

FLAME HOTLINE

Facts & Logic About the Middle East

September 18, 2018



The Dangerous "Palestinian Narrative" Threatens Peace for All

Dear Friend of FLAME:

I think we all have been in discussions/debates about the Middle East with family members, colleagues and friends who insist that we must accord value to the "Palestinian narrative." This demand is often heard on college campuses and in newspapers.

Usually, the demand is that this narrative must be balanced with the "Israeli narrative." Thus, these "narratives" must be accorded equal weight and respect, as we wrestle with the terrible issues in the Middle East.

But this equal weighting of "narratives" is post-modern psycho-babble and utter nonsense. More to the point, the "Palestinian narrative" makes any negotiated peace impossible, and keeps Palestinian Arabs mired in a false past that eliminates any chance for a better future.

As Woody Allen might have put it: if your spouse thinks s/he is a chicken, do you have to go out every day to collect the eggs?

And every day, the world wakes up to the surprise that there are no Peace Eggs to be found in Israel's neighborhood.

This Palestinian narrative destroys any notion of independent agency and control for the Palestinian Arabs themselves. Among other things, it creates a fictional past for Palestine as a historical Arab homeland, pre-dating any claims of the Jewish people. It creates a false picture of a long-time identifiable Palestinian polity that is somehow set apart from their Arab brethren in the Levant.

Further, it perpetuates the notion of stateless Palestinians when, in fact, there never was a Palestinian state (only a province of various

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**YOU DESERVE TO KNOW THE TRUTH...
Peace with Palestinian Dictators?**

Governments of the Palestinians' two ruling dictatorships are in shambles—and at war with each other. How can Israel possibly achieve peace with them at this time?

Neither the Palestinian Authority in Judea Samaria (the West Bank) nor the Islamic State group Hamas in Gaza has held elections since 2006, and the two factions are battling one another in a vicious power struggle. Both refuse to recognize the Jewish state or accept Israeli offers of peace.

What are the facts?

While Israel, with the United States, made generous land-for-peace offers to the Palestinians in 2001 and 2008—and left the entire Gaza Strip to the Arabs in 2005—neither of the two major Palestinian groups has accepted Israeli offers... or even the right to exist. What's more, both the Palestinian Authority and Hamas governments are in chronic, expanding practice renouncing a better tomorrow was. Until these warring Arab factions reconcile—and accept Israel as their neighbor—it's impossible to imagine a peace agreement among them.

Background: Palestinian Movement Following Israel's repudiation of five attacking Arab armies in 1967, Arab in Palestine formed the autonomous Palestine Liberation Organization, under Egyptian Yasser Arafat. Arafat launched the First Intifada, a terrorist guerrilla effort against Israel, which ended with the 1993 Oslo Peace Accords. Under these accords, the Palestinian Authority (PA) would rule over Arab parts of Gaza and Judea Samaria, while Israel would control the remaining parts until the Israeli-Arab conflict was resolved through peace negotiations. After Israel's complete withdrawal from Gaza, terror group Hamas was Palestinian legislative elections in 2006, then seized control of Gaza from the PA. Since 2007, Hamas has ruled Gaza as an Islamic Emirate, and the PA and Hamas remain tense enemies to this day.

The Palestinian Authority: Secular Dictatorship. While governed in Muslim values, the Palestinian Authority has always been secular. Following Arafat's death in 2004, Mahmoud Abbas was elected president of the PA for a five-year term, yet he held the grip of power ever since. Today's Palestinian Authority is rife with corruption, its economy almost entirely bankrupt, it suffers from unemployment of 20%, and without foreign subsidies it would collapse. Despite its charter under the Oslo Agreement to make peace with Israel, the PA has remained dedicated to erasing all of the Holy Land from Jewish control. It has never recognized Israel as a Jewish homeland and has demanded that all Arab refugees from Israel's War of Independence in 1948—as well as some five million non-refugees of those refugees—be "returned" to Israel, thus destroying the Jewish state demographically by Israel—under the sponsorship of President Bill Clinton in 2001 and George W. Bush in 2008—claim the Palestinians about 90% of Judea-Samaria, as well as a significant section Jerusalem, in return for peace.

In order to bring an Israel-Palestinian peace, all parties must sincerely want it and be capable of carrying out a plan for reconciliation. It's clear that today's Palestinian dictatorships lack the ability to make peace among themselves, humbly govern their people or commit to peace with Israel. While Israelis pray for peace, Palestinian leaders still pray for Israel's destruction.

For peace, Yasser Arafat turned down the last offers, and Mahmoud Abbas rejected the second. Since 2014, Abbas has refused to negotiate with Israel.

Hamas: Islamist Dictatorship. An offshoot of Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood—which also sponsored al-Qaeda in Bosnia as a Freshman Jihadist organization. Its charter calls for the conquest of all Palestine—including present-day Israel—and the establishment of an Islamic state. Because of Hamas' brutal use of suicide bombings and rocket attacks on Jewish civilian populations, it has been declared a terrorist organization by the U.S. State Department and the European Union. While Hamas was power after Palestinian parliamentary elections in 2006, it has refused to reject violence, and in fact took violent control of Gaza. Today Hamas rules Gaza harshly, according to strict Sharia law. Hamas has benefited from war against Israel, most recently in 2014. Because of Hamas' intelligence, Gaza is virtually under no-fire from Egypt, Israel and the Palestinian Authority. While the PA and Hamas have made strong attempts at reconciliation, all have failed, and relations between them remain poisonous. The people of Gaza suffer an unemployment rate of 40%, just five hours of electricity daily and a dysfunctional economy. Hamas routinely invades Israel's territorial support from land and Turkey, much of which is used to sustain the terror group's war against Israel.

It is not a surprise an Israel-Palestinian peace, all parties must sincerely want it and be capable of carrying out a plan for reconciliation. It's clear that today's Palestinian dictatorships lack the ability to make peace among themselves, humbly govern their people or commit to peace with Israel. While Israelis pray for peace, Palestinian leaders still pray for Israel's destruction.

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IF YOU SUPPORT PUBLISHING FLAME'S BOLD PR MESSAGES, PLEASE HELP US!!

FLAME is the only organization that defends Israel with paid

empires), and when all other peoples living for scores of years in other host countries have been afforded citizenship and opportunities for advancement and social mobility in their new countries.

Instead, the Palestinian narrative demands that Palestinian Arabs wallow as hapless victims in their various host societies—even in societies where they rule themselves! (Think the Palestinian Authority and Hamas-ruled Gaza.)

Narratives are perceptions of reality, subjectively viewed by the narrator (assuming his or her sanity and honesty).

False narratives are those utterly untethered to reality, reflecting a mythical fabrication of events and, usually, with ill-will on the part of the false narrator.

Such is the essence of the "Palestinian narrative." It is unconnected to reality, and reflects only the illusions and delusions of Arab leaders and their officials and spokesmen.

In short, the "Palestinian narrative" is a massive hoax, which we must understand, refute and debunk in order for Israel and its neighbors to take constructive steps toward peace and a better future for all, especially the Palestinian Arabs.

In this week's featured FLAME Hotline article (see below), Dr. Martin Sherman, founder and executive director of the Israel Institute for Strategic Studies, describes the mythology and corrosiveness of the "Palestinian narrative." His points provide pro-Israel advocates with powerful arguments against the poisonous invective of this false narrative.

I hope you'll forward this incisive perspective to friends, family and fellow congregants to help them understand why the Palestinian narrative lacks all validity—and in fact is lethal to the process of formulating realistic and positive solutions to the crucial problems in Israel's neighborhood.

I hope you'll also quickly review the P.S. immediately below, which describes one of FLAME's *hasbarah* campaigns to explore the nature of the Palestinian Arab refugee problem. I hope you agree with and will support this message.

Best regards,

Ken Cohen

Editor, Facts and Logic About the Middle East (FLAME)

editorial hasbarah messages placed in media nationwide every month: The dire threats from Iran, Hamas and Hizbollah, the injustice of BDS, Palestinian anti-Semitism and more. If you support a bold voice that tells the truth about Israel in American media, please donate now.

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**FLAME'S WEEKLY
HOTLINE E-
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FLAME's Hotline e-newsletter keeps you up to date on the most important pro-Israel advocacy issues and features our choice of the week's most informative and thought-provoking article on Israel and the Middle East. If you only subscribe to one pro-Israel news service, make it the FLAME Hotline.

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P.S. FLAME has been publishing messages exposing the false narrative of Palestinian refugees for years now, particularly the world's obsession with it. It's the reason FLAME created the editorial message—"[Who—and How Many—Are the Palestinian Refugees?](#)"—which has run in mainstream magazines and newspapers, including college newspapers, with a combined readership of some 10 million people. In addition, it was sent to every member of the U.S. Congress. If you agree that this kind of public relations effort on Israel's behalf is critical, I urge you to support us. Remember: FLAME's powerful ability to influence public opinion—and U.S. support of Israel—comes from individuals like you, one by one. I hope you'll consider giving a donation now, as you're able—with \$500, \$250, \$100, or even \$18. (Remember, your donation to FLAME is tax deductible.) To donate online, just go to [donate](#) now. Now, more than ever, we need your support to ensure that the American people, the U.S. Congress and President Trump stay focused on the true obstacle to peace, which is the lack of a credible Palestinian peace partner and a world that sees no evil—except in Israel.

As of today, more than 15,000 Israel supporters receive the FLAME Hotline [at no charge](#) every week. If you're not yet a subscriber, won't you join us in receiving these timely updates, so you can more effectively [tell the truth about Israel](#)? Just go to [free subscription](#).

Five Mendacious Palestinian Myths Make One False Narrative

[by Martin Sherman](#), *The Algemeiner*

No consensus exists among political scientists as to an exact definition of "nation" and "nationalism," but there is broad agreement over what [cannot](#) be excluded from such definition. Thus, whatever other details different scholars might wish to include in their preferred definition, there is little disagreement that:

- A "nation" is an identifiably differentiated segment of humanity exhibiting collective desire to exercise political sovereignty in a defined geographical territory; and
- "Nationalism" is the pursuit, by those identifiably differentiated segments of humanity, of the exercise of political sovereignty in a defined territory.

Even a cursory analysis of historical events in this region will reveal

that, in the case of Palestinians-Arabs, neither of these constituent elements exists: Not an identifiably differentiated people, desiring exercise of political sovereignty; nor a defined territory in which that sovereignty is to be exercised.

One need only examine the declarations and documents of Palestinians themselves to verify this , and discover that they have never really conceived of themselves as a discernibly discrete people with a defined homeland.

Accordingly, little effort is required to demonstrate that the Palestinian "narrative"—the ideo-intellectual fuel driving the demands for statehood—is nothing more than a motley mixture of multiple myths, easily identifiable and readily refutable. The inescapable conclusion is—or should be—that the entire edifice of Palestinian national aspirations is a giant political hoax, a massive sleight of political hand to serve a more sinister—and thinly disguised—ulterior motive.

What are the five constituent myths that comprise the noxious concoction of the Palestinian narrative?

The myth of Palestinian homeland

The first—and arguably, the most startling—myth is that of a Palestinian "homeland," now designated as "the West Bank" (Judea-Samaria) and Gaza. For not only did the "Palestinians" never claim this as their historical homeland, they explicitly eschewed any claims to sovereignty over it until well after it fell under Israeli control in 1967.

Thus Article 16 of the original version of the Palestinian National Covenant sets out the alleged desire of the people of Palestine "who look forward to . . . restoring the legitimate situation to Palestine, establishing peace and security in its territory, and enabling its people to exercise national sovereignty..."

However, since the covenant was adopted in 1964, well before Israel "occupied" a square inch of the "West Bank" or Gaza, the question is what is meant by "its territory" in which the Palestinians were "looking forward . . . to exercise national sovereignty"? Significantly, in Article 24, they state specifically what this territory did not include, and where they were not seeking to exercise "national sovereignty," explicitly proclaiming that they do not desire to "exercise any territorial sovereignty over the West Bank in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan . . . [or] the Gaza Strip . . ."

From this we learn two stunning facts: Not only did the "Palestinians" not claim the "West Bank" and Gaza as part of their homeland, but they expressly excluded them from it. Moreover they unequivocally acknowledged that the "West Bank" belonged to

another sovereign entity, the Hashemite Kingdom.

There is, therefore, not the slightest resemblance—indeed not one square inch of overlap—between the territory claimed by the Palestinians as their "homeland" when they first allegedly formulated their national aspirations, and the "homeland" claimed today.

Indeed, the two visions of "homeland" territories are not only inconsistent with each other, but mutually exclusive.

Accordingly it would seem that it is Jewish rule, rather than any "collective historical memory, "that is the determining factor in defining the location of the Palestinian "homeland." This is starkly underlined by the proclamation of Ahmad Shukeiri, Yasser Arafat's predecessor, on the eve of the 1967 Six Day War: "D Day is approaching.

The Arabs have waited 19 years for this and will not flinch from the war of liberation . . . This is a fight for the homeland . . . "

Shukeiri's use of the words "liberation" and "homeland" are revealing. They clearly cannot refer to Judea-Samaria or Gaza, now claimed as the "Palestinian homeland," since these were then under exclusive Arab control.

Indeed, nothing could better vindicate the contention that the concept of a "Palestinian homeland" is a fabricated construct, conjured up to further the Arab quest to eradicate any trace of a sovereign Jewish homeland.

The myth of Palestinian peoplehood

Senior Palestinian leaders have openly admitted—consistently and continually—that Palestinians are not a discrete people, identifiably different from others in the Arab world. For example on March 14, 1977, Farouk Kadoumi, head of the PLO's Political Department, told Newsweek: ". . . Jordanians and Palestinians are considered by the PLO as one people."

This statement parallels almost exactly the oft cited, and ne'er denied, position expressed two weeks later by the former head of the PLO's Military Department and Executive Council member, Zuheir Muhsin, who declared: "There are no differences between Jordanians, Palestinians, Syrians and Lebanese . . . It is only for political reasons that we carefully underline our Palestinian identity . . . (Dutch daily Trouw, March 31, 1977).

It was Jordan's King Hussein who underscored that the emergence of a collective Palestinian identity was merely a ploy to counter Jewish claims to territory considered "Arab." At the Arab League

meeting in Amman in November 1987, he stated: "The appearance of the Palestinian national personality comes as an answer to Israel's claim that Palestine is Jewish."

This necessarily implies that the "Palestinian personality" is devoid of any independent existence, a fictional derivative, fabricated only to counteract Jewish territorial claims.

The myth of Palestinian nationhood

But not only do the Palestinians admit that they are not a discrete sociological entity, i.e. a people, they also concede that as a political unit, i.e. a nation, their demands/ aspirations are neither genuine nor permanent.

Indeed, Zuheir Muhsin candidly confesses: We are all part of one [Arab] nation . . . The founding of a Palestinian state is a new tool in the continuing battle against Israel."

Indeed, the Palestinian-Arabs not only affirm that their national demands are bogus, but are merely a temporary instrumental ruse. In their National Covenant they declare: "The Palestinian people are a part of the Arab Nation . . . [H]owever, they must, at the present stage of their struggle, safeguard their Palestinian identity and develop their consciousness of that identity . . . "

So how are we to avoid concluding that at some later stage there will be no need to preserve their "national identity or develop consciousness thereof? How are we to avoid concluding that Palestinian identity is nothing but a short-term ruse to achieve a political goal: annulling the "illegal 1947 partition of Palestine" (a.k.a. Israel).

After all, what other nation declares that its national identity is merely a temporary ploy to be "safeguarded" and "developed" for the "present stage" alone? Does any other nation view its national identity as so ephemeral and instrumental? The Italians? The Turks? The Japanese? Of course not.

So as King Hussein said: "The appearance of the Palestinian national personality comes as an answer to Israel's claim that Palestine is Jewish." Nothing more.

The myth of Palestinian statelessness

A major theme exploited to evoke great sympathy for the Palestinians' cause—and commensurate wrath at Israel—is that they are a "stateless" people. But this condition of "statelessness" is not a result of Israeli malfeasance, but of Arab malevolence.

For the Palestinians are stateless because the Arabs have either stripped them of citizenship they already had, nor precluded them

from acquiring citizenship they desired.

In the "West Bank" for example, until 1988, all Palestinians—including the "refugees"—held Jordanian citizenship. This was then annulled by King Hussein, after relinquishing his claim to this territory. This abrupt measure was described by Anis Kassim, a prominent Palestinian legal expert, as follows: ". . . more than 1.5 million Palestinians went to bed on 31 July 1988 as Jordanian citizens, and woke up on 1 August 1988 as stateless persons."

But Palestinians have also been prohibited from acquiring citizenship of their countries of residence in the Arab world, where many have lived for over a half-century.

The Arab League has instructed members to deny citizenship to resident Palestinian-Arabs "to avoid dissolution of their identity and protect their right to return to their homeland." Thus, Arab League spokesman Hisham Youssef, in a 2004 Los Angeles Times interview, reiterated that this official policy was meant "to preserve their Palestinian identity"—which was apparently incapable of independent existence without external coercion.

He went on to assert that "if every Palestinian who sought refuge in a certain country was integrated and accommodated into that country, there won't be any reason for them to return to Palestine." Precisely.

The myth of Palestinian refugees

Much has been written elsewhere on the anomaly of the Palestinian refugees. I will, therefore, confine the discussion to two short but edifying references.

While all other refugees on the face of the globe are under the auspices of the UN High Commission for Refugees, the Palestinian refugees have their own unique organization, the UN Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA).

The two organizations have two different definitions of who is a refugee and different mandates as to how they should be treated. These differences have far-reaching consequences, arguably the gravest being that they spectacularly inflate the numbers of Palestinian refugees, from fewer than 50,000 to around 5,000,000.

Thus, in a letter to former UN secretary-general Kofi Annan (May 18, 2002), the late Tom Lantos, ranking Democrat on the US House International Relations Committee, expressed bewildered disapproval at the prevailing situation: "I am frankly baffled as to why, more than 50 years after the founding of the State of Israel, there continues to exist a UN agency focused solely on Palestinian refugees—no other refugee problem in the world has been treated in

this privileged and prolonged manner."

Over a decade later (August 31, 2014), former Labor Knesset member and ardent two-stater Einat Wilf wrote: "If UNRWA operated the same way as the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, which is responsible for all other refugee groups in the world, today there would be only tens of thousands of Palestinian refugees, rather than millions . . . "

Brooklyn Bridge or Palestinian narrative?

So there you have it—or at least part of it. Thus, in light of this overly condensed and admittedly incomplete exposé of lies, distortions and exaggerations of the Palestinian claims, what seems more credible? An offer to buy the Brooklyn Bridge or the Palestinian narrative?

The logo for FLAME, featuring the word "FLAME" in a bold, white, sans-serif font. A small flame icon is positioned above the letter 'A'.

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