

Terror in Israel – and in the World

Is "peace" possible under present conditions?

The news brings us daily ever more gruesome stories of the bloodlust of the Palestinians, whose suicide thugs kill and maim hundreds and who lob mortars and missiles into Israeli neighborhoods. Preferred targets of those massacres are children and teenagers. Is "peace" possible with a people who perform and condone such outrageous acts?

What are the facts?

A history of terror: Arab-Muslim terror in Israel has been going on for a very long time. Pogroms have been perpetrated on the Jewish population for almost 100 years, one of the most egregious being the carnage in Hebron in 1929, in which the Arabs killed 129 Jews and grievously wounded and maimed 399, many of them women and children. The current outrages have acquired new bloody dimensions because of the introduction of the "suicide martyrs" and because of the weapons that the Palestinians have been able to smuggle into their territory and those that the Israelis have foolishly provided to them.

Our country has risen in justified outrage and has gone to war to pursue those who have inflicted 4,000 casualties on us. Israel has one-fiftieth of the population of the United States. The about 500 Jews who have been killed by the Palestinians in the past eighteen months corresponds to about 25,000 killed in the United States. Would the American people stand still for that? Of course not! How much forbearance does the world expect before Israel lashes out and inflicts terrible punishment on its tormentors?

These are the same people who have blown up the Israeli embassy in Buenos Aires, the Jewish Community Center in the same city, and the Israeli Embassy in London. Hundreds of people were killed. There can be no question that they were also behind the PanAm flight 103 plane explosion which killed 270 people, mostly Americans; that they were responsible for the blowing up of the Air Force barracks in Saudi Arabia, in which 19 Air Force personnel died; and in literally hundreds of other acts of terror. All of these terror acts are specifically authorized by Yassir Arafat. That is a man who until not too long ago was classified as an international terrorist by the U.S. State Department. That he has received the Nobel Peace Prize must be considered a cosmic joke.

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Any pretext suffices. The basic understanding with Arafat and his Palestinian Arabs was that terror and mayhem would stop after the signing of the Oslo Agreement. That has not happened. On the contrary, more Jews have been killed by terror attacks since the famous handshake between the late Prime Minister Yitzchak Rabin and Yassir Arafat than in any comparable period before it. Arafat and the "Palestinian Authority" do nothing to stop this slaughter; on the contrary, they actively encourage their followers to use violence to accomplish their ends. In blood-curdling speeches, Arafat and his henchman goad their followers into violence, urging them to "liberate Palestine by jihad (holy war) with blood and with fire."

The current rampage was supposedly triggered by Mr. Sharon's visit to the Temple Mount. And why shouldn't he visit the Temple Mount? It's in Israel, isn't it? The Arabs-Muslims can visit any place in Israel, without anybody standing in their way. Were it not for that freedom, there would be no suicide bombers. The dreadful acts of slaughter are committed because of the undying hatred of the Jews, a hatred that permeates the Muslim world. The purpose is to kill and maim as many Jews as possible.

And that is the nub of the problem. Only the most naïve can any longer believe that the Palestinian Arabs (or the rest of the Arab-Muslim world) can be placated by the Israelis bringing further "sacrifices for peace." The Arabs will not be satisfied with any piece of land. Even if the Israeli Jews were prepared to hand over the entire land of Israel to the Arabs and only retain perhaps, the enclave of Tel Aviv, it would not suffice. The elimination of any Jewish vestige is the inalterable goal.

The presence of Jews in the Middle East is an unacceptable thorn in the side of the Arabs – an insult that must be avenged and eliminated. But, of course, no peace can come about until that attitude and mindset change. And that may take a very long time.

Regardless of what other proposals may be put on the table by well-meaning (and sometimes not so well-meaning) third parties, the Palestinians having their own governance and living side by side with Israel in harmony and co-prosperity is simply not possible at the present time. Former prime minister Ehud Barak, under the insistent pressure of former president Clinton, offered breathtaking concessions to the Palestinians, concessions that would have fulfilled virtually all of their stated aspirations, including even the de facto partition of Jerusalem. But Mr. Arafat haughtily rejected them and unleashed his bloody intifada instead. Israel should respond harshly to any further provocations and should not enter into any further negotiations with the Palestine Authority and with Yassir Arafat, because he is not a nation builder but a blood-stained terrorist, the perfect counterpart to Osama bin Laden. Nobody, not the United States, nor any other country, nor the United Nations should be the arbiter of Israel's destiny. Only Israel should determine whether its national rights and its security requirements are being honored and fulfilled. Only then, and not before, should Israel be prepared to continue any negotiations with the Palestinian Arabs and, hopefully, not with Arafat, but with a more enlightened successor.

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