

## West Bank Success Story

By Michael B. Oren Wall Street Journal August 13, 2009

Imagine an annual economic growth rate of 7%, declining unemployment, a thriving tourism industry, and a 24% hike in the average daily wage. Where in today's gloomy global market could one find such gleaming forecasts? Singapore? Brazil? Guess again. The West Bank.

According to the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the West Bank economy is flourishing. Devastated by the violence and corruption fomented by its former leadership, the West Bank has rebounded and today represents a most promising success story. Among the improvements of the last year cited by the IMF and other financial observers are an 18% increase in the local stock exchange, a 94% growth of tourism to Bethlehem—generating 6,000 new jobs—and an 82% rise in trade with Israel. Since 2008, more than 2,000 new companies have been registered with the Palestinian Authority in the West Bank. Where heavy fighting once raged, there are now state-of-the-art shopping malls.

Much of this revival is due to Palestinian initiative and to the responsible fiscal policies of West Bank leaders—such as Prime Minister Salaam Fayyad—many of whom are American-educated. But few of these improvements could have happened without a vastly improved security environment.

More than 2,100 members of the Palestinian security forces, graduates of an innovative program led by U.S. Gen. Keith Dayton, are patrolling seven major West Bank cities. Another 500-man battalion will soon be deployed. Encouraged by the restoration of law and order, the local population is streaming to the new malls and movie theaters. Shipments of designer furniture are arriving from China and Indonesia, and car imports are up more than 40% since 2008.

Israel, too, has contributed to the West Bank's financial boom. Tony Blair recently stated that Israel had not been given sufficient credit for efforts such as removing dozens of checkpoints and road blocks, withdrawing Israeli troops from population centers, and facilitating transportation into both Israel and Jordan. Long prohibited by terrorist threats from entering the West Bank, Israeli Arabs are now allowed to shop in most Palestinian cities.

Further, several Israeli-Palestinian committees have achieved fruitful cooperation in the areas of construction and agriculture. Such measures have stimulated the Palestinian economy since 2008 resulting, for example, in a 200% increase in agricultural exports and a nearly 1,000% increase in the number of trucks importing produce into the West Bank from Israel.

The West Bank's economic improvements contrast with the lack of diplomatic progress on the creation of a Palestinian state. Negotiators focus on the "top down" issues, grappling with legal and territorial problems. But the West Bank's population is building sovereignty from the bottom-up, forging the law-enforcement, civil, and financial institutions that form the underpinnings of any modern polity. The seeds of what Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has called "economic peace" are, in fact, already blossoming in the commercial skyline of Ramallah.

The vitality of the West Bank also accentuates the backwardness and despair prevailing in Gaza. In place of economic initiatives that might relieve the nearly 40% unemployment in the Gaza Strip, the radical Hamas government has imposed draconian controls subject to Shariah law. Instead of investing in new shopping centers and restaurants, Hamas has spent millions of dollars restocking its supply of rockets and mortar shells. Rather than forge a framework for peace, Hamas has wrought war and brought economic hardship to civilians on both sides of the borders.

The people of Gaza will have to take notice of their West Bank counterparts and wonder why they, too, cannot enjoy the same economic benefits and opportunities. At the same time, Arab states that have pledged to assist the Palestinian economy in the past, but which have yet to fulfill those promises, may be persuaded of the prudence of investing in the West Bank. Israel, for its part, will continue to remove obstacles to Palestinian development. If the West Bank can serve as a model of prosperity, it may also become a prototype of peace.

**Mr. Oren is Israel's ambassador to the United States.**

## Fatah's new status quo leaders

By Barry Rubin The Japan Times August 16, 2009

The Sixth Fatah Congress, held recently in Bethlehem, was an important event for the future of the Arab-Israeli conflict and for the Palestinian movement. But a careful look at the results of the Congress' elections to Fatah's Central Committee yields a picture that is quite different from what many will conclude about the meeting.

The Congress seemed to demonstrate three main points: Fatah has moved toward peace with Israel; it has adopted democratic procedures; and a new generation, or even a specific group called the Young Guard, has assumed leadership. But this interpretation is in large part wrong.

In terms of its approach to peace, the new Central Committee is roughly the same as the old one. Of the 18 elected members (Palestinian Authority leader Mahmoud Abbas will appoint four more later), no more than two (Nabil Shaath and Muhammad Shtayyeh) are really moderate. At least four (Muhammad al-Ghuneim, Salim al-Zanoun, Abbas Zaki, and Nasser Kidra) are hardliners, and most of the rest follow pretty much the traditional Fatah line.

As for democracy, while the Congress was certainly a step forward from the past (when Fatah leader Yasir Arafat could handpick Fatah's leadership), real limits remain. Depending on one's definition, Abbas chose between one-third and one-half of the delegates.

The majority of the Central Committee, not surprisingly, are Abbas' close associates and supporters. The fact that only one of 18 members will be from the Hamas-ruled Gaza Strip, which contains about half of all the Palestinians that Fatah governs, also skews the results.

But there is one aspect of this election so dangerous that it might outweigh everything else. The candidate who came in first, with two-thirds of the vote, was Abd al-Mahir Ghuneim, who is increasingly being spoken of as Abbas' successor. Ghuneim is an unrepentant hardliner and an open opponent of the Oslo agreement, much less of a negotiated peace agreement with Israel. If he becomes Fatah's leader (and hence leader of the PA and the PLO as well), any compromise with Israel would become unimaginable.

What about the transfer of power to a new generation? This is accurate in purely chronological terms — old leaders inevitably get older, after all. Yet, while almost all the old members of the committee were not re-elected, at least 15 of the 22 members will be old-style leaders (presuming Abbas will appoint such people to the four seats that he controls). Many of the newly elected members, moreover, are veteran Fatah bureaucrats.

The most interesting additions to the Central Committee are three younger men, though they have played leading roles in the organization for 20 years or more. Marwan Barghouti, the leader of Fatah's grassroots group on the West Bank, is now in an Israeli prison for organizing the bloody uprising that began in 2000, and for direct involvement in planning the killings of many Israeli civilians.

While some will point to Barghouti's election as a victory for the younger generation, not one of his followers will join him. The other two younger men, Muhammad Dahlan and Jibril Rajoub, built political bases of their own as commanders of security forces in the Gaza Strip and on the West Bank, respectively. But Rajoub has many enemies, and Dahlan was responsible for Fatah's humiliating defeat by Hamas in the fight that led to the expulsion of Fatah from Gaza.

In addition, all three of the younger men are rivals, not allies. In other words, there is no unified Young Guard. Indeed, far from being an electoral revolution, only two of those elected — Barghouti and Muhammad Shtayyeh, who has headed PECDAR, the Palestinian agency that promotes transparency and economic development — can be considered at all critical of the Fatah establishment.

But, while the election did not usher in a leadership eager for peace with Israel and a Palestinian state achieved by compromise, nor was it a prelude to a renewal of violence. There are several individuals in the new leadership who have many Israeli contacts, and who can pick up a phone and call or be called by their Israeli counterparts.

It is also extremely important that most of Fatah's new leaders have a strong distaste for Hamas, which makes rapprochement between the two groups unlikely. Still, if Ghuneim takes over as the PA's and Fatah's leader, which could happen next year, a breakdown of negotiations with Israel and a new round of fighting would not be surprising.

The other interesting new face, though he has no chance of becoming a major leader, is Shtayyeh. A successful businessman, he could become an ombudsman and whistle-blower, which would be a real innovation. But while it will be interesting to see whether he speaks out or is shut up, one shouldn't read too much into his election: He finished last among those elected, beating by a single vote Tayib Abu Rahman, one of Arafat's most trusted lieutenants and an old-school hardliner.

There is a wide range of views in the new Palestinian leadership. This is neither a group that will make peace with Israel nor one that will ally itself with Hamas. In other words, it is a group with which Israel can work on status quo issues, though

not on a comprehensive agreement. But if Muhammad al-Ghuneim does indeed become the new leader, the prospects for any peace at all look grim.

**Barry Rubin is director of the Global Research in International Affairs (GLORIA) Center, and the author of "Yasir Arafat: A Political Biography and Revolution Until Victory."**

## Top Sweden newspaper says IDF kills Palestinians for their organs

**By Morten Berthelsen and Barak Ravid**

A leading Swedish newspaper reported this week that Israeli soldiers are abducting Palestinians in order to steal their organs, a claim that prompted furious condemnation and accusations of anti-Semitic blood libel from a rival publication.

"They plunder the organs of our sons," read the headline in Sweden's largest daily newspaper, the left-leaning *Aftonbladet*, which devoted a double spread in its cultural section to the article.

The report quotes Palestinian claims that young men from the West Bank and Gaza Strip had been seized by the Israel Defense Forces, and their bodies returned to the families with missing organs.

"Our sons are used as involuntary organ donors,' relatives of Khaled from Nablus said to me, as did the mother of Raed from Jenin as well as the uncles of Machmod and Nafes from Gaza, who all had disappeared for a few days and returned by night, dead and autopsied," writes author Donald Boström in his report.

Boström's article makes a link to the recent exposure of an alleged crime syndicate in New Jersey. The syndicate includes several American rabbis, and one Levy Izhak Rosenbaum, who faces charges of conspiring to broker the sale of a human kidney for a transplant.

Boström also cites an incident of alleged organ snatching from 1992, during the time of the first Palestinian intifada. He says that the IDF seized a young man known for throwing stones at Israeli troops in the Nablus area, who was shot in the chest, both legs, and the stomach before being taken to a military helicopter which transported him to "a place unknown to his loved ones".

Five nights later, Boström says, the young man's body was returned, wrapped in green hospital sheets.

"The sharp sounds from the shovels were mixed with the occasional laughter from the soldiers who

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were joking with each other, waiting to go home. When Bilal was put into his grave, his chest was revealed and suddenly it became clear to the present what abuse he had been put through. Bilal was far from the only one who was buried cut-up from his stomach to his chin and the speculations about the reason why had already started," he writes.

But the liberal *Sydsvenskan* - southern Sweden's major daily - had harsh criticism for the rival paper, running an opinion piece under the headline "Antisemitbladet" (a play on the name *Aftonbladet*).

"We have heard the story before, in one form or the other. It follows the traditional pattern of conspiracy theory: a great number of loose threads that the theorist tempts the reader to tie into a neat knot without having been provided with any proven connection whatsoever," writes leading columnist Mats Skogkär of *Sydsvenskan*.

"Whispers in the dark. Anonymous sources. Rumors. That is all it takes. After all we all know what they [the Jews] are like, don't we: inhuman, hardened. Capable of anything," the opinion piece says. "Now all that remains is the defense, equally predictable: 'Anti-Semitism' No, no, just criticism of Israel."

The Foreign Ministry reacted angrily on Tuesday to the report. Ministry spokesperson Yigal Palmor said the newspaper's decision to publish the story is "a mark of disgrace" for the Swedish press.

"In a democratic country, there should be no place for dark blood libels out of the Middle Ages of this type," Palmor said. "This is an article that shames Swedish democracy and the entire Swedish press."

A Foreign Ministry official said that Israel's embassy in Stockholm have communicated a harsh condemnation to the Swedish government and the newspaper itself.

## The 14 Lies Blocking Peace in the Middle East

**By Steven Plaut FrontPageMagazine.com August 14, 2009**

Israel's enemies around the world have poisoned the debate with their smoke and mirrors.

If a Martian were suddenly to land on earth and start listening to and reading the mainstream media, he would form the impression that the entire Middle East conflict were due to Israel building some settlements in land that much of the world thinks should become a Palestinian state. A near-consensus

exists among the governments of the world and among media writers that peace has yet to break out in the Middle East because of three principle reasons. The first is that the Jews and the Arabs have been unable to agree about whether there should be a Palestinian state. The second is because Israel has obstinately refused to withdraw its troops from (so-

called) “occupied Arab” lands. The third is because Israel behaves cruelly towards the Palestinians.

The Martian could easily carry these beliefs back to its home planet, as long as it did not bother to learn the background and the history of the Middle East conflict. Those three reasons cannot survive an antibiotic of familiarity with Middle East history.

President Barack Obama and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton seem to think the idea of Palestinian statehood is the most wonderful idea to come along since the Thirteenth Amendment. And almost all world politicians, along with the Israeli Left, insist that all Israeli settlements must be removed from the West Bank because they serve as the main obstacle to peace. The reality is that the Middle East conflict has very little to do with debate over Palestinian statehood and even less to do with Israeli “settlements.” In fact Israel has agreed in principle, somewhat foolishly, to the erection of such a Palestinian state, at least subject to some security conditions and other concessions from the Palestinians -- like recognizing Israel’s right to exist. As it turns out, even so-called “moderate” Palestinians reject any such idea.

Meanwhile debate about the Middle East conflict is based on an incredible absence of historic information and on a series of stylish misconceptions about Middle East history. The anti-Israel Lobby, which grows by the day in its maliciousness and anti-Semitism, counts on the ignorance of much of the public concerning how the Middle East got to where it is.

Here are just a handful of popular misconceptions and their antidotes:

**1. Falsehood:** Israel was erected on land that belonged to Palestinian Arabs.

**Truth:** Before Israel was created its territory never belonged to Palestinian Arabs and had not been ruled by any Arabs at all since the Middle Ages. It had been a Turkish province for centuries until it was captured by Britain during World War I. The League of Nations awarded governance of “Palestine” to Britain at the end of the war in exchange for its commitment to turn the area into a Jewish homeland. The lands on which Jewish immigrants settled before Israel was created were purchased by Jews at above-market prices and in most cases had no Arabs living on them. Virtually no Arabs were evicted.

**2. Falsehood:** The Jews came to Palestine as foreigners and aliens whereas the Palestinians were the indigenous people of the territory.

**Truth:** Jews lived in “Palestine,” which is the Land of Israel or “Eretz Yisroel,” continuously from the time of the Bible. Most families of “Palestinians” migrated into “Palestine,” during the same period as the Zionist waves of immigration, starting in the second half of the 19th century. The largest ethnic

group in the country at the time was the Turks. The “Palestinian Arabs” in 1948 were primarily families of migrants from Lebanon and Syria. Ironically, they were motivated to become “Palestinians” in the first place thanks to the Zionist movement, which brought capital and labor into “Palestine” and improved living conditions there. Huge numbers of the names of “Palestinian” Arab villages and towns are slightly-modified Hebrew names. It is difficult to dig in the ground of “Palestine” without uncovering Jewish artifacts, some thousands of years old. Meanwhile, two-thirds of Mandatory Palestine’s territory had been sliced off in the 1920s and used to set up Jordan, an Arab Palestinian state much larger than Israel. The remaining territory, Western Palestine, was to become the Jewish homeland. That was the original “two-state solution,” the same “innovation” now being promoted for the Western third of the remaining part of Palestine.

**3. Falsehood:** There is no Palestinian state today because of Israeli aggression and obstinacy.

**Truth:** There is no Palestinian state today because of Arab aggression and obstinacy. In late 1947, the United Nations approved by a two thirds majority a proposal to create in to create in Western “Palestine” two states to replace the British Mandatory regime there. One would be Jewish and the other a Palestinian Arab state. The Jews agreed. The Arabs rejected the idea. The Arab states launched an attack of genocidal aggression against the Jews, invaded “Palestine” and gobbled up the lands earmarked for the Arab Palestinian state. Most of those lands were then held illegally by Jordan and semi-legally by Egypt until 1967 when they were liberated by Israel in the Six Day War. The Arab world has maintained a state of war with Israel since 1948, refusing to recognize its legitimacy, and attacking Israel over and over in a series of wars and terrorism campaigns. The Arab states attacked Israel in 1948, 1956, 1967, 1973, 1982, 2006, and sponsored terrorist atrocities against Jews in Israel since it was created. The reason for the attack which produced the first Arab-Israeli war in 1948 is exactly the same thing that stands in the way of any real peace settlement today.

**4. Falsehood:** Israel conducted “ethnic cleansing” of the Palestinian Arabs in 1948-49.

**Truth:** The Arab states conducted ethnic cleansing of Jews after 1948. About a million Jews were expelled by Arab states, their property stolen, and most then became citizens of Israel. Palestinian Arabs became refugees in 1948-49 as a direct result of the Arab war of aggression against Israel, in which the Palestinians participated. The estimated number of such Arab refugees varies between 400,000 and 750,000, with the former the more likely correct estimate. Afterwards, many were quietly allowed to return to Israel. Hundreds of thousands of Arabs

from other Arab countries then declared themselves “Palestinian refugees” in order to get handouts from the UN and other international relief organizations. The actual Palestinian Arabs became refugees for the same reason that ethnic Germans living in Eastern Europe became refugees after World War II: because they were on the losing side of the war of aggression launched by their own political leaders.

**5. Falsehood:** Israel is an apartheid regime and mistreats Arabs.

**Truth:** Israel is the only Middle East country that is NOT an apartheid regime. Arabs living under Israeli rule are the only Arabs in the Middle East who enjoy freedom of speech and of the press, free access to courts operating with due process, legal protection for property rights and the right to vote. Israeli Arabs have higher standards of education and health than any other group of Arabs in the Middle East. Israeli Arabs are quite simply the best-treated political minority in the Middle East and are in some ways better treated than are minority groups in many European countries. Israel is the only country in the Middle East that does NOT deal with Islamist terror through wholesale massacres of the people in whose midst the terrorists operate

**6. Falsehood:** Arabs engage in aggression and terrorism because Israel occupies territories.

**Truth:** Israel occupies territories (that had been controlled by Jordan and Egypt before 1967) because of Arab aggression and terrorism. Had the Arabs made peace with Israel after 1949, the West Bank and Gaza would have remained under the hegemony of Arabs and they could easily have erected a Palestinian Arab state there any time they wished. Instead, they attacked Israel in an attempt at genocidal extermination in 1967 and they lost.

**7. Falsehood:** The Middle East conflict is and has always been based on Israeli opposition to Palestinian self-determination.

**Truth:** The Middle East conflict is and has always been based on Arab opposition to Israeli-Jewish self-determination. There is one and only one cause of the Arab-Israeli conflict, even if that single cause is buried beneath an avalanche of media mud designed to obfuscate and confuse. That single cause is the refusal of the Arab world to come to terms with Israel’s existence within any set of borders whatsoever. The cause of the war is Arab refusal to come to terms with Jewish self-determination in any form whatsoever. The Middle East conflict is not about the right of self-determination of “Palestinian Arabs,” but rather it is about the Arab rejection of self-determination for Israeli Jews. For a century, the Arabs have attempted to block Jewish self-determination, using violence.

No Palestinians before 1967 demanded any “homeland,” although they did demand that the Jews be stripped of theirs. That is because

Palestinians are not a “people” at all and do not consider themselves such, any more than do the Arabs of Paris or of Detroit. Palestinians never had any real interest in their own state, and in fact rioted violently in 1920 when “Palestine” was detached from Syria by the European powers. Indeed the original term “Nakba” (“catastrophe” in Arabic and in leftist NewSpeak) was coined to refer to the outrage of Palestinians separated from their Syrian homeland. Immediately after the Six Day War a sudden need for a Palestinian state was fabricated by the Arab world, as a gimmick to force Israel back to its pre-1967 borders. Israel would then again be ten-miles wide at its narrowest, and so prepped for the new Arab assault of annihilation and genocide.

The Arab world invented the “Palestinian people” so that it would serve the same role as the Sudeten Germans did in the late 1930s. That role was to provide a pretense of legitimacy for the war aims and aggression of a large fascist power. The term “self-determination” has been repeated as a rhetorical “inalienable right” for so long that few people recall that pursuing “self-determination” can also serve as a tool of aggression by barbarous aggressors and totalitarian powers. When Hitler decided to go on a war of conquest in the late 1930s, he dressed up his intentions in the cloak of legitimacy, merely “helping disenfranchised and oppressed people attain self-determination.” He distorted the plight of ethnic Germans living in the Czech Sudetenland and elsewhere in Eastern Europe, inventing tales of mistreatment. In reality of course these ethnic Germans already had the option of “self-determination” within the neighboring, sovereign German nation-states, and in fact enjoyed far more freedom and rights than did Germans inside Germany. Germany’s invasion of Czechoslovakia was prepared through postured indignity over the mistreatment of Germans by Germany’s neighbors. Hitler insisted he was simply seeking to relieve the “misery of mistreated ethnic Germans,” supposedly suffering inside democratic Czechoslovakia. “Self-determination” was also the pretense when Germany attacked Poland and other countries.

The Arab world decided that the “Palestinians” must play the role of Sudetens, serving as the political and moral pretense for Arab aggression and Islamofascist imperialism. The Arab fascists then misrepresent themselves as pursuing noble efforts at protecting a mistreated oppressed minority group of Arabs in need of “self-determination.”

**8. Falsehood:** Palestinian terrorism has been a response to Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza, and as a response to Israeli settlements there.

**Truth:** Palestinian terrorism against Jews began in the 1920s, escalated in the 1930s, continued non-stop in the 1940s even in the midst of World War II,

and reached heights of barbarism in the 1950s. All this was long before Israel “occupied” anything. The PLO was set up long before the Six Day War, meaning before Israel “occupied” the West Bank and Gaza, and before those areas held a single Israeli settlement.

**9. Falsehood:** Israel has no right to build settlements in the West Bank.

**Truth:** Israel has as much right to build settlements in the West Bank as France has to build towns in Alsace and Lorraine, or as Poland has to build in areas that once held ethnic Germans. The Arabs launched a series of wars of aggression against Israel and lost. Aggressors who lose a war also lose territory. The bulk of Jewish “settlers” are actually Israelis living in the suburbs of Jerusalem that were constructed after 1967. A handful of small rural “settlements” have been constructed in empty West Bank lands from which no Arab civilians were evicted. In any real peace settlement, Jews would have as much right to live in the West Bank as Arabs have to live inside Israel. A peace accord that rules out such an arrangement would be no peace accord at all.

**10. Falsehood:** The Middle East conflict continues because Israel refuses to share its land and resources with Palestinians.

**Truth:** The Middle East conflict continues because the Arab world refuses to share its land and resources with Jews. It is about the absolute refusal of the Arab world to acquiesce in the existence of any Jewish-majority political entity within any set of borders in the Middle East. The Arabs today control 22 countries and territory nearly twice the size of the United States (including Alaska), whereas Israel cannot be seen on most globes or maps. Arabs as an ethnic group control more territory than any other ethnic group on earth. They refuse to share even a fraction of one percent of the Middle East with the Jews, even in a territory smaller than New Jersey. Without the West Bank, Israel at its narrowest point is less than 10 miles wide, about the length of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge. The main reason the Arab world demands that Israel relinquish the West Bank to Palestinian terrorism is so that it can be used to attack Israel again and so that Israel can at last be militarily annihilated. The Arab world controls such vast amounts of territory and such vast amounts of wealth (thanks to petroleum) that it could have created a “homeland” for Palestinian Arabs anywhere within its territories at any time.

**11. Falsehood:** Israel deals with Palestinian violence and terrorism using excessive disproportionate force.

**Truth:** The number of innocent Palestinian civilians intentionally killed by Israel is exactly zero. The number of civilians injured in Israeli anti-terror operations is tiny when compared with NATO and

Allied military operations in Serbia, Bosnia, Afghanistan, or Iraq. Given the near universal support among Palestinians for terrorist atrocities against Jews, the self-restraint and moderation used by Israel in dealing with the threat has no precedent in the world. Israel’s own Arabs make little attempt to hide their open identification with the genocidal enemies of their own country and they by and large support the annihilation of the state in which they hold citizenship. No other democratic country facing such open sedition and identification with the enemy in time of war ever responded with anywhere near the same restraint as shown by Israel. In World War II, when faced with a far less-dangerous problem, the United States locked up its ethnic-Japanese domestic population in internment camps. Democratic Spain set up teams of death squads to deal with its separatist terrorists. Democracies in war have junked habeas corpus and treated their internal Fifth Columns as the enemy, with no hesitation or squeamishness.

Democratic Czechoslovakia and India (as well as non-democratic countries throughout Eastern Europe) undertook wholesale expulsions of millions of members of their internal ethnic minorities who had sided with the enemy. Greece and Turkey and the two sections of Cyprus simply expelled altogether their minority populations. Israel, in contrast, operates affirmative action programs that benefit Arabs, finances Arabic-language schools in which Israeli Arabs preserve and develop their culture, overfunds Arab municipalities, and turns a blind eye to massive Arab sedition and lawbreaking, including with regard to illegal mass squatting on publicly-owned lands. Israel is a Western democracy with a Scandinavian style social welfare system, the only democracy in the Middle East. It is hard to come up with words to mock satisfactorily the ludicrous nature of the complaints about Israeli “mistreatment” of Arabs. These complaints come from the very same people who are apologists for genocidal Islamofascist terrorist movements and for the Arab fascist states, regimes that are among the most barbarous and openly war-seeking on earth. The endless complaints about “human rights violations” of the “Palestinians” by Israel are a rhetorical part of the broader campaign of aggression against Israeli survival. Arabs living under Israeli rule are the world’s foremost illustration of “Moynihan’s Law,” which holds: “The amount of violations of human rights in a country is always an inverse function of the amount of complaints about human rights violations heard from there. The greater the number of complaints being aired, the better protected are human rights in that country.”

**12. Falsehood:** Israel can achieve peace by trading “Land for Peace” and by relinquishing territories that it “occupies.”

**Truth:** Every time Israel relinquishes territory it “occupies” it triggers an escalation of terror and violence by Arabs against Jews. The main cause of anti-Israel terrorism today is the removal of Israeli occupation from Arabs. This is so obvious that it is a major intellectual challenge to explain why so few people understand it. Israel ended its occupation of the Gaza Strip in its entirety in 2004 and evicted all Jews who had been living there. The complete Israeli withdrawal from the Gaza Strip produced a barrage of thousands of rockets aimed at Israeli civilians inside Israel (NOT in the “occupied territories”), a barrage that eventually forced Israel’s reluctant leaders to carry out the “Cast Lead” operation against Gaza terrorism. The Israeli occupation of southern Lebanon was unilaterally ended in the year 2000 by then-Israeli socialist Prime Minister Ehud Barak. The direct result of that fiasco was the launching of 4,000 Katyusha rockets from Lebanon against northern Israel in the summer of 2006, and several times that number now poised to strike Israel. The worst waves of Palestinian suicide attacks were directly triggered by the early Oslo withdrawals — before which there had been no suicide bombings. There can be no doubt that a complete Israeli withdrawal from the West Bank and a return to pre-1967 borders would trigger a massive rocket and terror assault against the remaining areas of Israel, launched from the “liberated” lands in the West Bank. The same thing would result from Israel relinquishing the Golan Heights to Syria.

**13. Falsehood:** The Zionist Lobby exercises excessive influence and dictates policies to the United States, protecting Israel from just criticism.

**Truth:** The anti-Zionist Lobby exercises excessive influence and dictates policies to the United States, protecting Palestinians, Arab fascist regimes, and Islamofascism from just criticism. While the media overflow with nonsensical talk about a “Zionist/Israel Lobby,” it would only be a small exaggeration to claim that there is no such thing at all. The anti-Zionist lobby binds together anti-Semites and fanatics, ranging from Islamists, to the radical Left to the Neo-Nazi Right. There is little today that separates anti-Zionism from anti-Semitism and I have never met an anti-Zionist who was not also an anti-Semite. (Jewish leftist anti-Zionists are the self-hating moral equivalents of Taliban John and Tokyo Rose).

**14. Falsehood:** The Middle East conflict can be resolved through “Two States for Two Peoples.”

**Truth:** The “Two States for Two Peoples” idea is not a solution at all but simply a strategy for weakening Israel and forcing it behind indefensible borders. Right after “Two States for Two Peoples” would be implemented, the new “Palestinian state” would invite the rest of the Arab world to finish off what remains of Israel. Even the “moderates” within

the PLO insist that any “Israel” left standing within “Two States for Two Peoples” must be flooded by Arab migrants and stripped of its Jewish majority, in effect converted to yet another Arab Palestinian state. The Arabs still condition any “two-state solution” on Israel agreeing to being flooded with Arab immigrants purporting to be Palestinians, so that it will morph demographically into the 24th Arab state. Israel obviously cannot agree. Israel would be blanketed in rocket and mortar fire from “Palestine” and waves of Arab terrorist infiltrators into Israel would raise the carnage to unprecedented levels.

That such a “two-state solution” will not end the conflict, but only signal the commencement of its next stage, has long been the quasi-official position of virtually all Palestinian groups. These have long insisted that any two-state solution is but a stage in a “plan of stages,” after which will come additional steps ultimately ending Israel's existence as a Jewish state. The “two-state solution” is no more realistic an option today than it was in 1948, when it was militarily squashed by the Arab states, terrorists, and armies. It is ultimately as much of an existential threat to Jewish survival in the Middle East today as the so-called “one-state solution,” favored by the anti-Semitic Left, in which Israel is replaced by a Rwanda-like bi-national entity controlled by Arabs, in which the Jewish problem will be resolved in a Rwanda-style manner.

Creation of a Palestinian state alongside Israel would be a major step in the escalation of the Arab war against Israel's existence, even if that war is delayed for a brief time while the world celebrates the outbreak of a Potemkin “peace” in the Middle East produced by the end of Israeli “occupation” of “Palestinians.”

Since the Oslo “peace process” began in the early 1990s, the working hypothesis endorsed by nearly everyone on the planet (including large numbers of IQ-challenged Israeli politicians) has been that the most urgent task at hand is to end the Israeli “occupation” of Palestinian Arabs. The problem is that ANY Palestinian state, regardless of who rules it, will produce nothing but escalated violence, terror and warfare in the Middle East, certainly not stability or peaceful relations. It will seek war with the rump Israel, and will seek to draw the entire Moslem world into that war. It will be indifferent to the economic and social problems of its own citizens.

Humans seem to have a basic impatience with hearing the truth repeated over long periods of time. In an era in which technology, politics, and science change so rapidly, many consider it to be implausible that a statement that had been true 60 years ago could still be true today. Surely, they insist, explanations from the past, such as those of the

Middle East conflict, must be obsolete by now, replaced with new updated "theories" and more-modern perceptions of reality.

The result of all this is pseudo-history, where people invent new "theories" about some of the most widely-accepted truths of history. No subject has been subject to quite so much pseudo-historic revisionism and denial of "out-of date" truths as the Middle East. George Orwell once said that the first duty of intelligent men is to restate the obvious. Obvious truths need to be restated because they are under assault by so many dishonest men.

The Palestinians have no legitimate claim to a right to set up their own state, and creation of such a state would result in escalated warfare and bloodshed, not peace. There was never in history an Arab Palestinian state. Even if such a right ever

## Flicker of hope vs. false premises

By Clifford D. May The Washington Times

When it comes to peace in the Middle East, we've tried just about everything and nothing has worked. And if you believe that, there's a bridge over the River Jordan I want to sell you.

The truth is that one American administration after another has embraced the same false premises and, from that starting point, set into motion a "peace process" that ineluctably fails. Afterward, they say: "We came so close!" Which is like saying: "The last time I jumped off the roof, I almost flew!"

Start with the assumption that the core issue in the conflict is the Israeli "occupation" of Palestinian territories and that the solution is therefore "land for peace." In 1967, Israel's Arab neighbors fought a war to wipe the Jewish state off the map. When they lost, Israel took control of Gaza (which had been Egyptian) and the West Bank (which had been Jordanian). Israelis were willing to relinquish those territories -- but they wanted a solid peace treaty in exchange. No Arab leader was willing to pay that price.

Four years ago this month, in exchange for nothing, Israel removed from Gaza every last Israeli -- including even those buried in the cemeteries. Palestinian leaders did not say: "If we can next disengage from the Israelis on the West Bank, the conflict is over." Instead, Hamas was soon launching thousands of missiles from Gaza at cities well inside Israel proper.

Move on to a second premise: that the primary goal of Palestinian leaders now is a Palestinian state that would live in peace with Israel. Seven years ago, President George W. Bush became the first American president to officially endorse the establishment of a Palestinian state -- as long as it would not become another terrorist-sponsoring state.

existed, the Palestinians -- like the Sudeten Germans - would have forfeited it thanks to decades of terrorism, savagery, mass murders and barbarism. Their pacification today requires reimposing of martial rule by Israel and a thorough program of De-nazification.

The promotion of a "Two States for Two Peoples" solution has radicalized and Nazified most Israeli Arabs, who now identify with and openly support Arab parties and politicians openly calling for violence against Jews and for the destruction of Israel. The "solution" is a recipe for more bloodshed and strife.

**Steven Plaut is a professor at the Graduate School of the Business Administration at the University of Haifa.**

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Hamas explicitly rejected that condition. Hamas demands that infidels leave the Middle East or, at the very least, submit to Islamic rule and Shariah law. But isn't that just where the bargaining begins? No, that's the third mistaken premise. For Hamas, Islamic supremacy is not a negotiating position; it's a religious conviction and therefore not open to compromise.

As for the more "moderate" Fatah movement, this week it held its Sixth General Assembly in Bethlehem. The path to peace with Israel was not its theme. One prominent Fatah politician, Muhammad Dahlan, recently said: "For the 1,000th time, I want to reaffirm that we are not asking Hamas to recognize Israel's right to exist. Rather we are asking Hamas not to do so, because Fatah never recognized Israel's right to exist."

A new administration ought to think outside the box. If President Obama were looking for new and improved approaches to peace processing, what options might be considered?

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu thinks an "economic peace" could pave the way to a broader settlement. He recalls that the economy of the West Bank was among the fastest growing in the world after 1967 and before 1993 -- when Israeli leaders brought Yasser Arafat from exile and installed him as Palestinian strongman under the Oslo Accords. A precipitous economic decline followed. Violence increased as well.

In recent months, Mr. Netanyahu has removed military checkpoints in the West Bank and opened the Allenby Bridge across the Jordan River 24 hours a day to promote freer trade among Palestinians, Israelis and Jordanians. New shopping centers and industrial parks are being built and/or planned. The International Monetary Fund predicts the West Bank

economy could grow by an enviable 7 percent this year.

"We are opening ties," Mr. Netanyahu said last week. But a durable peace, he added, must be based on "reciprocity, not unilateralism."

If Palestinians in the West Bank see their lives improving, will they stand up to the militant jihadists who have victimized them and who are only too eager to sacrifice their children in pursuit of Israel's

annihilation? Probably not. But such an approach would represent real change and does offer a flicker of hope where now there is none. You'd think that would appeal to President Obama.

**Clifford D. May is president of the Foundation for the Defense of Democracies, a policy institute focusing on terrorism.**

## 'Fatah has never recognized Israel'

**By Khaled Abu Toameh The Jerusalem Post July 22, 2009**

Fatah has never recognized Israel's right to exist and it has no intention of ever doing so, a veteran senior leader of the Western-backed faction said on Wednesday.

Rafik Natsheh, member of the Fatah Central Committee who also serves as chairman of the faction's disciplinary "court," is the second senior official in recent months to make similar statements regarding Israel.

Natsheh is also a former minister in the Palestinian Authority government who briefly served as Speaker of the Palestinian Legislative Council.

Earlier this year, Muhammad Dahlan, another top Fatah figure, said that Fatah had never recognized Israel's right to exist despite the fact that it is the largest faction in the PLO, which signed the Oslo Accords with Israel.

Natsheh's remarks came days before Fatah's general assembly that is slated to take place in Bethlehem on August 4.

The assembly, the first in two decades, is expected to bring some 1,500 Fatah delegates together to discuss ways of reforming the faction and holding internal elections.

One of the topics on the conference's agenda is whether Fatah should formally abandon the armed struggle and recognize Israel's right to exist.

"Fatah does not recognize Israel's right to exist," Natsheh said, "nor have we ever asked others to do so." His comments, which appeared in an interview with Al-Quds Al-Arabi, came in response to reports according to which Fatah had asked Hamas to recognize Israel as a precondition for the establishment of a Palestinian unity government.

"All these reports about recognizing Israel are false," Natsheh, who is closely associated with PA President Mahmoud Abbas, said. "It's all media nonsense. We don't ask other factions to recognize Israel because we in Fatah have never recognized Israel."

Asked about calls for dropping the reference to armed struggle from Fatah's charter, Natsheh said: "Let all the collaborators [with Israel] and those who are deluding themselves hear that this will never happen. We'll meet at the conference [in Bethlehem]."

Natsheh stressed that neither Fatah nor the Palestinians would ever relinquish the armed struggle against Israel "no matter how long the occupation continues." He said that Fatah, at the upcoming conference, would reiterate its adherence to the option of pursuing "all forms" of an armed struggle against Israel.

Another senior Fatah representative, Azzam al-Ahmed, confirmed that his faction would renew its pledge to pursue the armed struggle against Israel during the conference.

"The Fatah conference won't obliterate the "resistance option," he said. "Fatah has been the target of a conspiracy to liquidate it ever since the signing of the Oslo Accords and the establishment of the Palestinian National Authority. The elimination of Fatah means the end of the revolutionary era which began in 1965 [when Fatah was founded]." He said that, more than four decades later, Fatah's main strategy and goals remain unchanged.

The decision to convene the conference in Bethlehem has triggered a crisis in Fatah. Many Fatah living in Arab countries have protested Abbas's decision, saying it was inconceivable that the parley be held under "Israeli occupation." They are still demanding that the conference be held in an Arab country to avoid a situation where Israel would try to prevent some delegates from arriving in Bethlehem.

Meanwhile, there is growing concern in Fatah that Hamas would not permit hundreds of Fatah activists from leaving the Gaza Strip to attend the conference. Senior Fatah officials said that the conference would be called off if Hamas stopped the Fatah members from leaving the Gaza Strip.

The officials said that Fatah leaders have been talking to Syria and Egypt about the possibility that Hamas might prevent their men from traveling to the West Bank. "We made it clear to the Egyptians and Syrians that the conference would not be convened without the Fatah members from the Gaza Strip," a Fatah official in Ramallah told The Jerusalem Post.

## Why the Left should support settlements

By Michael Freund The Jerusalem Post August 12, 2009

In recent months, there has been a growing sentiment that the Israeli-Palestinian peace process is foundering as never before, as the two sides seem to drift still further apart. Just pick up a copy of The Washington Post, or Haaretz for that matter, and you'll see various pundits and commentators on both sides of the ocean expressing a mounting sense of frustration over the impasse, with much of the blame being laid at Israel's doorstep.

Take, for example, veteran columnist Thomas Friedman, who wrote in The New York Times (August 1) that Israel had "misled" and even "manipulated" Washington for the past 40 years on the issue of settlements in Judea and Samaria. Israel's leaders, he warned, need to realize that "they have a real problem with America on settlements," which Friedman believes stand in the way of real progress toward peace. Such claims are hardly new, of course. If only the Jewish state would stop expanding settlements, we have constantly been told, the chances of resuming talks would brighten.

And if Israel would just cease its policy of "confiscating" additional Palestinian land, it would pave the way for a viable two-state solution to bring about an end to the century-old conflict, the Left frequently asserts. Nothing, however, could be further from the truth.

Indeed, if the Left would put aside its slogans for a moment and consider the present situation rationally and cogently, it would realize that much of its heated rhetoric about settlements is entirely misplaced. For it is precisely the continued expansion of Jewish communities in Judea and Samaria which provides the best chance for achieving a long-term, viable peace between Israelis and Palestinians.

Yes, you read that correctly. More settlements can actually mean more peace, and for that reason the Left should switch gears and support them.

The logic is really quite simple. For the past 16 years, ever since the signing of the 1993 Oslo Accords, the Palestinians have refused to conclude a final deal. Feeling that they have all the time in the world at their disposal, they are in no rush to ink a lasting agreement. Instead, they can sit on the sidelines and watch as the international community directs its ire at Israel and tries to compel it to make even more far-reaching concessions.

That is a recipe for failure, which is exactly what it has produced thus far. In any negotiations of consequence, when one side feels it has nothing to lose - and everything to gain - by dragging out talks, that is just what it will do. Therefore, anyone who really wants to see a resumption of talks should cheer when the Israeli bulldozers rev up their

engines, because that is the most effective way of disabusing the Palestinians of the notion that time is on their side.

Their leadership needs to be made to understand that their dilly-dallying comes at a very tangible price, because the longer they wait, the more territory they will "lose" as the Israeli presence in the areas is strengthened and reinforced.

Now, don't get me wrong - I personally believe Israel should expand Jewish communities in Judea and Samaria because of our divine-given right to these areas. And I do not want Israel to give up control over any part of our ancestral patrimony, nor do I believe the Palestinians are truly interested in peace with us.

But I just cannot help but find it ironic how the Left, by parroting Palestinian demands, is actually undermining the prospects for the very peace that it so ardently says it longs for. For in effect, it is feeding directly into the Palestinian perception that there is no urgent need to get back to the negotiating table. History is full of examples to buttress my argument. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, for instance, the Soviet Union was busy upgrading its intermediate-range nuclear missile force in Eastern Europe, more than doubling the number of rockets pointed west between 1978 and 1982.

At the time, US president Ronald Reagan decided together with his NATO allies to move ahead with the deployment of a countervailing force of nuclear warheads, over the strenuous objections of the American Left. This, Reagan asserted at the time, was being done both as a deterrent and as "an incentive to the Soviet Union to meet us in serious arms control negotiations." Sure enough, the Soviets quickly agreed to resume talks with Washington. As Reagan told the American people in a March 1983 address to the nation: "The Soviets are now at the negotiating table - and I think it's fair to say that without our planned deployments, they wouldn't be there." The same principle holds true for the Israeli-Palestinian dispute. As long as the Palestinians are made to feel they have nothing to lose by their delaying tactics, they will continue to resort to them.

So rather than howling with anger when Israel moves forward with various housing projects, the Left might just find that a little construction can go a long way. Inspire a little anxiety within the Palestinian leadership, a sense that the sand is rapidly slipping out of the hourglass, and before you know it, they might just be pleading to return to the negotiating table. Believe it or not - the surest way to bring that about may just be to start filling the horizon outside their windows with red-tile roofed homes inhabited by Jews.