



Jerusalem 3:56  
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## ISRAEL NEWS

*A collection of the week's news from Israel  
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known that the administration doesn't want Israel to do anything that might interfere with the diplomatic plans of the United States or the nuclear schemes of Iran.

The upshot of the piece was that everyone would be better off

### Commentary...

#### When it Comes to Iran, is the US Missing the Bigger Picture?

By Dan Schueftan

The coming months are crucial to Israel's national security, because the decision that the United States makes with regard to Iran will shape our strategic environment for years to come. And whoever looks at the implications of U.S. policy from the nuclear aspect alone is missing the point.

President Joe Biden will either choose a responsible policy that will prevent Tehran from gaining regional hegemony, and allow Washington to divert its resources to its struggle against China, or one that will turn the ayatollah-led regime into a superpower whose actions will most likely lead to a widespread conflict in the Middle East.

The democratic West in general, and the U.S. in particular, has consistently failed to understand radicalism. They assume that what emanates from radicals are empty "extremist" slogans, and that fundamentally "rational" leaders will act "pragmatically" when they "have something to lose."

This is also how they misunderstood Nazi leader Adolf Hitler, Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat, Syrian President Bashar Assad and Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, to name a few.

A similar "cultural blindness" has consistently failed Americans when they tried to bring democracy to Iraq, pluralism to Libya, acceptance to the Muslim Brotherhood, women's equality to Afghanistan and peace to Palestinians.

As for Iran, a nuclear deal will only marginally curb its nuclear progress, but will greatly increase its capabilities and regional aggression. Having enriched uranium to record-high levels, it only lacks the launch means and weapons system to become a nuclear threshold state.

The danger of the nuclear deal lies in the strategic realm in which Washington has failed repeatedly, by obsessively focusing on a much-needed, but secondary, goal in a way that disregarded the main one.

As such, focusing on curbing Tehran's nuclear enrichment efforts alone will eventually make it easier for the regime to become a nuclear threshold state and strengthen its status as a regional power.

The key questions remain economics and consciousness. Lifting the sanctions will bring the regime in Tehran tens of millions of dollars and will open the door for hundreds of billions more from Europe, China, India and others.

A critical U.S. contribution to strengthening Iran and its regional control will almost inevitably lead to a conflict with Israel, which sees such hegemony as an existential threat. Such an outcome can still be prevented if Washington examines the overall regional repercussion of the nuclear deal. (Israel Hayom Nov 23)

#### Biden's 'Build Back Better' Message to Iran, Israel and the Arabs

By Jonathan S. Tobin

Critics of The New York Times sometimes claim that the newspaper's biases render it unreadable. But those who avoid it are missing out on one of its key features: the way it serves as a sounding board for Democratic administrations. The Times was an essential part of what Ben Rhodes, former President Barack Obama's deputy national security advisor, called his media "echo chamber," which essentially repurposed that administration's talking points about its efforts to appease Iran as news analysis and reporting. Though the all-too candid Rhodes is not one of the many former Obama aides who have failed upward and assumed even higher positions in the Joe Biden presidency, the Times' recent coverage of the administration's posturing on current Iran policy brought to mind that boast from 2015.

In an article published this past Sunday, the Times served as the medium by which the administration sent a clear message to both Israel and the Arab states. As far as Washington is concerned, the boat has sailed on stopping Iran from going nuclear. A "senior American official"—journalistic code for a cabinet-level source—also made it

if Israel stopped both its highly successful efforts at sabotaging Tehran's program and threatening to take major military action if they feel the Islamist regime is getting close to a bomb with or without American help.

According to the highly placed source, Israel has been wasting its time trying to hobble the Iranians' efforts to develop the capacity to make good on their genocidal threats about eliminating the Jewish state. The official said Iran hadn't really been hindered by the series of successful Israeli operations inside the country, including the assassination of its top nuclear scientist and explosions at four facilities where its centrifuges operated. The Biden official said that Iran has quickly recovered from these setbacks calling it Tehran's "Build Back Better" plan—a play on the title given to the president's massive domestic spending bill.

That effort to disabuse its allies of any confidence in the longstanding American commitment to preventing Iran from gaining a nuclear weapon—and one that has even repeatedly been restated by the president and many of his functionaries—was also interestingly timed to coincide with visits to the Gulf states by both Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin and Robert Malley, the administration's special envoy for Iran. In theory, Austin's job was to convince Arab nations that are both deathly afraid of Iran and committed to normalization with Israel, that the United States was, appearances to the contrary notwithstanding, not abandoning them to face the Iranians on their own.

Any headway that Austin may have made with the Arab states was almost immediately undermined by a statement from Malley, an inveterate appeaser of terrorist regimes throughout a long career serving three Democratic presidents. At a conference organized by a think tank in the United Arab Emirates last week, Malley told the audience that he believes that the main problem in the region isn't the fact that the world's largest state sponsor of terror has—through the weak diplomacy of the West and its blatant cheating on Obama's nuclear deal—gotten closer to the nuclear threshold. On the contrary, Malley thinks the problem is "most of the region's disfunctionings have root in Iran's exclusion" from the world community as a result of sanctions aimed at stopping the nuclear threat.

These are two themes that are clearly music to the ears of the theocratic tyrants that run Iran.

Much like Obama's attitude during the negotiations with Iran from 2013 to 2015, the idea that the West has no chance of halting the nuclear threat through covert actions or the use of military force is self-defeating. It's true that Iran has built back after suffering setbacks; think, however, about how much closer it would be to a bomb if the Israelis hadn't been playing havoc with Tehran's facilities and putting the fear of God into scientists working on programs designed to facilitate the mass murder of Israeli Jews.

Israel's harassment has effectively tied the Iranian regime up in knots searching for a network set up by the Jewish state inside the country that has resulted in some epic intelligence coups and overt operations. While Biden officials may downplay the effectiveness of this campaign, the Iranians have no idea where or when the Israelis will strike next or how it will happen, and that means the regime cannot confidently protect its assets or its prized nuclear equipment and uranium stockpiles.

While Iran is too big and its nuclear program too spread out in several highly defensible locations to easily destroy it, what the Israelis have done is make it plain that no one person or facility in that country is safe from the long reach of Israeli intelligence operatives.

At one point, Israeli and American intelligence agencies were working in tandem against Iran but the message we're getting now is that Biden wants Israeli Prime Minister Naftali Bennett to declare a ceasefire. That's the complete opposite of the message Israel's military and intelligence establishment have been telling the world. An example was the IDF's very public talk of 2022 being the year that the Israeli Air Force is making dealing with Iran its top priority.

For all of Biden administration officials' talk of Iran being able to "build back better," Tehran knows not to underestimate Israel's ability to strike them at will in unconventional ways. Yet, as I've previously noted, Iran is quite confident that the administration is completely disinterested in seeking a "plan B" to stop its nuclear quest if diplomacy fails. And with the Biden team's latest article planted in the Times indicating that the president's national security team has lost hope of persuading the Iranians to re-enter a nuclear deal that would have given them a legal path to a bomb inside of eight years, Tehran knows it holds all the cards in the upcoming talks with the West in Vienna.

But despite Washington's efforts to tame both the Israelis and their new Arab allies, Biden shouldn't think that even an Israeli government that would love to stay on good terms with him like the one led by Bennett is so weak that it would acquiesce to an existential threat like that of a nuclear Iran.

So we are left with a contradiction between America's pre-emptive surrender to Iran and its inability to stop Israel from defending itself despite the very real challenges involved in any undertaking on the part of the Jewish state to take out Tehran's nuclear program. The ayatollahs should take great comfort in the articles churned out by the Times assuring them that Biden doesn't mean business when it comes to stopping their nuclear ambition. They also need to pay extremely close attention to what the Israelis are saying and must understand that the chances that the Jewish state can be prevented from defending itself by American pressure are not greater than zero. (JNS Nov 22)

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### **Bennett's Big Twitter Blunder** By Ruthie Blum

Israeli Prime Minister Naftali Bennett chose a particularly inopportune moment to enrage disgruntled voters. Though a member of his staff was likely responsible for the extremely poor judgment call, Bennett is the one in whose name the move was made. Its subsequent reversal after an outcry, then, proved insufficient.

The incident in question involved the bereaved father of Shir Hajaj, 22, a female Israel Defense Forces lieutenant killed in a 2017 Palestinian truck-ramming attack. She was murdered along with three other innocent IDF soldiers enjoying an educational field trip in Jerusalem's Armon Hanatziv neighborhood.

In a post on Sunday evening—mere hours after 25-year-old Eliyahu Kay, an immigrant to Israel from South Africa, was gunned down by a Hamas-linked terrorist on a rampage near the Western Wall in Jerusalem—Herzl Hajaj announced that Bennett had blocked him on Twitter.

Referring to him as the "prime minister of the terrorist [coalition] ... who knew how to ask us to support him in the election," Hajaj accused Bennett of "now being unable to handle my criticism of the formation of his government with the terrorist-supporting Ra'am Party. ... Now he can embrace the terrorist-supporting [Ra'am leader Mansour] Abbas in peace, without criticism [and] without our reminding him of the truth."

The stir caused by Hajaj's tweet, which accompanied a screen shot of Bennett's account blocking him, spurred the prime minister's staff to engage in on-the-spot damage control. Less than an hour after it appeared, the prime minister unblocked Hajaj and issued an odd semblance of an apology.

Saying that blocking Hajaj had been done with "good intent," the prime minister's office claimed that "The moment his social-media team understood it, the block was lifted." By "it," the PMO seemed to mean the foolishness of the decision—taken by tech-savvy but otherwise pretty ignorant young people—to protect their boss by penalizing his critics.

Whatever their motive, however, they were forced to backtrack following the backlash, which included calls to block Bennett in return, to reduce his number of followers. Indeed, all the dissing of Hajaj did was provide fodder to others who felt betrayed by the premier and his Yamina Party, as well as to politicians in the opposition, happy to be given cause to slam the prime minister for going so far as to sever ties with the devastated parent of a slaughtered daughter.

Ironically, Hajaj, like many of those who cast their ballots for Yamina in the last four election cycles, favored Bennett precisely because he was to the "right" of former longtime Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. Having a child killed so brutally in broad daylight will tend to make her father blame the incumbent for being soft on terrorism. And Bennett campaigned as the candidate whose

party would be utterly uncompromising where security and defense were concerned.

The trouble was that Yamina simply didn't garner enough seats, and Bennett managed to secure his current position by forging a coalition that included not only the far-left but a Muslim Brotherhood-affiliate to boot. As this went against his pre-election vows, his champions ended up ranging from disillusioned to disgusted.

Hajaj is among the latter.

"I not only voted for Bennett and backed him, but I volunteered at the Yamina headquarters," he told Channel 12 on Monday morning. "I believed in him; that he opted to discard the bereaved families and Israeli security is my greatest disappointment."

In the same interview, he defended his own behavior while disparaging Bennett's.

"My comments [on his feed] have been harsh," he acknowledged. "But I don't lie or curse; I only speak my mind. This apparently wasn't to the liking of his aides, and ... [he] must have been fed up with me."

Hajaj then assailed them for doing this on the day of the deadly attack in the Old City, in which Kay was killed and four others were wounded; being preoccupied with "nonsense" is how he put it.

He wondered aloud how, on such an occasion, the prime minister's staff is busy trying to silence critics, when they should be "preventing terrorist attacks and creating deterrence."

This will be hard for Bennett to do while working tirelessly to keep his coalition together. Even more difficult for him will be living down his social-media blunder, which is by no means the only reason for his disastrous showing in opinion polls.

The well-deserved ridicule that he's been receiving for the faux pas is already rearing its head.

In reaction to heartfelt tweet about Kay—"who served as a paratrooper in the 202nd Battalion and worked as a tour guide at the Western Wall [Heritage Foundation] ... [a] beautiful Israeli ... connected to his country, to his homeland"—one follower retorted: "And if [his] parents sharply criticize you, are you going to block them, too?" (JNS Nov 23)

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### **A Spectacular Security Failure** By Yoav Limor

It is unbelievable that in 2021, a convicted felon with an impressive criminal record and several prison sentences can still get hired as a cleaner in the home of Israel's defense minister.

It is astonishing that it did not occur to those in charge of security to do a background check on an individual who would regularly come into close contact with one of the most protected leaders in Israel.

In this aspect alone, Omri Goren has done a great favor to Israel and its security services: he revealed their failure free of charge and without severe consequences. It is not hard to imagine how much damage could have been caused had information from the defense minister's home—classified material and recorded conversations—been shared with Israel's enemies.

As for Goren, there is nothing to discuss. Anyone who offers to spy for Iran should be imprisoned. And it doesn't matter that Goren failed. The act itself warrants severe punishment, including for the sake of deterrence. Anyone who entertains the idea of spying on Israel should know that a lengthy prison sentence awaits him should he choose to do so.

Gantz was assigned special security, at a cost of millions of shekels. It seemingly included everything: fences, checkpoints, cameras, security guards. The only thing that was missing was background checks on individuals roaming free around his house.

This incident is serious and should not be taken lightly. It warrants a thorough investigation by the Israel Security Agency (which has already begun), but also demands accountability. Interrogators should treat the incident as if damage was done, and in the process, check existing weaknesses in the security system.

Israel has had its fair share of spies and assassinations. It was supposed to bring about more alertness than ever. The fact that this did not happen is alarming, certainly in light of Iranian efforts to harm Israeli officials.

This time, no one was hurt. Next time, who knows. (Israel Hayom Nov 21)

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## **Not Everything is About Palestine** By Emily Schrader

With every perceived injustice that occurs to anyone, particularly in the West, not far behind are the anti-Israel activists standing by, ready to hijack any and every cause to make it about themselves. From May Day to the Women's March, Palestinian activists are seemingly incapable of actually standing in genuine solidarity with anyone, but rather twist any and every cause to turn the spotlight back on themselves.

The last week proved no different with the trial and acquittal of Kyle Rittenhouse, an American teen who was responsible for the death of two (white) men and the injuring of another (white) man in the midst of the Black Lives Matter riots in Kenosha, Wisconsin.

The court ruled that Rittenhouse acted in self-defense on all counts, and the jury found him not guilty. Those who disagreed with the verdict took to the streets, and to social media, to claim that this was racial injustice because he's a white kid, and that a black kid in the same situation would not have gotten off in the same circumstances.

Setting aside the hypothetical nature of this assumption (especially when there actually are concrete examples of racial injustice), it certainly has nothing to do with Palestine. Yet that didn't stop left-wing writers like Mairav Zonszein from immediately spewing ridiculous nonsense with a tweet reading: "It's Kyle Rittenhouse verdict pretty much everyday over here in Israel-Palestine."

As of yet, it is unclear what she was referring to, given the fact that many Palestinians don't even have criminal trials with a presumption of innocence in places like the Gaza Strip when they're accused of crimes far less severe, such as "collaboration with Israel." Instead, Hamas executes them.

Things aren't much different in Ramallah under the Palestinian Authority where government critics like Nizar Banat are beaten to death instead of given a fair trial with a jury of their peers, like Kyle Rittenhouse received.

Perhaps Zonszein was referring to Israel, which actually convicted one of their own soldiers for killing a Palestinian terrorist at the scene of the attack when the terrorist was already neutralized. The soldier then served time in prison for his act.

No matter how you look at it, the Rittenhouse case isn't applicable. But anti-Israel activists aren't concerned with reality when it comes to hijacking a cause.

In the protests following the Rittenhouse verdict, pro-Palestinian activists were filmed chanting for the destruction of the State of Israel and explicitly calling for an intifada.

This is the same phenomenon we have seen in literally every single protest, every single global issue, and every single example of racial injustice. Somehow, Jews or Israel are always incorporated in the most absurd ways.

Several weeks ago at the climate change conference, protesters in Glasgow raised Palestinian flags. Protesters held signs claiming that Palestine is a climate change issue.

Last month, anti-Israel activists supposedly concerned with LGBTQ rights, harassed filmmakers over participating in the Tel Aviv LGBTQ film festival, which featured both Israeli and Palestinian films, without a care in the world for the fact that Palestinians cannot even hold an LGBTQ film festival in the Palestinian territories.

Graffiti was spotted following protests for Britney Spears over her controversial conservatorship stating "Free Britney + Palestine." In the Scotland-Israel football game, protesters held signs calling to cancel the match because of "Israeli Apartheid" – never mind the fact nearly half the team is Arab. Fans at the match were even fined by FIFA for booing the Israeli national anthem.

Throughout the last month, anti-Israel activists have turned the Miss Universe pageant into an Israel-Palestine debate by harassing and bullying Miss South Africa and calling on her to not take part because the pageant is being held in Israel.

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict has nothing to do with the Women's March, nothing to do with Black Lives Matter, nothing to do with climate change, with police brutality, with hate crimes against Asians, with Miss Universe, with Britney Spears, or with the Kyle Rittenhouse verdict.

The cynical attempts to hijack causes and make them about Palestinians is simply tragedy tourism on the part of anti-Israel activists, not to mention it is disrespectful to the causes they are hijacking. There's a difference between showing solidarity and using the publicity of another cause to promote your own propaganda.

These anti-Israel activists should not be welcomed in spaces where they cannot show genuine solidarity; these cynical hijackings show their true colors. (Jerusalem Post Nov 22)

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## **The Antisemitism and Erasure of Jews in Hollywood and Around the World** By Craig Dershowitz

Eddie Marsan is an actor who played a Jewish character on British television. He is not Jewish. But he was attacked, vilified, and virtually hunted down because in a fictional world, he pretended to be one of us.

Eddie Marsan was never meant to become a hero fighting hatred and antisemitism. But here we are, and Eddie Marsan is still not a Jew.

One would expect the fact that Eddie Marsan is not actually Jewish would protect him from disdain, hatred, threats, intimidation, and bullying. It did not.

Jew hatred is more than skin deep. It is seeking and pervasive. It is limitless. It now seeks even the fictional Jew.

In the world of the fictional Jew, all the worst misperceptions, accusations, and justifications for hatred against us can become real. In the mind of the antisemite, we can become a perversion of Nietzsche's *ubermensch*, and Platonic ideals of hate and evil. The fictional Jew can be anyone's abomination.

Let us talk, then, about the fictional Jew. He is the hook-nosed banker, the crooked politician, the crippling oppressor, and the master of the fate of all who feel victimized. The fictional Jews are the makers of media, and the powerful, influential, privileged, dominant majority. The fictional Jew is the Hollywood elite. They control what you see, hear, watch, and believe.

As much as Eddie Marsan is actually Jewish are the true Jewish people any of those things written above.

But to the antisemite, that doesn't matter. All of the worst lies about Jews become true. And either Marsan was believed to be Jewish because he played one on TV — which means people will buy any story they are told — or the world can no longer distinguish between reality and twisted, hateful fantasy. Either way, it's bad for the Jews.

Now let us talk truth — about the factual Jew.

The factual Jew is a minority. A minority beset by enemies. A minority with millennia of attempted genocide by those with rabid blood lust. A minority wrestling with intergenerational trauma so pronounced that it makes it difficult for us to walk this earth without seeing monsters under the bed and within the shadows. The factual Jew lives in a world where parents must have "the talk" with their children, and where every major Jewish institution believes they must now have armed guards and metal detectors.

The factual Jew seeks to work within the Black, Brown, LGBTQ, and indigenous communities — but is denied being part of the liberation movement. We are a minority simply struggling to survive. We are common folk with common goals — health, hope, peace for their children, serenity — but are struggling against an uncommon denial of those rights by those who are most loudly proclaiming it for themselves. This is not a right or left issue, this is a human issue — denying humanity to one group for a multitude of competing and pernicious reasons.

Attempting to understand the vast gulf between truth and lie is not impossible. Consider the obvious irony that if the accusations against Jews were true, those anti-Jewish lies couldn't spread.

If the Jews controlled the media, they would never portray themselves in the harsh, negative light we see now. Clearly, we would do a better job of hiding our proverbial fangs and horns. To ignore this laughable irony is to believe that within antisemitism there is hope. There is not.

We say, "If only the haters were educated, if only they knew our history, if only they understood our suffering, if only we reached our hands out further..."

The problem is that the majority of those who hate us know all these things — or, at the very least, have heard them. The problem is, they don't believe them or are willfully blind. They do believe that we are capable of playing a fictional role, whereby we exaggerate our historical suffering for favor; we hide our control behind a fiction of powerlessness; and we do, indeed, dominate the world.

In the current world, the factual Jew is discredited and the

fictional Jew becomes the dominant perception, and the killers become the authors of our fate.

Jews are told that we don't count as a minority — despite chants of “Jews will not replace us” and overwhelming evidence to the contrary — and told in Hollywood and elsewhere that our stories are no longer worth telling — that they will be told about us, told purposefully to ruin all that we have achieved, and to minimize all we have helped. It's just another version of the fictional Jew, but in today's world, that fiction is still being accepted as truth, perhaps more vigorously than ever. (Algemeiner Nov 21)

*The writer is the Executive Director of Artists 4 Israel.*

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### **A Tale of Two Cities: Dubai, Ramallah and their Views on**

By David M. Weinberg

**DUBAI:** Emirati Crown Prince Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed this week personally visited the Israeli pavilion at the Dubai Air Show and was briefed by Israel Aerospace Industries and other military tech representatives. IAI won a contract to convert four B777-300ER passenger aircraft into cargo planes for Emirates Airline.

The commander of the Israeli Air Force, Maj.-Gen. Amikam Norkin, visited the UAE too, attending the Dubai International Air Chiefs Conference and the air show. This follows the visit from the commander of UAE's air force, Maj.-Gen. Ibrahim Nasser Mohammed al-Alawi, to the Blue Flag international exercise held in Israel two weeks ago.

Also this month, Israel for the first time took part in a joint Red Sea naval drill together with the US, UAE and Bahrain. The historic joint exercise, held under the auspices of the US Fifth Fleet (which is headquartered in Bahrain), occurred as Iran held a major war exercise near the Strait of Hormuz, a naval choke point through which passes some 20% of the world's oil. Israeli navy officers met with their Bahraini, Emirati and American counterparts onboard the same ships.

Concurrently, senior Israeli and the Emirati officials began negotiations on a free-trade agreement. Trade between Israel and the UAE already has exceeded \$500 million, with venture capitalists from the Gulf scouting out joint investment opportunities in cybersecurity, fintech, agritech, food security, educational technology and healthcare. Trade is expected to double this year and hit over \$3 billion within three to five years. The two countries have signed 25 agreements across 15 sectors.

Overall, the value of acquisitions of Israeli start-ups and companies in 2021 thus far has reached \$9.5b. from 86 deals, nearly double the value of acquisitions in 2020 when the world was hit by the COVID-19 pandemic, and up nearly 25% from 2019.

Moving beyond the Arabian Gulf, Israel and Jordan signed an agreement this week to enhance cooperation in the areas of energy and water; an agreement mediated by US Special Envoy for Climate John Kerry, Emirati Climate Change Envoy Sultan Al Jaber, and “EcoPeace Middle East” activists. Israel will examine the construction of a designated desalination plant to export more water to Jordan at full price, and Jordan will consider building a new solar field in the desert in Jordan to export clean energy to Israel.

Next week, Defense Minister Benny Gantz will visit Morocco and sign a defense accord between the two countries. Foreign Minister Yair Lapid visited Morocco in August.

Finally, a group of 15 Republican American Jewish leaders paid a visit to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to try to advance normalization between Riyadh and Jerusalem. They were received by top Saudi princes and officials.

This is the new Middle East blessedly created by the “Abraham Accords.” Unfortunately, it is not a “tale of two cities.” The peace dynamic runs from Jerusalem all the way to far away Dubai (and Manama and Rabat, etc.), but it does not extend from Jerusalem to nearby Ramallah.

**RAMALLAH:** The Palestinian Authority's highest religious authority, Grand Mufti Muhammad Hussein, assured PA television viewers that the destruction of Israel, and the “liberation” of Jerusalem and “its return to Islam,” is only a matter of time. That same Grand Mufti issued a fatwa forbidding Muslims who come via the UAE to pray at al-Aqsa Mosque on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem.

Then PA TV broadcast a filler between programs which spoke of the fact that “history has never let the colonialist remain, and the occupiers have always left in the end. One day they [the Jews], too, will return to where they came from.”

A magazine published by Fatah's youth movement and distributed in Pa schools called Waed regularly demonizes Israel and incites to violence (according to Palestinian Media Watch report released this week). It gushes about “the giant Israeli murder machine” and “the Israeli monster,” and accuses Israel of behaving like Nazis. Palestinians have a “right to wage an armed struggle to take back its stolen homeland,” according to this official propaganda organ.

Archaeological evidence of Jewish history in the Land of Israel is presented by Waed as Palestinian artifacts, such as a coin with ancient Hebrew script on it being called ancient Palestinian currency. Israelis are called “foreigners who came from all ends of the earth... who did not know Palestine and did not live in it – neither them nor their fathers and forefathers,” as well as “invading Jews.”

Thus, it is no surprise that PA President Mahmoud Abbas gives one rambling, semi-coherent speech after another where he calls Israel “brutal” and “colonial,” accuses it of “ethnic cleansing” and “extrajudicial executions,” and rages wildly about “racist gangs of settlers.” He libels Israel as possessing “a culture of racism, incitement and hatred, and rants dangerously about non-existent Israeli “aggression and provocations against the Holy al-Aqsa Mosque and Christian sanctuaries in Jerusalem.”

He pledges fealty to the PA's “pay-for-slay” policy, the monthly payments to terrorists in prison and the families of terrorists killed while carrying-out acts of violent terror against Israel. (The stipend rises with the terrorists' prison sentences; they get paid more if they kill, rather than maim, their victims.)

All along, Abbas swears that he will “never” forgo the so-called right of return to Israel of Palestinian refugees, “never” accept Israeli security control of the Jordan Valley, “never” allow Jews to live in Judea, “never” accept Israeli sovereignty in any part of the Old City of Jerusalem and “never” recognize Israel as the national state of the Jewish People.

He leaves no room for real negotiation while engaging in wholesale denial of Jewish national rights in the Holy Land, including the repeated introduction of international resolutions that explicitly dismiss Jewish history in Jerusalem and Zion.

In fact, PA-controlled newspapers and social media accounts regularly sermonize about transience and permanence, calling Israelis abiroun (transient) and Palestinians bakoun (those who remain). The message is clear: Eventually, Israel will be broken.

Abbas is obstructionist in every way, leading to his marginalization. He has betrayed everyone: Palestinians, who were supposed to enjoy democratic self-rule and good governance; Israel, which was supposed to get a peace partner; and the Arab world, which was to be freed of debilitating conflict with Israel in favor of mutually beneficial cooperation in security, economic and humanitarian matters.

And yet, despite Abbas's sabotage and obstructionism, the Bennett-Lapid government this week asked the international community to increase investment in the West Bank and even in Hamas-controlled Gaza – for the betterment of Palestinians and to help build stability for both Palestinians and Israelis.

At the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for funding to the PA meeting in Oslo (how woefully fitting!), Regional Cooperation Minister Esawi Frej (Meretz) urged the PA to take advantage of economic benefits offered through the Abraham Accords. He also presented several initiatives that could fill the PA coffers, including an electronic VAT system that would ease custom collections. This could save Ramallah NIS 100 million a year.

Alas, PA Prime Minister Mohammed Shtayyeh angrily rejected all such forms of cooperation with Israel, instead regurgitating libels against Israel; essentially vowing everlasting war against the “apartheid” Jewish state. Unlike Frej, he was incapable of talking about coexistence, compromise, and cooperation.

As a result, Abbas and Shtayyeh are missing the opportunity of their lifetimes to lift Palestinians from the depths of impoverished self-pity and political retardation to the heights of enlightened self-rule and material advancement.

In short, the discourse about Israel in Dubai and Ramallah couldn't be more different: cooperation versus confrontation, celebration versus demonization. I'm just saying. How very sad. (Jerusalem Post Nov 18)

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