



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*

murder Jews and steal
Israeli land.

More astonishing
still, the BBC totally omitted the
reason for the terrorist upsurge in
Jenin and the disputed territories:
that Iran is running the terrorist
gangs there to further its aim of
wiping Israel off the map. In

Commentary...

The Malevolent Reporting on Israel's Jenin Operation

By Melanie Phillips

Among the media's customary Israel-bashers, reporting on Israel's military operation this week against terrorist enclaves in the city of Jenin was predictably atrocious.

Jenin had become a hub of deadly terrorism, responsible for the murder of 31 Israelis in 2022 and 24 so far this year. Almost half the inhabitants of Jenin belong to Hamas or Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ). In 2023, more than 50 shooting attacks emanated from Jenin. Recently, two rockets were launched from there towards Israel.

During the two-day operation, the IDF uncovered bomb-making laboratories, a homemade rocket launcher, explosives, weapons and military gear.

Yet The New York Times saluted Palestinian terrorism as "an ethos of defiance" and described Jenin admiringly as having "a long legacy as a bastion of armed struggle." Other media outlets misrepresented Israel's response to murderous terrorism as wanton aggression. They did so through systematic decontextualization, having largely ignored the growing toll of Israeli terrorist victims and the attacks that Israeli security forces thwart almost daily.

The day after the launch of the IDF operation, a car-ramming and stabbing attack took place in Tel Aviv in which at least nine people were injured and a pregnant woman lost her baby.

The usual suspects in the media instantly misrepresented this as an all-too predictable "revenge" attack in a dismal cycle of violence. But there is no "cycle of violence." There are unending attempts to murder Israelis and there is the Israeli attempt to deter further attacks.

Moreover, there is a fundamental difference between the Palestinians' deliberate attempts to murder Israeli civilians and the enormous care the IDF takes to avoid civilian deaths.

The IDF reported that all 12 of the Palestinians killed in the Jenin operation were combatants. In such a densely populated area, where terrorist caches and operation rooms are deliberately situated next to schools and hospitals, causing no civilian deaths in such an intense raid was an extraordinary achievement.

Not only was this given no credit by the media, but the entire event was framed in the most distorted and malevolent way. The leading offender in this—and the most important on account of its unique global reach and reputation for trustworthiness—was the BBC.

In an interview with former Israeli Prime Minister Naftali Bennett, BBC anchor Anjana Gadgil said, "The Israeli military are calling this a 'military operation,' but we now know that young people are being killed, four of them under 18. Is that really what the military set out to do?"

Bennett replied robustly that all the Palestinians killed were terrorists. To which Gadgil said, "Terrorists, but children. The Israeli forces are happy to kill children."

After receiving several complaints, the BBC apologized, saying, "The language used in this line of questioning was not phrased well and was inappropriate."

While any BBC apology is rare, this was wholly inadequate for such a malicious incident. The BBC's reporting on Israel and the Palestinians is not only consistently distorted but actively promotes hatred of Israel and the Jews who support it.

The BBC's general reporting on the Jenin operation parroted the outlet's standard narrative of oppressed and deprived Palestinians fighting hopelessly against Israel in an endless cycle of attack and retaliation. It failed to mention the century-old Arab war of extermination against Israel, in which the Palestinians have refused repeated offers of a state of their own and instead redoubled their murderous attacks. It failed to mention the daily Palestinian Authority propaganda onslaught that demonizes the entire Jewish people and instructs Palestinian children that their highest calling should be to

2021, a U.S. State Department report estimated that Tehran provides up to \$100 million annually in combined support to Hamas and PIJ.

A senior PIJ delegation, headed by its secretary-general, Ziyad al-Nakhleh, recently visited Tehran, where they discussed with Iranian leaders how to escalate the fight against Israel. Three months ago, Nakhleh said, "The weapons that the Palestinians use for fighting come from Iran—the Iranians either pay for these weapons or provide them." With Iran's assistance, he said, the PIJ had formed "combat battalions in all Palestinian cities in the West Bank."

Israel is now encircled by Iran. An estimated 180,000 Hezbollah rockets are pointed at Israel from Lebanon. Iran is backing missile and other terrorist attacks on Israel by Hamas and PIJ in Gaza.

Now it has set up a similar terrorist infrastructure in the disputed territories, with Ben Gurion Airport and central Israel potentially within missile range. It is simply staggering that the BBC and the rest of the liberal media have made no mention of this key development. The reason is that it doesn't fit their narrative of Israeli oppression and Palestinian "resistance."

That's why the demonization of the Jewish people pumped out by the P.A. is resolutely ignored. That's why the Palestinian aim to destroy Israel is denied. As the anchor of a BBC TV politics show said to me when I appeared on it this week, such things were just "propaganda" of the kind pumped out by "both sides."

This skewing of the entire narrative is more momentous than most people realize. The word "Nazi" has become so badly misused to demonize any opponent of the left that it's been robbed of much of its actual meaning. But in the case of the Middle East, it's not a vacuous insult. It's no exaggeration to view the Arab and Muslim war against Israel as a posthumous Nazi front.

In recent years, a group of scholars has been steadily uncovering the depth of the alliance between the Arabs of Mandatory Palestine and the Nazi leadership.

The German political scientist Matthias Kuentzel has argued that the Nazi Party intended to turn Muslims against Jews and Zionism.

Now Kuentzel writes in the journal *Fathom* that his new book, *Nazism, Islamic Antisemitism and the Middle East*, sets out what's known about the pamphlet *Islam and Judaism*, which was first published in 1937 by the director of the Palestinian-Arab Bureau of Information in Cairo. The author is believed to have had many contacts with Nazi agents. During the Second World War, his pamphlet was printed and distributed in large numbers by German forces. Kuentzel describes it as a shocking text that uses religion to incite Jew-hatred. He writes, "It contradicts the widespread assumption that Islamic antisemitism developed as a response to alleged Israeli misdeeds. It was not the behavior of the Zionists that prompted the publication of this hostile text, but rather the very first attempt to implement a two-state solution for Palestine. This fact suggests that Jew-hatred was a cause, not a consequence of the crises in the Middle East conflict."

Anyone looking at today's Palestinian propaganda can identify its Nazi heritage of images and tropes. That's because the Palestinian cause is a latter-day version of the Nazi onslaught against the Jews.

In the West, this does more than merely conflict with the narrative about the Middle East promoted by the BBC, The New York Times and the liberal intelligentsia. The West doesn't want to hear about the Holocaust. It doesn't want to hear about antisemitism. It tells itself the Jews exaggerate them for their own ends.

This is why the truth about the Palestinian war of extermination is never acknowledged. This is why the Iranian pincer movement against Israel is never reported.

It's because much of the West believes what antisemites have always told themselves: That the Jews are responsible for their own destruction. That terrible thinking is what we've heard amplified once again in this week's reporting of the events in Jenin. (JNS Jul 6)

Outrageous Jenin Conspiracy Theory Peddled by Ex-State Department Official By Stephen M. Flatow

A prominent former U.S. State Department official claims that Israel's action in Jenin is secretly motivated by the government's internal machinations over judicial reform. And believe it or not, CNN just gave him an international platform to spread this conspiracy-mongering nonsense.

The ex-official, Aaron David Miller, made his outlandish claim on the July 4 edition of "CNN This Morning." It was not an off-the-cuff remark; the interviewer did not even ask him whether he thought Israel had some secret motive for its action. Instead, Miller went out of his way to launch into an explanation of his bizarre conspiracy theory.

According to Miller, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has been "blocked" in his efforts at judicial reform, "and because he's blocked, he's rewarding the more extreme ministers within his own government." And the "reward" is military action.

"I think the Israeli Defense Forces did not want to launch an operation that was this large," Miller declared. "I think in large part, politics also colored the breadth and depth of what the Israelis are doing in Jenin."

I find it difficult to believe that a 24-year veteran State Department official—one who is known for his harsh criticism of Israel and sympathy for the Palestinian cause—has access to highly classified information about what Israeli Army leaders privately think. Miller is probably one of the last people an Israeli Army officer would confide in.

So, allow me to suggest three much more plausible reasons for Israel's military action in Jenin, reasons that have everything to do with the facts on the ground and nothing to do with domestic Israeli politics.

Jenin is overflowing with terrorist groups and weapons depots. Within the first hours of the Jenin operation, Israeli forces uncovered two bomb factories, captured numerous terrorists, and seized large quantities of weapons—something the Palestinian Authority security forces have never done.

In recent months, every time Israeli soldiers or police entered Jenin in pursuit of fugitive terrorists, they were assaulted by snipers and bomb-throwers. Clearly, Israel's individual arrest actions are insufficient to address the broader problem.

Israel's leaders today face the same dilemma every Israeli government has faced: whether to allow Jenin terrorists to murder Jews and then respond, or to pre-empt the murders by taking the initiative. I wonder if Miller would recommend letting the terrorists attack first, if those attacks were taking place in his own neighborhood.

Miller was so wrapped up in his conspiracy-mongering that he didn't seem to realize how some of the other statements he made on CNN directly contradicted his theory.

Earlier in the interview, Miller was making the usual excuses for the Palestinian Authority's refusal to combat terrorism. Instead of demanding that the P.A. fulfill its Oslo obligations to arrest, disarm, and extradite terrorists, Miller declared that the P.A. "is simply unable to assume responsibility, particular in the northern West Bank."

Well, if the P.A. is not assuming responsibility for stopping the terrorists, isn't that ample reason for the Israelis to do so? There's no need to come up with convoluted conspiracy theories when the reason for action is as plain as day: The P.A. won't do the job—as even Aaron Miller admits—so, of course, the Israelis have to. It has nothing to do with judicial reform or anything else.

Thirteen years ago, Miller made a public admission that should have disqualified him from ever offering advice to Israel again. In a 2010 op-ed in *The Washington Post*, Miller revealed that he was the architect of the plan to have Yasser Arafat visit the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in 1998 in order to help Arafat improve his public image.

In the article, Miller acknowledged that his plan would have meant "appropriating the memory" of the Holocaust for narrow political purposes, and therefore was "one of the dumbest ideas in the annals of U.S. foreign policy."

Yet here he is, 13 years later, berating Israel on CNN. I wonder how many years it will take before Miller looks back and admits that his conspiracy theory about Jenin likewise was "one of the dumbest ideas" in the history of foreign-policy pontificating. (JNS Jul 5)

The PA is No Longer Viable By Jason Shvili

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu says that Israel needs the Palestinian Authority. Sorry, Mr. Prime Minister, but I respectfully disagree. And I don't disagree with you too often.

The P.A. is an epic failure. It doesn't work for the Palestinians and it definitely doesn't work for Israel. The P.A. was created by the Oslo Accords as an interim authority for the Palestinian autonomous areas established by the agreements. Many assumed an independent Palestinian state would eventually replace it, even though the Oslo Accords never guaranteed statehood to the Palestinians.

Indeed, if anyone wants proof of why the Palestinians cannot be allowed to have a state of their own in the foreseeable future, they need look no further than the P.A.

For one thing, the P.A. can't even control the territory under its jurisdiction. In 2007, it lost control of the Gaza Strip to Hamas. Now, it is rapidly losing control of its territory in Samaria. Jenin and Nablus, the two largest cities in Samaria under P.A. control, are being taken over by terrorists. New terrorist groups like Lion's Den and Al-Ayyash have emerged to challenge the P.A.'s authority. By the P.A.'s own admission, the Iranians have already established a foothold in their territory—a development that is extremely dangerous for Israel.

Crumbling P.A. control in Samaria has led to increased terrorist attacks like the recent one near the Israeli community of Eli. The P.A.'s failure to control its territory has forced Israel to make increasingly frequent raids into P.A. territory in order to try and root out the terrorists taking refuge there. The current security situation is untenable, which is one of the reasons the P.A. has to go.

Another reason is that the P.A. is horribly managed. Corruption is rampant. P.A. employees are not even paid their full wages, although P.A. chief Mahmoud Abbas still finds plenty of money to pay terrorists and their families very generous monthly salaries for killing Jews. Abbas has gone on record saying, "We will neither reduce nor prevent [payment] of allowances to the families of martyrs, prisoners, and released prisoners, as some seek, and if we had only a single penny left, we would pay it to families of the martyrs and prisoners."

There is no accountability in the P.A. There have been no elections since 2006. Abbas is now in the 19th year of his four-year term. The Palestinian Legislative Council, which was last elected in 2006, was dissolved in 2018, and Abbas has ruled by presidential decree ever since. The P.A. strongly resembles other Arab dictatorships, with severe restrictions on freedom of expression and freedom of the press. There is arbitrary arrest, torture, enforced disappearances and pretty much everything else typical of those dictatorships. In a recent poll, 80% of Palestinians said they wanted Abbas to resign. In March, a poll found that 52% of Palestinians thought it would be a good thing if the P.A. collapsed. Even the Palestinians want to get rid of the P.A.

Israelis shouldn't want the P.A. to endure either. Some say that the P.A.'s security coordination with Israel is vital for stopping terrorism. But clearly, it hasn't worked very well, as Israelis experience an average of 5,000 terrorist attacks per year.

Moreover, the Palestine Center for Strategic Studies recently released statistics showing that about two-thirds of the terrorists who have died in the recent wave of terrorism in Judea and Samaria are from Abbas's Fatah party and most of them were members of the P.A.'s security forces. So, if most of the recent terrorism that Israelis have had to suffer from comes from Abbas's P.A., why should Israel allow the PA to continue to exist?

Israel should replace the P.A. and take complete control of its territory so that terrorists in Judea and Samaria have no place to take refuge. Once Israel has done this, the Israeli government should immediately set about building a new Palestinian authority from the ground up, just as the Allies rebuilt Germany after deposing the Nazis.

One of the first things Israel should do is revamp the Palestinian education system, which now brainwashes Palestinian children to hate and murder innocent Jews. Palestinians, young and old, need to be taught to live in peace with their Jewish neighbors and accept the existence of the State of Israel. Otherwise, there will never be peace.

It will very likely take a long time, but once the Palestinians learn to live in peace with their Jewish neighbors and stop committing acts of terrorism against them, they can gradually be given more autonomy. I stress the word "gradual" because Israel must never again make the same mistake it did when it signed the Oslo Accords and gave the Palestinians far more autonomy than they were ready for. (Israel Hayom Jul 2)

Jenin Operation was Essential But did not Produce Strategic Change By Meir Ben Shabbat

The IDF's highly professional and critical operation in Jenin was an unavoidable eventuality. Though it should set back the ongoing process of transplanting to northern Samaria the modus operandi of the terror groups in the Gaza Strip, it will not be sufficient to stop it.

The trend of escalation in shootings and bombings in the sector, in addition to the recent (failed) launching of rockets at the Jewish communities on the nearby Gilboa mountain range, has clearly underscored the significance of the processes being adopted by local terrorist organizations, leaving the IDF with no other choice than to engage in action in the heart of Jenin. Israel cannot allow the development in Judea and Samaria of a similar reality to that which has taken hold in the Gaza Strip.

Jenin has a history of intense violence. This is an area that is well and truly a geographical, political and socio-economic periphery. The central government has always had an extremely loose grip over Jenin. This was the case way back in the 1930s during the British Mandate when the British police forces killed Izz ad-Din al-Qassam near the village of Yabdi in this sector. Al-Qassam's name subsequently became a source of inspiration and a symbol of resistance for Hamas terrorist cells.

During the Second Intifada, this area came to be renowned as a stronghold of Palestinian resistance. The fierce battle in the Jenin refugee camp is considered to be one of the most painful incidents of "Operation Defensive Shield," during which the IDF forces incurred heavy losses. Just like today, then, too, strong cooperation among the various groups in the refugee camp was a salient point, together with the use of improvised explosive devices and booby traps, and the cynical exploitation of the local civilian population and facilities.

The ethos of resistance associated with Jenin soon became a symbol for the terrorist organizations, providing inspiration for Palestinian terrorists from all over.

Twenty years after "Defensive Shield," this area has once again been established as a stronghold of terrorism in Samaria and a focal point for exporting terrorism across Judea and Samaria, and into the heart of Israel, too. The objective of the IDF operation was to strike a blow at the underlying terrorist networks there, to arrest or kill terrorists and their supporters, to capture weapons, to expose and destroy the workshops used to manufacture arms, and to reverse or at least curb the process of terrorist organizations taking root there and bolstering their military capabilities.

The key objective of the defense establishment is to cause maximum damage to the terrorist infrastructure at minimum risk to our forces, and while avoiding any spillover of the violence into additional fronts, not to mention, of course, damage mitigation with regard to criticism on the diplomatic front.

Having said that, the IDF must be aware that with all due respect to the importance of these considerations, the prime consideration is that of the safety of our forces. An additional challenge facing the defense establishment, as we have seen, is of course to monitor and counter any attempts to carry out revenge attacks elsewhere. The aim to preserve and maintain the daily routine in those areas not in the immediate combat zone, including the entry of Palestinians into Israel for work, clearly increases the risk of lone-wolf attacks inspired by the events in Jenin, as we witnessed in Tel Aviv on Tuesday.

Consequently, the Israel Security Agency, or Shin Bet, will have to be on the alert and closely monitor the situation vis-à-vis Israeli Arabs and Palestinians (especially from northern Samaria), who have settled down in Israel as part of the process of family unification.

Ultimately, however, the big question pertaining to this operation still remains related to its underlying political-diplomatic purpose: What will happen now in Jenin, following the end of this operation? Now that the operation has come to an end, control over the area is to be handed back over to the P.A. security forces.

Will the P.A. adopt a more proactive approach in order to preserve the new situation? The simple two-word answer to this question is "highly unlikely." The fact that the P.A. security forces even allow the IDF to engage in such activity is considered by much of the local population to be an act of treason. It's safe to assume that Hamas and the PIJ will continue to chide it for this, ramping up animosity against it. In such a state of affairs, it is far from certain that the P.A. will elect to engage in any activity to uproot the remains of terrorist activity there.

It will come as no surprise when we have to continue to do this

ourselves.

If we add to this the inbuilt weaknesses of the P.A. (some of which have been a contributing factor to the current situation in Jenin) and the impact of the ongoing succession battles, as various rivals look to replace the aging Abbas, it is extremely difficult to be the least bit optimistic as to the chances of the Palestinian security forces preserving the IDF's achievements during the recent operation.

The most plausible option is that, even in the aftermath of "Operation Home and Garden," we will have to continue to root out any potential terrorist activity ourselves, in what might be termed "lawn mowing" activity. The contribution of the current operation to that will take the form of somewhat more favorable operational conditions when future operations are undertaken by security forces. (JNS Jul 6)

Palestinian Child Sacrifices By Maurice Hirsch

The Palestinian leadership is furious with the United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres. Launching a lengthy diatribe, the Palestinian Foreign Affairs Ministry declared: "The State of Palestine is appalled by the decision of the secretary-general of the United Nations to, once again, omit the Israeli occupation army and settler militias from the list of children's rights violators."

From their point of view, the Palestinians have every reason to be angry. For decades the Palestinian Authority has been brainwashing Palestinian children. The kids are taught that Jews are the source of all evil in the world, and that Israel was established on stolen Palestinian land. Jews, according to PA teachings, are carriers of diseases, spread drugs among the innocent Palestinians, and constantly desecrate the al-Aqsa mosque – a term they use broadly to describe the entire Temple Mount. Killing Jews, so the kids are taught, is both a moral and religious requirement. In the eyes of the Palestinian leadership, the Palestinian children are just ammunition to achieve political goals.

The parents of the youngsters are also part of the policy. Most of them, like their children, grew up indoctrinated by the PA manifest of Jew-hatred. When their kids are arrested for participating in terror, the parents are proud of their progeny.

Outrageously, if kids are killed while trying to murder Jews, the parents rejoice their children have "achieved martyrdom." Either way, whether the kids are dead or incarcerated, the families benefit from the generous PA "pay-for-slay" terror reward payments.

Brainwashing the Palestinian children to hate, kill, and be killed, as demonstrated by Palestinian Media Watch, is not random. Rather, it is part of a concerted effort to vilify and delegitimize Israel.

Each year, the UN secretary-general publishes a "Children and Armed Conflict" (CAAC) report. For more than 20 years, the secretary-general has included a blacklist of parties to armed conflict who engage in practices that fundamentally breach the rights of children. The egregious practices, referred to as "grave breaches," include: killing or maiming of children; recruitment or use of children by armed forces or armed groups; attacks on schools or hospitals; rape or other sexual violence against children; abduction of children; and the denial of humanitarian access to children. Understanding the propaganda value and the damage that would be caused if Israel were included on the secretary-general's blacklist, the Palestinian leadership is using "all means" to ensure the desired result.

In this wider effort, dead Palestinian children serve two primary goals. First, internally, the dead children are presented as proof that the "occupation intentionally targets" Palestinian children. The death of the children is used to reinforce and flame the virulent Jew-hatred.

Second, the death of the children, all of whom were, of course, innocent bystanders indiscriminately and baselessly targeted by the evil Jews, then become part of the annual statistics that prove that Israel is "killing or maiming" Palestinian children.

As is often the case, missing from this Palestinian narrative is any real context. The dead children were never involved in terror, even when they were killed while carrying out terror attacks, and were never used as human shields to protect terrorists and terror infrastructure. The missiles hidden by the terrorists under schools, and the kids paraded onto the tops of buildings the IDF might target, are just optical illusions and part of the "Zionist conspiracy."

Despite the concerted efforts of the Palestinian leadership; despite sending thousands of kids over the years to die; despite the support of the UN children's organization, UNICEF; and despite the

lobbying of a bunch of other co-conspirators – to date, the Palestinians had failed to dupe the secretary-general into falling for the ploy.

But last year, the Palestinians suddenly saw a ray of hope. In his CAAC report for 2021, released in June 2022, the secretary-general condemned Israel for the number of Palestinian children killed and threatened that “should the situation repeat itself in 2022, without meaningful improvement, Israel should be listed.”

Having been served the challenge on a silver platter, all the Palestinian leadership thought it had to do was simply to offer up as many child sacrifices as possible. The more kids who died, the greater the certainty that Israel would be blacklisted.

But then, in his infinite chutzpah, Guterres refused to accept the Palestinian dictate and actually gave the Jews a chance to explain the deaths. When presented with the real context, Guterres understood that he was being played for a fool in the sinister Palestinian plot, and decided that Israel would not be included on the blacklist. It was this chutzpah, to not follow UN protocol and blindly condemn the Jews, that enraged the Palestinian leadership.

Speaking as Israel’s foreign minister to the National Press Club in Washington, Golda Meir famously noted that “Peace will come when the Arabs will love their children more than they hate us.”

Sadly for the Palestinian children, the Palestinian leadership still hates the Jews more than it loves the Palestinian children. (Jerusalem Post Jul 5)

Surge in Palestinian Terror is a Preview of a Two-State ‘Solution’

By Jonathan S. Tobin

The international reaction to the recent surge in Palestinian terrorism and Israel’s operation in Jenin to take out the gunmen and infrastructure of the groups responsible for the bloodshed has been as predictable as it is depressing. Though the Biden administration has paid lip service to the notion that Israelis have the right to defend themselves, the general tone of press coverage and commentary from Washington and the international community has been the usual mantra about a pointless “cycle of violence” and worries about the declining chances of a two-state solution to the problem.

Critics of Israel’s government—both domestic and foreign—are right to describe the operation in Jenin as not providing a definitive answer to the problem of terrorism. But they are missing the main conclusion that should be drawn. Far from all these troubling events making it even clearer that the world must pressure Israel to accept a Palestinian state next to Israel, the fighting actually provides us with a preview of what such a scheme would mean for both sides.

Jenin, which under the “anybody but Bibi” coalition that led Israel for 18 months in 2021 and 2022 had become a mini-Gaza—a no-go zone for both the Palestinian Authority and Israeli forces. The terrorist stronghold is dominated by Hamas and the radical Palestinian Islamic Jihad, and bolstered by funding from their Iranian ally. Unlike Gaza, Israeli ground forces can still move into Jenin. But the Israel Defense Forces’ operation, which by all accounts was a major tactical success leading to the deaths of terrorists and the degrading of their infrastructure, was still much like other periodic efforts undertaken by the military in Gaza to “mow the grass” in that it provided merely temporary relief.

No one should be under any illusions that the terrorists won’t rebuild or that the P.A.—led by the corrupt Fatah Party and its leader, Mahmoud Abbas—will take it back or suppress the terrorists as they are obligated to do under the Oslo Accords that empowered it. Indeed, Fatah operatives are as supportive of terrorism as their Islamist rivals.

The conclusion to be drawn from this is that if Israel were ever so foolish as to succumb to foreign pressure and grant sovereignty to the Palestinians there, the entire area would become, like Gaza, a terrorist state. It’s true that, at least in principle, two states for two peoples would be the most logical way to end the century-long war against Zionism that the Palestinians have been waging. But the fact that not even the so-called moderates among them, like Abbas, are prepared to recognize the legitimacy of a Jewish state no matter where its borders are drawn and who have repeatedly rejected such a state if it was predicated on those terms means that there is no “solution” to the problem.

The talk about the vicious cycle of attack and counterattack to describe recent events is predominantly rooted in a narrative that places most of the onus for the current state of affairs on Israel’s government. The general assumption is that Prime Minister Benjamin

Netanyahu’s current coalition of right-wing and religious parties is responsible for outraging Palestinian sensibilities by allowing Jews to build more homes in existing towns and villages in Judea and Samaria, which is misleadingly referred to as “expanding West Bank settlements.”

The increase in bloody attacks on Jews in the territories, as well as in Jerusalem, Tel Aviv and other parts of the country the international community recognizes as part of the Jewish state, is most often credited to anger about the continued Jewish presence in those “settlements” or because of some illegal and deplorable reprisal attacks carried out by “settlers” against Arabs.

Yet the depiction of even the most gruesome acts of Arab terrorism as merely an understandable, if deplorable, tit-for-tat scenario in which no one is in the right contributes to the demonization of Israel and its people. Discourse about the conflict remains stuck in a mindset that sees the Palestinians solely as victims, no matter what they do. That is buttressed by the intersectional mindset that sees them as an oppressed people being pushed around by “white” colonial Israel. It’s what enables them to depict, as one BBC host did, an effort to take out a terrorist group as another example of Israelis “being happy to kill children.” And it allows The New York Times to falsely report that Hamas and PIJ are solely protesting the “occupation” of the West Bank, rather than being committed to Israel’s extinction.

Part of this prejudice against Israel and Jewish rights is rooted in antisemitism. But the point here is that rather than enabling an end to the violence, every Israeli withdrawal or concession—whether the Oslo Accords that led to Jenin being a terror stronghold in 2002 as well as today or the 2005 retreat from Gaza—hasn’t encouraged peace or coexistence. It has merely motivated the Palestinians to hold onto to their fantasies about reversing the history of the region and to believe that they still have a chance to eventually succeed in wearing down Israel.

For all of the mistakes he has made in his first 30 months in office, President Joe Biden hasn’t repeated the same one made by all of his recent predecessors by offering his own Middle East peace plan to make a two-state solution happen. Still, the administration’s retreat from its predecessors’ policies aimed at making Palestinians realize that they have lost their war and must accept reality has contributed to the Arab intransigence that makes the current upsurge in violence inevitable.

In particular, Washington’s recent decision to cease scientific and technological cooperation with Israeli institutions in Judea and Samaria like Ariel University does more to fuel violence than building homes for Jews in the region. This embrace of a BDS-style boycott sends a signal to the groups it labels as terrorists and their supporters that they must continue fighting rather than giving up.

Above all, those who deplore both Israeli and Palestinian actions as equally wrong are ignoring the plain evidence that rather than the conflict, making Jenin a place where Israeli forces would be as unable to enter in the future as Gaza would simply replicate the same situation as currently exists in the Strip. Rather than gaining support because of Abbas’s failure to create a state, Hamas and PIJ are on the rise because they promise to keep fighting Israel until it is destroyed. Two states do not correlate into peace. It would simply make Israel’s already difficult security dilemma even more dangerous.

This isn’t something most people want to hear. The implacable nature of the Palestinian refusal to accept Israel is rooted in religious and cultural ideas that are alien to most Americans. And accepting that there is no answer to this terrible problem in sight is something that also runs counter to Jewish millenarian and utopian ideals that envision the arc of history always bending towards progress, justice and peace. Confronting a future in which Israel will always have to be on guard against forces seeking to destroy it and in which American Jews are obligated to support their efforts is a similarly unattractive vision.

Backing terrorism and the commitment to keep rejecting Israel among Palestinians that has been on display in the territories is a reminder that the international and American determination to double down on working for two states is actually contributing to the problem, not helping solve it. Perhaps sometime in the distant future, it might be possible to imagine a situation where Palestinians have undergone a sea change in their political culture, and two states won’t be a prescription for more violence. Until then, it’s a pipe dream that does far more harm than good. (JNS Jul 5)