



## ISRAEL NEWS

*A collection of the week's news from Israel  
From the Bet El Twinning / Israel Action Committee of  
Beth Avraham Yoseph of Toronto Congregation*

unique figure in that she had earned the respect even of Trump foes, who generally consider anyone who works in the administration to be beyond redemption.

Haley has a bright political future. And thanks to her ties to the GOP establishment and her ability to stay on Trump's good side, it's likely that

## Commentary...

### The Woman who Showed How Americans can Succeed at the UN

By Jonathan S. Tobin

The resignation of U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Nikki Haley took the political world by surprise, but it's likely that no one is more disappointed than supporters of Israel. Haley wasn't just a smart and assertive voice for America at the world body. She was a champion for the Jewish state, refusing to countenance the routine discrimination against Israel that was either blandly accepted or even encouraged—as it was during the last days of the Obama administration—by many of her predecessors.

Most of those sent to represent the United States at the United Nations have sought to both assimilate into their environment and to adjust their foreign-policy message to fit in with the culture of a world body where America and Israel are generally despised. It's become a place where everyone pretends that Third World dictators, theocrats and terrorists are respected statesmen.

This theory of diplomacy is epitomized by former Secretary of State John Kerry, the architect of the 2015 Iran nuclear deal, who is, according to Politico, apparently thinking of running (again) for president in 2020.

Kerry, like his former boss, Barack Obama, doesn't just believe in multilateral institutions, he hitched U.S. foreign policy to the notion that America's role in the world was not to listen and cooperate, but to also apologize and appease. He paid lip service to Western values, rather than to confront America's enemies and call out those who have perverted international institutions into cesspools of anti-Semitism. The result was not merely a failed attempt to ingratiate Muslim extremists, but retreats in Iraq and Syria, followed by atrocities, and then a nuclear pact that enriched and empowered an Iranian regime seeking regional hegemony.

Though Samantha Power—Obama's U.N. ambassador—has a reputation as a fighter for human rights and opponent of genocide—she wound up doing little to change the ways of the United Nations or oppose anti-Israel prejudice.

By contrast, Haley's tenure was in the tradition of a select few U.S. ambassadors that preferred calling things by their right names, rather than ignoring and enabling corruption and prejudice. Like Daniel Patrick Moynihan, Jeanne Kirkpatrick and John Bolton (who now serves as U.S. President Donald Trump's National Security Advisor), Haley stood with Israel when the rest of the world was silent or complicit in the unfair treatment it got at the world body.

As a general rule, that is the sort of behavior that makes few friends for U.S. ambassadors, as well as bringing down upon them the opprobrium of the foreign-policy establishment.

Haley was undaunted by the abuse of the "experts" who opposed her stands, in addition to the decisions of the Trump administration to move the U.S. embassy in Israel from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, and to withdraw from the Iran deal while re-imposing sanctions on a rogue theocratic and terrorist regime.

But there was more to Haley's tenure than just that. She didn't just talk back to terrorists and dictators, telling them that she would be "taking names" of countries that get U.S. aid but oppose America when it comes time to vote at the world body.

She also worked hard at persuading and charming—at least, as far as it is possible to persuade and charm the diplomatic corps—other nations to back the United States. She didn't just decry the United Nations. She engaged in successful attempts to reform its budget and to pass resolutions that assisted U.S. efforts to prevent nuclear proliferation. In other words, she didn't arrive in New York to kowtow to the establishment or to engage in war with its members. Her goal was to change the tone at the United Nations, even as she held it accountable.

It was a unique combination of toughness and political skills that none of her predecessors possessed.

As such, she wasn't just a key member of a Trump foreign-policy team that pushed hard for a sensible reboot on Iran and stood by Israel. She was a

at some point she will be a presidential hopeful who will be able to point to her time at the United Nations as a powerful argument for her candidacy. But that's something to consider in the future after the 2020 election, no matter what happens to Trump.

What is important to consider now about her service is that she managed to do something that no other U.N. ambassador accomplished: to stand up for American interests—and those of its crucial ally, Israel—while also making friends. That's something that Bolton, who was as forthright as Haley but who played the role of a bull in a china shop, didn't manage to do during his time at the United Nations. As such, it's no wonder that reportedly Haley and Bolton clashed behind the scenes. The idea that the only choice Americans have on the diplomatic stage is to be either a Kerry or a Bolton was always a false one.

It's a shame that Haley was apparently determined not to hang on longer, as her many admirers, including those in the pro-Israel community, would have liked. But this unlikely diplomatic star—she had no foreign-policy experience before Trump appointed her, despite Haley's bitterly opposing his candidacy during the 2016 Republican primaries—has made a mark that will ensure she is remembered even if she never runs for president.

Those who follow Haley will need to match her diplomatic chops, as well as her courage. Let's hope that they'll be as steadfast in their determination as she was to bear witness against anti-Israel and anti-American hate in the diplomatic circus that is the United Nations.

(JNS Oct 9)

### The Newest Form of Anti-Semitism is Hatred of Israel

By Ron Lauder

Shortly after the Second World War when the world saw the true horrors of the Nazi death camps, we thought anti-Semitism had finally been wiped out for good.

But, now 7 decades and 3 generations later we see how wrong we were.

Today, people throughout Europe frustrated with government or the establishment or the wealthy, once again, blame their problems first on immigrants and then on the age-old scape goat the Jews.

What does it say that the second leading candidate for president in France's last election was Marine Le Pen - the far-right daughter of a renowned anti-Semite? Or that the leader of the Labor Party in Britain and possibly the next Prime Minister Jeremy Corbyn is an outright anti-Semite?

And in Germany where the straight-arm Nazi salute has been banned since 1945, we watched something last month that we never thought we'd see in that country again. Neo-Nazis marching through the streets of Chemnitz and Dortmund reaching out their arms and screaming hatred towards Jews and attacking a Jewish restaurant and the police - because they are not instructed in what to do - did nothing!! It reminds us of 1938 when the police stood by on Kristallnacht while Jews were beaten, store windows smashed and over a thousand synagogues burned to the ground.

Europe in 2018 is not Europe of 1938. But it's because what happened 80 years ago was so horrific, we monitor it constantly.

German police reaction must be forceful - there should be zero tolerance for Nazis in Germany today.

The United Nations was created out of the ashes of World War II. It was built on the broken bones of the Jewish people. So, what does it mean that the UN singles out one - and only one country for condemnation - over and over again and that one country is the only Jewish state on earth, Israel. Listen to these numbers, but remember there are many more like it.

Between 2012 and 2015 the UN General Assembly adopted 97 resolutions criticizing countries 83 out of those 97 were against Israel. 83 out of 97!

Between 2009 and 2014 UNESCO passed 47 resolutions of condemnation: 1 against Syria - where over half-a-million human beings

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have been slaughtered, and all the rest - 46 - against Israel. This makes a mockery of UNESCO. It makes a mockery of the UN.

Audrey Azoulay the new head of UNESCO is making great strides correcting this and we applaud her for what she's doing but after decades of bad behavior at UNESCO, its reputation cannot be cleansed overnight. Especially when this virus of anti-Semitism still runs throughout the entire body of the UN.

Here in the UN, Iran - against all the rules in the UN charter - promises to destroy a member state, Israel, and the UN says nothing. It does nothing. It is silent. From the UN to the German police once again we hear only silence. The Jewish People learned the lesson of silence. We learned that lesson the hard way. What has to happen before the UN and the governments of Europe finally react? Nazi salutes attacks on Jewish restaurants and synagogues, Jews murdered - this must stop now!

This is our response - we will never be silent again.

The newest form of anti-Semitism is hatred of Israel. We hear people say I have no problem with Jews only Israel. A perfect example of this the BDS movement, which stands for the boycott, divestment and sanctions against Israel. Remember BDS does not seek peace it seeks the elimination of Israel, yet politicians look the other way and won't call BDS what it really is.

The World Jewish Congress was created in 1936 to warn the world about the dangers coming out of Nazi Germany. The world ignored that warning and 60 million human beings died and an entire continent was almost destroyed.

Please, do not ignore my warning today. (Globes Oct 3)

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### Who Speaks for the Jews, and Why do we Let Them?

By Jonathan S. Tobin

The confirmation of Brett Kavanaugh as the newest associate justice of the U.S. Supreme Court was greeted by the organized Jewish world in the same manner as his nomination by U.S. President Donald Trump. While some organizations stayed silent, liberal-leaning Jewish groups generally deplored his ascension to the high court. The far smaller number of conservative-leaning groups that label themselves as Jewish cheered him.

But the willingness of so many of the institutions that are tasked with representing Jewish interests to seek to drag the entire community into the no-holds barred brawl about Kavanaugh and the future of the court didn't draw much notice or debate. That's because we take it for granted that such groups rarely question the notion that what is good for the secular partisan interests that most Jews support is what is also good for the Jewish community.

While just about everyone in the country had an opinion about the court fight—and is generally willing to view those who disagree as either evil or otherwise beyond redemption—this ought to be one of those moments when Jewish institutions should be particularly careful about not getting involved in partisan politics that are tearing the country apart. Yet few seem willing to stay out of even the nastiest and most divisive battles, where, as was the case with Kavanaugh, the Jewish angle is far from obvious.

The argument for their actions is based in a belief that liberal stands reflect Jewish values about social justice. For some, that means anything that is identified with liberals or Democrats can be depicted as a Jewish issue, rather than just one on which many individual Jews have strong opinions. But the problem with this sort of thinking is that once you head down that road, virtually any issue can be defined as the right "Jewish" stand, even if it is wholly unconnected to the direct interests of the Jewish people.

When groups see no distinction between those partisan affiliations and the interests of the community, they are also marginalizing those who disagree. While there is no doubt that most American Jews are Democrats, the notion that liberals can speak for all Jews is as risible as the idea that one point of view encompasses that of all women or any other demographic group, let alone giving them the right to brand dissenters as beyond the pale.

The irony here is that the one issue on which there can be no debate about its importance to the Jews or the obligation for Jewish organizations to speak up—Israel—is often the one about which American Jews are bitterly divided. Support for the Jewish state has become controversial in some quarters, with many opposing its government policies on the peace process or are offended by the closeness between Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Trump. Many on the left are unperturbed by the drift away from support for Israel in the Democratic Party base or the rise of popular figures who are either critics or outright opponents of Zionism.

An example of how this worked was the battle over President Obama's 2015 Iran nuclear deal. The pact was opposed by the overwhelming majority of Israelis and their government as a threat to their security, as well as to that of the region and the world, and many in the organized Jewish community followed their lead. But while polls indicated that Americans were split on the issue, the same surveys showed that U.S. Jews

were more inclined to favor it, with 48 percent of Jews supporting the deal and only 28 percent of non-Jewish Americans doing so. Most Jewish Democrats viewed the issue through a partisan lens; even supporters of Israel among them were able to persuade themselves that it was the right thing to do.

What this means is that though support for Israel is as strong, if not stronger, than it has ever been, Jews are, like the Democratic Party, divided about it or at least far more reluctant to support Netanyahu than many Christians.

By contrast, when Jews dive headfirst into tussles like the Kavanaugh nomination, which are in no small measure primarily driven by opinions about abortion, those on the left do so in the knowledge that, as a 2015 Pew Research Survey revealed, most Jews are far more enthusiastic supporters of Roe v. Wade than they are of Netanyahu and Israeli security.

On other issues, the Jewish angle is there, but isn't as clear-cut as some on the left assert. As the descendants of immigrants with memories of the Holocaust always present, most Jews are generally supportive of immigration and sympathetic even to those who are here illegally. But there is a difference between those principles and support for open borders, as well as opposition to enforcing the laws. When synagogues declare themselves "sanctuaries" for illegals and some Jewish Community Relations Councils embrace their plight with an enthusiasm that might exceed their level of support for Israel's positions, the disconnect between Jewish interests (which ought to include the rule of law, as well as compassion for those who violate it) and the stands of those who claim to speak for the Jews remains clear.

Yet as long as 83 percent of Jews are in favor of legal abortion and only 28 percent oppose something like the Iran deal, liberal-leaning groups aren't wrong to conclude that their members (and much of the community) don't think there's anything wrong with them being liberal or partisan.

While the numbers back up these assertions, that doesn't necessarily mean that Jewish organizations are right to squander their clout and credibility in fights where specifically Jewish issues aren't at stake. Not all U.S. Jews may be fans of Netanyahu, but support for Israel and the security of the Jewish people as opposed to secular concerns—is a Jewish obligation, not an option. That is something those who claim to speak for the Jews should never forget. (JNS Oct 8)

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### The Left is in a Lose-Lose Position

By Amnon Lord

Justice Minister Ayelet Shaked went too far in her attack on the High Court of Justice, a classic case of overplaying her hand. Shaked spoke at the Kohelet Policy Forum on Monday and criticized arguments backing up the Supreme Court's authority to reject amendments to laws as unconstitutional. She said that not only was the argument an incompetent one, it was also dangerous.

According to Shaked, supporting that claim could wind up bringing down the rule of law and the principle of separation of powers, which is the basis of our democratic system – all because of what she called a "constitutional delusion."

The entire legacy and body of jurisprudence of the Israeli legal system stands in the way of the new invention of what is being termed "the unconstitutional constitutional amendment," as law professor Menachem Mautner called it in a piece he published in Haaretz Tuesday.

Those who oppose the nation-state law are in a lose-lose situation. If the High Court repeals Basic Law: Israel as the Nation-State of the Jewish People, it will cause the same crisis of separation of powers that President Reuven Rivlin warned about and Shaked is constantly cautioning against.

But beyond that, rejecting the law would set the Right on fire, and spur a widespread political uprising that will clearly benefit the Right come election time. It might entail significant gains for Habayit Hayehudi, Shaked's own party.

Most likely, the High Court will let the nation-state law stand. Legal scholars from the Left, out of a kind of hubris, are flooding the court with petitions against the legislation. If the High Court allows the law to stand, the ruling will strengthen the national-Zionist side in comparison to the side that wants a "state of all its citizens."

For those who are guided by true, liberal values, it would be best if the Left laid off the nation-state law. Its existence will not prevent the High Court from handing down consistently liberal rulings.

In contrast to Shaked, Zionist Union MK Tzipi Livni has attacked both Shaked and the law itself in the name of the Declaration of Independence.

She and others talk about the declaration in its "constitutional" context without having studied or understood it. Because if the Declaration of Independence were still used by the legal system as a basis for principle overriding constitutionality, we wouldn't be seeing those same controversial rulings that spurred politicians to pass the nation-state law in the first place.

The greatest justice in the history of the nation was probably Shimon

Agranat, who based two of his most significant rulings – one liberal and the other illiberal – on the Declaration of Independence.

Former Chief Justice Aharon Barak was apparently looking for something other than the Declaration of Independence to use as a basis for rulings. Therefore, he declared time and again that the Basic Laws enacted in 1992 were a "constitution" or a "constitutional revolution." That created a crisis, and now Barak is going back to the Declaration of Independence.

And based on the Declaration of Independence, the High Court might approve the Basic Law: Israel as the Nation-State of the Jewish People. If it bases its ruling on the Declaration of Independence, it will restore the document to its key status and allow it to be used as a future basis for rulings because of the obvious liberal, democratic principles that exist in it. (Israel Hayom Oct 10)

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### **Fighting BDS Activists is Justified** By Eitan Orkibi

Perhaps the critics of Public Security Minister Gilad Erdan and the supporters of American student Lara Alqasem, who has been denied entry into Israel over her support of the boycott, divestment and sanctions movement, are right. It would have been better to avoid law enforcement measures fashioning her as the latest on-duty prisoner of Zion for the Palestinian cause.

It is even possible that, in the wake of the inquiry into her case, the authorities will agree she can study in Israel, despite her connections to the BDS movement as a foreign student.

Thus far, the debate has revolved around organizational and image-related considerations. On the fundamental level, Erdan is right. The criticism leveled against him has been mocking: What, a young student is so scary to the mightiest power in the Middle East? What has she done anyway to rattle the "thought police," boycott humus?

This argument is aimed to deceive. Anyone familiar with American campus life knows that anti-Israeli activity is established by small, localized cells; they know that the fight to boycott Israel is decentralized, lacks a hierarchical structure, and that its campaigners dot the landscape of Western campuses. Anyone who has ever attended a symposium on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict on a Western campus, or "Apartheid Week" or any other anti-Israel happening, is cognizant of the impact of these messages espoused by the apprentices of the economic, legal, media and diplomatic elites.

The public relations campaign to minimize Alqasem's activities is first and foremost an affront to the political conscience of her supporters. It is curious, to say the least, that these people – who on a daily basis heap praise on any display of resistance to the occupation and hope to arouse an awakening of Israeli conscience – are so quick to present anti-Israel activity on an American campus as a trivial biographical detail.

The drag on the public's resources and the detriment to the national interest is even more of an outrage. What do those who call to boycott Israel, if not to inflict serious economic, academic and cultural damage on the Jewish state, expect? How can it be that people – who only yesterday decried "wasting" public funds on cultural initiatives in settlements – are suddenly so generous at the expense of the Israeli taxpayer?

This is also directed at Hebrew University's board of directors, whose members ceremoniously hopped on the bandwagon calling for Alqasem's release and whose leaders even declared that academia believes in "diversity of opinion" – and therefore "raise the banner of tolerance toward those who call to boycott us."

With all due respect and utmost forgiveness – at whose expense exactly? The boycott movement has made Israeli academia a primary target; an academic boycott against Israel is de-facto in place, openly and hidden. It takes just one leading periodical or prestigious scientific conference to reject a paper or lecture for political reasons to wash countless hours of research and technological resources down the drain. Is the call to boycott our scientific output, that in which the Israeli taxpayer invests a fortune to fund labs, facilities, research and researchers – part of the legitimate "diversity of opinion" you espouse in your halls?

The arrogant contempt for the fight against the BDS movement is a slap in the face of every Israeli citizen. (Israel Hayom Oct 10)

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### **Incitement Breeds a Despicable Murderer** By Haim Shine

It wasn't lack of progress in peace talks, the situation of the Palestinians of Gaza, unemployment, lack of Israeli deterrence, or the nation-state law that influenced the loathsome murderer who brutally killed Kim Levengrond Yehezkel and Ziv Hajbi on Sunday morning. These explanations, which the Israeli Left churns out after terrorist attacks and incidents in Gaza and Judea and Samaria have nothing to do with reality.

The terrorist who killed his former colleagues was influenced by years of incitement against Jews and Israelis and by the sense that killing Jews will give him status in Palestinian society and that becoming a martyr will sanctify him and pave his way to the Muslim Paradise. This murderous

narrative is spearheaded by Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas, his fellow PA leaders, and preachers in the mosques, who are the successors to former Grand Mufti of Jerusalem Amin al-Husseini and PLO leader Yasser Arafat. The narrative is a violent one that reminds the victims' bereft families of the respectable monthly stipends paid to the killers and their relatives and the cycle of their homes being demolished by the IDF and then rebuilt. The money for the terrorists' salaries comes from European countries, where naiveté mixes with hatred of Israel and Jews.

It's very difficult to deter a society built on radical, inhumane foundations, including legitimacy for honor killings. It is frustrating and complicated to confront a society in which mothers long for their children to die as martyrs. Western society, which is based on human rationalism and the desire to live, has not yet found appropriate tactics to use against radical Islam, which places no value whatsoever on human life. In the standoff between Western rationalism and Islamic fundamentalism, the West is at an inherent disadvantage.

Israel's Jewish and democratic values prevent it from operating the way that Syrian leader Bashar Assad and his Russian and Iranian partners have been operating for the last several years in Syria, which has led to hundreds of thousands of civilian dead, some in chemical weapons attacks by the regime. The values in which we take such pride do not allow us to execute collective punishment, make an unchecked use of force, or ignore the world's reaction to our deeds – in comparison to its astonishing apathy to the acts of other countries.

The spokespeople of the Left, who include former defense and security officials, are conditioned to suggest miracle cures. Some argue that only if we improve conditions for the Palestinians and offer them work will they back off of terrorism. Sunday's killer chose to carry out his plans in the middle of an industrial zone that is supposed to help Palestinians by providing them with a place of employment. Other security experts, who used to be courageous fighters, suggest that we cut ourselves off and transfer control of Judea and Samaria to the Palestinians. They forget that any territory we hand over will become a base for rocket fire toward Israel, and then we'll be forced to retake those same areas.

The battle against Palestinian terrorism is an old one. Or to put it more precisely, the battle is for our right to live in peace and safety in our homeland. We must stay alert, prevent terrorist activity, punish those who engage in it, and employ force wisely and in a focused manner. As the next Knesset election approaches, we must make special preparations to confront terrorism and harsher action against the terrorists themselves, who believe that their actions can influence the Israeli election.

(Israel Hayom Oct 8)

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### **Warmed-Over Withdrawal Syndrome** By David M. Weinberg

Given the Arab regional meltdown, the inroads made by radical Islam in the Palestinian national movement, and the decrepit dictatorship that has become the Palestinian Authority – it's hard to believe that anybody still hawks the same-old "solutions" for the Palestinian-Israeli arena.

And yet, that is what center-left generals and former government officials did again this week with the presentation of yet another *passé* plan for unilateral Israeli withdrawals from the West Bank.

Maj. Gen. (res.) Amos Yadlin – one of Israel's most important military men – and a group of colleagues at the Tel Aviv-based Institute for National Security Studies (INSS) tabled a comprehensive plan of action to separate Israel from the Palestinians. It's about Israel unilaterally creating a contiguous Palestinian "entity" under the control of the PA comprising approximately 65% of the West Bank and taking steps to starve settlements outside the so-called settlement blocs.

The "new strategic framework" is wrapped-up nice and pretty as original, professional and politically neutral research that took a year of intensive discussions to produce, and it is couched in high-soaring language about "taking Zionist initiative."

But essentially it is the same, sad "Plan B" for unilateral withdrawals in the absence of peace with the Palestinians that Gen. Yadlin proposed four years ago, and which he used as a political platform when he stood as Zionist Union candidate for defense minister in 2015.

On the credit side of the ledger, the plan acknowledges a series of realities that are long overdue, beginning with the fact that there is no comprehensive peace deal to be had with the Palestinians any time soon, and it would be a mistake to attempt another frantic John Kerry-style effort to secure such a deal.

There is no obvious solution to the situation in Gaza, where Hamas has taken control, nor is an easy compromise possible in Jerusalem. Thus, the INSS left these issues completely outside its plan. In these matters, Israel must just stick to its guns, literally and figuratively.

Yadlin also stipulates that Israel would retain near-permanent control of the Jordan Valley for security reasons, and indefinite freedom of IDF action against terrorism throughout the West Bank, in all areas, no matter

what nice or nasty entity the Palestinians might develop there. The plan allows for no Palestinian veto in these matters.

But then, Yadin & Co. make a series of spurious and unsubstantiated arguments.

First, that by ceding security control to the PA of some parts of Area B, and civilian/economic control of 25% of Area C (what the plan calls genteelly calls “reducing the dimensions of Israeli occupation”), Israel’s security situation would improve.

Second, that the granting of such unilateral goodies to the PA would encourage its moderation and not, rather, teach Palestinian leaders just to ratchet-up their demands and wait-out Israel – as they have adamantly done over the past 25 years.

Third, that by doing so, Israel would gain more international legitimacy and Sunni Arab state cooperation.

Fourth, and most problematic, these experts nonsensically claim that ending construction and government budgets for daily life in “far-flung” settlements – in effect, choking them to death – doesn’t amount to another Gaza-style disengagement. While they don’t propose physically dragging Israelis out of their homes in Shiloh or Ofra, they suggest making it impossible and illegitimate to live there.

Gen. Yadin calls his plan a diplomatic “Waze” – an ingenious route out of the current situation toward an indeterminate but better future. I view it as Waze gone wacky, inevitably leading toward runaway and hostile Palestinian statehood, without securing an end to conflict.

After the Israeli withdrawals outlined in the plan, how would Israel be able to prevent the fall of Judea and Samaria to Hamas or one of the other jihadist groups now swarming the Mideast? If we reserve the right to regularly raid the territories to root out Hamas cells (which Yadin correctly insists on), how is that any different from the situation today? And if we keep a significant troop presence on the hilltops and at key junctures, who would really consider this an end to the Israeli “occupation”?

With Israel’s civilian settlements in the Samarian mountains asphyxiated, can you imagine what would befall Israel’s rump troop presence in the West Bank? Remember how badly Israel’s “security zone” in southern Lebanon worked out? Our forces there had no legitimacy whatsoever, brought us sustained international opprobrium, and we suffered constant casualties. Do we want to turn the West Bank into southern Lebanon?

Nor would unilateral moves provide Israel with diplomatic breathing room, as the plan’s proponents claim. Withdrawing from one part of the territories would not convince anyone that Israel has a right to keep other parts. On the contrary, a partial Israeli pullout would intensify the illegitimacy of our remaining presence in the territories. Every Israeli retreat is taken as proof that the territories are all stolen property which must be returned to their rightful Palestinian owners. Unilateral withdrawals would bolster Palestinian maximalism, not engender Palestinian cooperation or moderation.

What about the infuriating Palestinian campaign of denialism (denying Jewish history in Jerusalem and Israel through UNESCO resolutions and more), or PA “pay for slay” stipends to terrorists, or Palestinian lawfare which seeks to criminalize Israel in international legal forums like the ICC?

Under Yadin’s “Zionist initiative” plan, Israel is supposed to swallow all this while unilaterally forking over parts of Areas B and C to the PA! Why reward the wayward PA in this way?

Worst of all, unilateral withdrawals would unnecessarily and unjustifiably tear the internal fabric of this country asunder. It’s unforgivable and simply indefensible to tie a death-knell tourniquet on Israeli towns in Judea and Samaria – if at all – without hope for real, comprehensive, sustainable peace in the offing.

In short, unilateral Israeli withdrawals would not enhance Israeli security, nor would they improve Israel’s international position and moral standing, but they would rip Israeli society apart, for no good reason. And as the Lebanon and Gaza precedents proved, unilateral Israeli withdrawals only guarantee continuation of the conflict and even its escalation, not its de-escalation.

I prefer the view of Maj. Gen. (res.) Yaakov Amidror, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s former national security adviser, who is now the Anne and Greg Rosshandler Senior Fellow at the Jerusalem Institute for Strategic Studies. (In fact, JISS was founded to be a conservative intellectual counterweight to the left-leaning INSS).

Amidror rejects suggestions that Israel undertake unilateral initiatives – whether annexation of Judea and Samaria, or withdrawals from all or parts of the territory. Unilateral moves, he says, entail a very high domestic price for Israel, while earning Israel very few gains in diplomatic and defense terms. “Israel must not jeopardize its existence by embarking on rash initiatives that would radically worsen its security situation – just to please proponents of ‘forward progress’ at any cost. This risk is not worth taking,” Amidror has written.

Amidror accepts that Israeli building in Judea and Samaria should best be focused in the settlement blocs and within the existing boundaries of

settlements – as was reportedly agreed last year between Israel and the Trump administration. But that’s a far cry from Yadin’s plan to suffocate settlements.

“Israel should manage the conflict until conditions improve for a renewed negotiating effort at an agreed-upon solution. When on the edge of the cliff, standing still is preferable to stepping ‘forward,’” Amidror concludes. (Jerusalem Post Oct 11)

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### **Start-Up Nation vs Blow-Up Nation** By Michael Freund

With its decades-old track record of murder and mayhem, Hamas has already secured itself a place in the annals of infamy.

From bus bombings to underground terror tunnels to the indiscriminate firing of thousands of rockets and projectiles at Israeli towns and cities, the Islamic extremist group has repeatedly found new ways to sow widespread death and destruction.

But just when it seems that their injurious impulses cannot possibly sink any lower, the organization’s terrorist masterminds somehow manage to come up with novel methods that would make even the devil blush.

Such has been the case in recent days when, as Yediot Aharonot reported, Hamas has launched the “terror of the toys,” deliberately targeting young Jewish children by attaching explosive devices concealed as playthings to balloons and sending them airborne from Gaza towards neighboring Jewish communities in the Negev.

In one instance, a bomb disguised as a toy tied to a batch of balloons was discovered in the Eshkol region. It was glittering with colorful lights, clearly intended to entice a curious Israeli child to pick it up. Fortunately, the bomb was discovered and diffused before it caused any damage.

But this incident, along with others, prompted security officials to issue an unusual warning to local residents last week: “Please instruct your children not to touch objects attached to balloons which appear to be toys.” The circular further noted, “Sometimes there are drawings on the balloons, with hearts and smiles, funny faces and the like. All of these are intended to create an innocent cover for the explosive devices.”

So there you have it for all the world to see. Israel’s enemies are not targeting “the occupation” or “illegal settlements.” They are consciously and with premeditation seeking to blow the limbs off of Jewish children and kill them.

Needless to say, this latest outrage is unlikely to provoke much of a response from the international community, which is too busy calling for the creation of a hostile Palestinian state alongside Israel to take note of still another Palestinian war crime.

But it most assuredly should evoke a determined and harsh rejoinder from the IDF. Anyone who purposefully seeks to target Jewish children should have a bull’s-eye placed firmly on his back.

The reason why the Hamas leadership feels free to plumb new depths of evil is because they assume that they will not be compelled to pay a personal price for their actions. That is why they are continuously inventing new techniques of treachery and persist in attempting to inflame the situation, both literally and metaphorically.

The numbers speak for themselves. According to data compiled by the Keren Kayemeth LeIsrael, which administers forests throughout the country, over the past six months there have been 1,053 fires in the woodlands adjacent to Gaza thanks to Palestinian airborne incendiary devices, which have burned more than 11,920 dunams of land. That is more than twice the size of Gibraltar.

The beautiful Be’eri forest, which sits in the western Negev, has been hit especially hard, suffering 452 fires with some 3,616 dunams set ablaze.

Isn’t it ironic that the Palestinians are intentionally setting fire to the land that they claim to love so much? What does this say about their true intentions?

Many of us go about our daily lives without giving much thought to events in the South, as though they are taking place in an alternate reality.

But the indifference, whether willful or otherwise, will inevitably be short-lived. Indeed, there have been a string of incidents of late in which “balloon bombs” or other suspicious flying objects have appeared much closer to home, such as on the streets of the industrial zone in Modi’in and even adjacent to the Malha Mall in Jerusalem.

Ignoring the problem and hoping that it will go away is not a solution. Only by striking swiftly and hard against the Hamas leadership and eliciting a heavy price for their actions, can this latest threat be contained before it spins completely out of control.

One of the sad things about this situation is that the Palestinians are clearly resourceful people, although it seems that many of their energies are directed toward destruction. They could have invested in human capital and technological progress as Israel, the “Start-up Nation,” has done, and brought themselves peace and prosperity. Instead, the Palestinian leadership appears intent on turning “Palestine” into the “Blow-up Nation,” best known not for what it builds, but rather for what it aims to destroy. (Jerusalem Post Oct 10)