedes the establishment of it. Arafat's Palestinian Authority, in brazen violation of the Oslo undertaking to abandon violence, has chosen to wage a kind of urban guerrilla warfare against Israel. But Israel is skilled at combating such warfare. And now Israel should show that it, not Arafat, will dictate the intensity of the conflict. A short war -- a few days; over before European and American diplomats' appeasement reflexes kick in -- should have four objectives.

First, to kill or capture those terrorists (and those who direct them) whom Arafat has permitted to remain at large, in violation of his Oslo undertaking and of his promise to CIA Director George Tenet after the disco bombing.

Second, to destroy the Palestinian Authority's military infrastructure built up in violation of detailed Oslo restrictions.

Third, to destroy other physical infrastructure useful to the Palestinian Authority, including all newspaper and broadcasting facilities.

Fourth, and most important, to define, with finality, Israel's borders, around which a wall should be built. All of Jerusalem should be within the wall. Israel's seizure of the Palestinian Authority's East Jerusalem headquarters, Orient House, which has been constantly used for political activities forbidden by Oslo, should signal the end of all talk about the indivisibility of Jerusalem.

The State Department, that brackish and bottomless lagoon of obtuseness, where Secretary of State Colin Powell has gone native with disgusting speed, will respond with the rhetoric of moral equivalence -- "both sides" must stop "the cycle of violence" -- to whatever Israel does in self-defense. On Tuesday the department sank to self-caricature when it denounced as "provocative" Israel's brief incursion into the West Bank in pursuit of the perpetrators of suicide bombings.

It is instructive that the assault against Israel was not slowed by the intervention there of former senator George Mitchell, whose achievements in Northern Ireland are just now proving similarly illusory. Under his promptings, the IRA -- like the Palestinian Authority, a terrorist organization masquerading as a normal political entity -- made various false promises about "decommissioning" arms, abandoning violence, etc. Like Arafat, IRA leaders say the continuing violence is committed by entities beyond their control. Mitchell cannot be blamed for failing to reconcile irreconcilables. But blame, and complicity in murder, attaches to all those who willfully refuse to recognize the limits of diplomacy and the duty of active self-defense.

CONGRESS AND BUSH SHOULD PUNISH ARAFAT **By Morton Kondracke, Executive Editor of Roll Call** **reprinted in Jewish World Review August 21, 2001**

President Bush has no coherent policy on the Middle East crisis, but Congress is in the process of nudging him toward one that would begin punishing Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat for failing to control terrorist violence. Bush has been calling on Arafat to “do a lot more” to stop terrorism, but administration policy lacks any sense of “or else.” On occasion, Bush and Vice President Cheney have indicated they sympathize with Israel’s effort to preempt terrorist attacks, even by assassinating militant leaders, and to punish Arafat’s Palestinian Authority following acts of violence. At other times, though, pronouncements by Secretary of State Colin Powell and Bush make it seem that the administration considers Arafat and Israel’s government equally responsible for the absence of peace.

It’s not clear whether this is a good cop-bad cop act designed to appease both Jewish voters in the United States and oil-rich Persian Gulf Arabs, the product of a fundamental split within the administration – or evidence of confusion. This week, in the wake of the latest suicide bombings at a pizzeria in Jerusalem and a cafe in Haifa, Bush rather impotently declared, “There’s nothing that an administration can do if there’s no will for peace.” Au contraire. The administration can begin by saying consistently that Arafat is fundamentally responsible for the violence and that sanctions are on the way. Among the steps suggested by members of Congress are placing Arafat’s security services on the State Department’s terrorist list, downgrading the diplomatic status of the Palestinian mission in Washington, and cutting off non-humanitarian aid to the West Bank and Gaza. Such sanctions, subject to presidential waiver, are part of a foreign aid bill passed by the House and headed for Senate hearings in September.

Arafat deserves to be penalized for releasing from jail leaders of the chief terrorist groups claiming credit for suicide bombings, Hamas and Islamic Jihad. Rather than re-arresting them, Arafat is in the process of negotiating with the terrorists to have them join his government. Arafat himself has sent statements of praise to the families of suicide bombers. Moreover, the Tanzim and Force 17, two security services affiliated with Arafat’s Fatah party, have been directly involved in attacks on Israeli targets. Arafat has agreed on numerous occasions – the latest in connection with the peace agreement negotiated earlier this year by CIA Director George Tenet – to crack down on those responsible for violence. Yet he hasn’t done a thing beyond issue occasional condemnations of especially egregious acts of terrorism. Meantime, media outlets controlled by the Palestinian Authority spew a constant message of violence against Israelis.

The Friday, Aug. 3, sermon given by Sheik Ibrahim Madhi at the Sheik Ijlin Mosque in Gaza and broadcast on the Palestinian Authority’s television station, for example, declared, “Blessings to whoever saved a bullet to stick it in a Jew’s head.” The sermon continued, according to a transcript from the Middle East Media Research Institute, “Whoever can fight the Jews with his weapons should go out to the battle; whoever can fight them with a machine gun, should go out; whoever can fight them with ... his hands, should go out. Nothing will deter the Jews except the color of their filthy people’s blood.”

The fact is that, even when Arafat was ostensibly negotiating peace with Israel, no effort was made to prepare the Palestinian population to accept less than the elimination of the Jewish state. When former Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak offered Arafat more than 90-percent control of the occupied West Bank, partial governance of Jerusalem and recognition of an independent Palestinian State, Arafat rejected the deal and unleashed a wave of violence against Israel. In hindsight, there’s reason to wonder whether Arafat ever intended to reach a true peace with Israel, or simply to gain as much territory as he could in order to resume his lifelong armed struggle. The collapse of the peace process has led Barak to call for building a security wall hundreds of miles long to separate Jews and Palestinians, while keeping open an offer to negotiate with some future Palestinian leader.

The more hawkish-minded suggest going beyond that step, declaring all the fruits of the peace process null and void, and calling for the attack and destruction of the Palestinian Authority’s infrastructure, even driving Arafat himself back into exile.

Barak's successor as prime minister, Ariel Sharon, has adopted no discernable long-range policy, but instead has offered to resume negotiations if Arafat will bring violence to a halt while attacking targets linked to terrorism. Sharon evidently hopes there is a finite number of young men in Palestine willing to blow themselves up and that hardships suffered by the Palestinian population will bring its leaders to reason.

But that hope may be a vain one. Terrorism and Israeli reprisals could well lead to all-out war, which U.S. allies in the Arab world might feel it necessary to support or even join, raising the specter of a break with the United States. The bottom line is, Bush can't afford to conclude there's nothing he can do. At a minimum, he should support legislation to punish Arafat, making it clear that his administration speaks with one voice on who's to blame for Middle East violence.

A FATHER'S PRIDE AND GLORY By Daniel Pipes The Jerusalem Post August 15, 2001

Hours after the killing of 15 Israelis in a Jerusalem restaurant last week, the brother of the 23-year-old suicide bomber delightedly announced that "this is a unique operation for its quality and success... Palestinians everywhere can now hold up their heads."

Likewise, after a 22-year-old suicide bomber two months earlier killed 21 Israelis at a Tel Aviv discotheque, his father announced: "I am very happy and proud of what my son did and, frankly, am a bit jealous... I wish I had done it myself." And so it has been with nearly all suicide operations - family members rejoicing at the "martyrdom" of their brothers and children. Some fathers even publicly announce a hope that their children will kill Israelis in suicide operations. Puzzled by this apparent denial of the primal human urge to protect one's young, President George W. Bush has commented, "I just can't understand this." He is hardly alone. Two main factors account for this bizarre behavior. The first concerns the Palestinian Authority drumming into impressionable youth the glory of suicidal death while killing Israelis. PA television harps constantly on this message. On the Children's Club (a Sesame Street-like children's program), a young boy sings: "When I wander into Jerusalem, I will become a suicide bomber." A repeatedly shown television clip calls on children to "Drop your toys. Pick up rocks." In another, the words to a children's song go: "How pleasant is the smell of martyrs, how pleasant the smell of land, the land enriched by the blood, the blood pouring out of a fresh body."

Ikrima Sabri, the PA's ranking religious leader, says, "The younger the martyr, the greater and the more I respect him," while praising mothers who "willingly sacrifice their offspring for the sake of freedom." PA schools indoctrinate pupils on the virtues and joys of martyrdom, then honor and celebrate suicide killers. Four summer camps are currently training eight- to 12-year-olds for suicide bombings. Organizations like Hamas promise to look after the killers' families' financial needs. In all, notes Meyrav Wurmser, a Hudson Institute specialist on the indoctrination of pupils, the PA has developed "a state-run ideology that pushes [children] to their death." Why does this indoctrination work and why do Palestinian families enthusiastically send their children to die? What pressure could overcome the human instinct to protect one's beloved?

That pressure is not hard to locate, for it pervades Middle Eastern life. It is an unrelenting, compulsive preoccupation with family honor. The power of this obligation goes far beyond anything Westerners encounter. The fixation on family honor takes two main forms. The negative one, called *ird* in Arabic, concerns the sexual purity of women and it accounts for the Middle Eastern custom of murdering female relatives for perceived offenses to the family. Such honor killings are intended to purify the family from its shame; thus do brothers kill sisters, cousins kill cousins, fathers kill daughters, and even sons kill mothers.

These men do so not because they want to - almost nothing could be more horrifying in the context of the tight-knit Middle Eastern family - but because they feel obliged to. Allowing a dishonored woman to remain alive brings ridicule and disdain on the entire family. In such circumstances, mere love for a daughter or sister dwindles into insignificance; she must be killed. Thus, after an Egyptian father strangled his unmarried but pregnant daughter, cut her corpse into eight parts, and threw those down the toilet, he explained his reasons: "Shame kept following me [before the murder] wherever I went. The village's people had no mercy on me. They were making jokes and mocking me. I couldn't bear it and decided to put an end to this."

The positive form of honor (sharaf in Arabic) involves efforts to enhance the family's status by taking steps to win it praise and renown; and nothing can win a family as much glory as its willing sacrifice of a family member for a noble cause. Thanks to PA propaganda, suicide bombing has become a highly honored act. Thus, the Tel Aviv bomber's father crowed about his son, "He has become a hero! Tell me, what more could a father ask?"

Combined, the monstrous social environment created by the PA and the families' preoccupation with social status goes far to explain why Palestinians glory in the destruction of their youth.

The writer is the director of the Philadelphia-based Middle East Forum.

WHO CARES ABOUT PALESTINIANS? By Joseph Farah WoldNetDaily.com August 23, 2001

Who really cares about the human rights of Palestinian Arabs? Syria, Iraq, Iran, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Jordan and other Muslim nations have warned Israel, in various ways and with different degrees of intensity, over the Jewish state's alleged mistreatment of Palestinian Arabs.

There's one major problem with these threats. These nations have done far less for Arab Palestinians than Israel has. That's right. I said it, and I mean it.

Let me give you an example of what I'm talking about. The Jordan Times reports that "Palestinian refugees in Lebanon, who have long been denied many civil rights including the right to work, now face a new obstacle in their precarious lives." Under a bill introduced by parliament earlier this year, Palestinian Arabs will be deprived of their right to own property. Those who already own property will not be able to pass it on to their children.

Now just imagine if Israel passed such a law? Can you imagine the international outcry? What would the United Nations have to say about this? How long would it take to equate Zionism with racism again? How would the media establishment in the West view such a draconian ploy? Yet, this is happening in an Arab country virtually without comment – except here. And take a look at the transparent rationale for this action in Lebanon, as described in the Jordan Times: "The Lebanese parliament passed the law on the grounds that it wants to protect the right of the Palestinian refugees to return eventually to their homes which they fled after the creation of the state of Israel on Palestinian lands in 1948."

Don't you love that? We are protecting your rights by denying your rights. Only in the Arab world could such hypocritical duplicity occur without international ridicule and universal denunciation. Keep in mind that most Palestinian refugees today were born well after 1948. They never lived in the land called Palestine. And the reason is that their Arab neighbors have been so inhospitable to them. They have not allowed them to resettle because Arab leaders are determined to fan the flames of hate with Israel. They want to keep this scapegoat issue of a Palestinian homeland alive so that the Arab people don't turn their enmity toward their own leadership and begin questioning why they are deprived of their own human rights. Lebanon, by the way, is a virtual client state of Syria. It is occupied by the Syrian army. No significant political decision is made in Beirut without the approval and direction of Damascus. And it is Damascus, more than any other Arab capital, that supports the Arab terror campaign in Israel, that undermines every attempt at peaceful reconciliation between Arab and Jew and that has orchestrated this strategy of actively denying Palestinians their human rights in the name of Palestinian human rights. How bad is the situation in Lebanon? Here are more details as reported by the Jordan Times – not exactly a mouthpiece for the vast international Zionist conspiracy:

- Under the Lebanese labor law that governs foreigners, Palestinians are denied 74 forms of employment;
- Palestinians face tight exit and entry requirements;
- Palestinians in Lebanon are not allowed citizenship;
- Palestinians are confined to 12 camps with no medical, social or educational services from the government and are barred in some of those camps from building or even repairing homes.

Some in Lebanon have even recognized the "racist" nature of this anti-Palestinian campaign – policies far worse than anything ever contemplated by Israel. Yet, more than half a million Syrians marched earlier this week in support of the Palestinian uprising in Israel, chastising the Jewish state for "Nazi and fascist" practices.

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Do those Syrian citizens have any idea of what kind of oppression Palestinian Arabs face next door in Lebanon? Do they have any idea that their government is directly supporting such policies? Are they aware that more Syrian troops are headed to Lebanon now to support the Beirut regime that has imposed such repressive measures?

While Israel has bent over backwards to accommodate the Palestinian Arabs – especially those victimized by the 1948 war – the Arab nations have only sought to exploit their misery. That exploitation continues today. It is overt. It is a matter of law. Yet the world sees it not.

© 2001 WorldNetDaily.com **Joseph Farah is editor and chief executive officer of WorldNetDaily.com and writes a daily column.**

MAKING RULES IN THE WORLD BETWEEN WAR AND PEACE

By Tim Weiner New York Times August 22, 2001

We are facing an implacable enemy," the top-secret report to the president said. "There are no rules in such a game. Hitherto acceptable norms of human conduct do not apply." The nation must "destroy our enemies by more clever, more sophisticated and more effective methods than those used against us," the report said. And citizens must come to "understand and support this fundamentally repugnant philosophy."

The year was 1954; the president was Dwight D. Eisenhower. The report was the intellectual basis for lethal American covert action, including the attempted assassinations of Cuba's Fidel Castro and the Congo's Patrice Lumumba, among others. But after these secrets were revealed in Congressional hearings 25 years ago, public revulsion led to a presidential order outlawing assassination by American officials and agents.

Now, Israel is destroying its implacable enemies through a policy it calls "liquidation": lethal, anticipatory self-defense. The Palestinians call it "assassination," and say about 60 of their activists have been killed since September. Are there rules in this game? Do norms of human conduct or international covenants apply? Can a state legally destroy its enemies by any means necessary? International laws have never stopped secret intelligence services.

Mossad officers, for example, picked off Palestinians (including one victim of mistaken identity) after the massacre of Israeli athletes at the 1972 Munich Olympics. In 1976, a mile from the White House, a time bomb planted by Chile's secret police killed that country's former foreign minister, Orlando Letelier. Bulgarian agents killed the dissident writer Georgi I. Markov with a poison-tipped umbrella in London in 1978. British special services murdered three suspected Irish Republican Army members at Gibraltar in 1987.

Legal experts argue over the rules of engagement in a field of battle "that is very gray - the zone between the poisoned umbrella and all-out war," said John Norton Moore, director of the Center for National Security Law at the University of Virginia.

The Israelis should halt "targeted assassinations" of Palestinians, the United Nations secretary general, Kofi Annan, said last month. He called the policy an affront to "international law, in particular human rights law, but also to general principles of law." The United Nations charter says, "in peacetime, the citizens of a nation, whether they are political officials or private individuals, are entitled to immunity from intentional acts of violence by citizens, agents or military forces of another nation."

But the Israeli Army says it is in something close to a state of war with the Palestinians. "The Israeli view is that they have been in a perpetual state of war since 1948," said Ruth Wedgwood, a professor of international law and diplomacy at Yale and Johns Hopkins, "and the fact that their adversaries do not wear uniforms does not matter. "What's delicate about the Israeli argument," she said, "is that they haven't said they are at war with the PLO, but the vocabulary they use is that of a state of war. If Israel is indeed at war with the PLO, these people - anyone in the chain of command - are fair targets." But, she added, "no one really knows what to do in this netherworld between peace and war."

The Israelis first defined and defended their liquidation policy days after it began. "International law actually only recognizes two situations: peace or war," said Col. Daniel Reisner, the head of the international law branch of the Israeli Army's legal division. "But life isn't as simple." Israel is not exactly at war, he said, "because war is a conflict between two armies or two states," and the Palestinians have neither. But "we are definitely in the area of armed conflict," he said. And under the laws of war, "you are allowed to target combatants."

Is this assassination? "Assassination is not a legal term, at least not in international law," he said. This is what the Israelis are calling anticipatory self-defense. International laws don't precisely define "terrorism" and "assassination." But if terrorism is a war crime committed in peacetime - the random killing of civilians for political ends - assassination has a sharper aim: to kill someone specific in the enemy's political or military chain of command.

In theory, no innocents die. In practice, sometimes they do. If a suicide bomber's satchel is a tool of terror, and a sniper's rifle a tool of assassination, what is a precision-guided missile aimed at a terrorist target that kills unintended victims?

Did the American bombs that killed the 15-month-old daughter of the Libyan leader Muammar el-Qaddafi at his home in 1986 fall in that gray zone? Was that an assassination attempt against a foreign leader? The United States argued that since Colonel Qaddafi had been plotting terrorist attacks on its citizens, it had the right to strike directly at him. In the name of counterterrorism, Congress, in 1996, passed and President Clinton signed a law authorizing "all necessary means, including covert action and military force, to disrupt, dismantle and destroy international infrastructures used by international terrorists." And "infrastructures" meant "anything and everything that supports a terrorist" - including the terrorists themselves," explained Mark M. Lowenthal, who was then staff director of the House intelligence committee.

In 1998, after the bombing of the American Embassy in Nairobi, the United States fired cruise missiles at Afghan camps where Osama bin Laden was believed to be hiding. More than 20 people were reported killed. Few tears would have been shed in Washington if Mr. Bin Laden, the world's most wanted terrorist suspect, had been hit.

"If terrorists attack you and you respond by bombing, are you violating the U.N. charter?" said Mr. Moore, a former State Department international law counsellor. "I think not. If there is an identifiable group that you know through your intelligence is engaging in attacks against your people, you have every right to defend yourself."

"That is not assassination and should not be talked about as assassination," he said. "It is lawful under the U.N. charter." But Jeffrey H. Smith, the former general counsel at the Central Intelligence Agency - whose director, George J. Tenet, has tried to broker a Mideast peace - said Israel must have hard evidence of an impending attack by a specific individual to justify killing him. "It raises profound questions under international law for the Israelis to retaliate against a Palestinian leader in the absence of specific information, that he was about to attack them," he said. "A military or intelligence operation designed specifically to kill an individual because he or she is a leader of an opposition group, even if that group advocates violence against you, raises a very real question as to whether that operation is authorized by international law. In my view, it is not." "This is not just a narrow legal question," he said. "You have to ask: does it work? Does it deter terror? Does it brand the state that does it an international outlaw? Does it expose them to retaliation against their leaders? And what does it say about the morality of those who do it?"

The legal concept of anticipatory self-defense is not new. In 1839, anti-British rebels planned to invade Canada by crossing the Niagara on a steamer. A British force entered the United States, set the ship ablaze and sent it over the falls. Two Americans were killed.

The secretary of state, Daniel Webster, said the British could justify sinking the ship by proving "a necessity of self-defense, instant, overwhelming, leaving no choice of means, and no moment for deliberation." There, in a nutshell, is a legal theory setting limits on killing a suspected terrorist. But for Mr. Lowenthal, the former House staffer, the binding authority in this conflict may not be a legal theory, but a literary plot. He recalled Alexandre Dumas's "The Three Musketeers." The plot hinges on a carte blanche written by Cardinal Richelieu, minister of France. His note provides an all-purpose alibi for an assassination. It says, "It is by my order and for the good of the state that the bearer of this has done what he has done." That, Mr. Lowenthal says, may be as good an explication of Israel's liquidation policy as any.

This next article is reprinted in an effort to understand how a mainstream American Arab community leader understands the Israeli Arab conflict and its ultimate resolution. Take special note in the writer's usage of condemning suicide bombers but then comparing them (moral equivalency issue) with Israeli soldiers and the dreaded "settlers". The writer also says that Israel must eventually "make peace and integrate itself" – most likely into that wonderful democratic State of Palestine that Arafat envisions. (ed).

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THERE IS NO MILITARY SOLUTION By Ziad Asali

The Washington Post August 23, 2001

Last week some Post columnists advocated that Israel should "escalate the violence" (Michael Kelly); recommended "a lightning and massive attack on every element of Arafat's police state infrastructure" (Charles Krauthammer); and suggested "a short war . . . to destroy other physical infrastructure useful to the Palestinian Authority, including all newspaper and broadcasting facilities" (George F. Will).

It was shocking to read those pieces, given that it has been almost a year since the worst fighting of this generation began in earnest in the Middle East. In that time, both sides have become more entrenched in their unwillingness to negotiate and more willing to accept the unthinkable -- that this generation will not know peace in its time. After 11 months of violence, the innocents on both sides now hate each other more fiercely. Palestinian children are shot by Israeli soldiers and Israeli children are killed by suicide bombers. No winners, just blood-soaked streets.

In a way, though, there are victors: They are the extremists on both sides. It used to be that moderate Israelis agreed the Palestinians had a right to a state to call home, while moderate Palestinians agreed that Israelis had this same right. Now all seem to have forgotten. The failure of peace talks -- and the continuing occupation of ancestral land the Palestinians view as their own -- has led to extremism on both sides. These extremists are Israeli soldiers killing innocents and Palestinian suicide bombers doing the same. How much blood will be shed before reasonable people reclaim the debate and deny extremists the stage?

To achieve peace, both sides must accept the other's fundamental right to exist. Even when Jerusalem was under Muslim control for hundreds of years, there was always a Jewish quarter. Muslims did not invent anti-Semitism; that disgrace belongs to Christian Europe. And since the state of Israel was created in 1948, there have been hundreds of thousands of Muslim and Christian Palestinians living inside its original borders and not at war with their Jewish neighbors. Peace among these neighbors is a candidate to be another casualty of the present war. Two million Palestinians in the West Bank and 1 million in Gaza continue to live under occupation. The same is true of those inhabiting East Jerusalem. How can anyone wonder why young Palestinian men are driven to violence when they watch Israeli soldiers harass and spit on their relatives at checkpoints? The 10-mile trip from Ramallah to Jerusalem has become an all-day exercise in futility for Palestinians.

This does not excuse suicide bombers who take the lives of Israeli citizens. The suicide bombing must stop, just as violence and torture by Israeli soldiers and settlers must stop against Palestinians. Instead of each demanding something of the other before peace negotiations can begin, both Yasser Arafat and Ariel Sharon should worry less about who threw the last stone and get back to the table before more innocent lives are lost.

Over the long term, one thing is certain. Making peace is vital to the survival of Israel. It cannot exist forever as an enclave on the edge of the Middle East surrounded by hostile neighbors. It must make peace and integrate itself. There is no military solution to this problem, and Israel's current military superiority will not guarantee its survival. History teaches us that military superiority is ephemeral. It also teaches us that change is an absolute inevitability.

Israel will never make peace with its hostile neighbors until it makes peace with the Palestinians. Without peace with the Palestinians, Israelis will never truly be safe.

Some contemplate absurd solutions such as the building of a large wall. But what would they do with the Palestinians who live inside the wall? They cannot throw them all out. They must also allow the land called Palestine to be "whole," and viable, not a handful of unconnected parcels.

Both sides must come to an agreement enabling Jerusalem to be shared.

The only lasting solution is for there to be two states, Israel and Palestine, with Jerusalem as the shared capital of each. If Ariel Sharon or Yasser Arafat knows of another, he should let us know. If not, the two should come to the table and hammer out a solution along these lines. If they fail, let them step aside. There are Israeli and Palestinian children who will not live to be adults if an agreement is not reached. The whole world has a stake in peace in the Middle East, and it should guide those leaders, or whoever replaces them, to this historic compromise.

The writer is president of the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee.

**“Good news” feature SBARRO WORKING TO REOPEN
Arutz Sheva News August 23, 2001**

The Israeli management of the Sbarro food chain announced yesterday that the Sbarro restaurant in downtown Jerusalem that was damaged in the terrorist bombing on August 9 will be renovated and reopened as soon as possible. Fifteen Jews were killed in the suicide blast. The management of Sbarro-Israel said, "The Jerusalem Sbarro branch has a symbolic significance that goes beyond the commercial aspect, and we will do everything to rebuild it." Although fifteen people were killed in the attack, many more lives would likely have been lost had the owner of the restaurant not gone to the trouble and expense of taking extra precautions beforehand. When Sbarro's Yochai Peleg, a resident of Telz-Stone outside Jerusalem, rented the building six years ago, city inspectors informed him that it technically met all requirements, but that it might be advisable for him to install extra supporting pillars. Even after he learned that the cost of the extra columns would be \$170,000, he decided to go ahead with it. "It was out of a sense of responsibility," he explained to Arutz-7's Yosef Zalmanson today. "After all, the building is 70 years old - although I can only wish that they would build buildings today as strongly as they did then." After the fatal blast, engineers told him that his actions had prevented the building from collapsing further, thus saving possibly dozens of lives of people in the restaurant at the time. Work on the restaurant will begin in the near future, and Peleg hopes to complete it by Rosh Hashanah. The total investment in the renovations is estimated at approximately NIS 2 million. Two victims of the suicide slaughter remain hospitalized: Chana Tova Chaya (bat Pescha) Nachenberg, 31, is still in grave condition, and Chaya Schijveschuurder, who lost both parents and three of her seven siblings in the attack.

CALENDAR OF ISRAEL EVENTS

ALL ITEMS NOTED ON THE COMMUNITY CALENDAR ARE FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES AND SHOULD NOT BE CONSTRUED AS AN ENDORSEMENT BY SUBURBAN ORTHODOX TORAS CHAIM CONGREGATION.

**SHALOM USA RADIO PROGRAM Sunday mornings from
8:00am to 10:00am on WJFK 1300AM Includes Israel news**

**MISSION TO ISRAEL United Jewish Communities (212) 284-6519
September 9th-14th; November 3rd-18th; December 2nd-7th.**

**ISRAEL SOLIDARITY RALLY IN NEW YORK CITY Sunday,
September 23rd at 1:00pm 2nd Avenue at 47th Street
Call BZD (410) 602-1200 or The Associated (410) 369-9299 for
bus reservations Leaves Chizuk Amuno parking lot at 7:00am
and leaves New York City at 4:30pm \$10 per person fee covers
transportation and a kosher box lunch.**

**THE WASHINGTON TIMES (favorable Israel coverage) possible
home delivery in our area, Monday through Saturday for \$60 per
year. Interested people should contact Michael Langbaum at
(410) 764-6643 or E-mail at mikelangbaum@chi-east.org.**

**IF THERE ARE ANY ADDITIONAL PROGRAMS IN THE
COMMUNITY THAT ARE ISRAEL BASED, PLEASE LET US KNOW
BY E-MAIL TO SHELDONB@RSFCHART.COM.**