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# FLAME HOTLINE

Facts & Logic About the Middle East

February 4, 2020



## Who Cares About Palestinian Rejectionism?

Dear Friend of FLAME:

Last month, President Trump issued his long-awaited “Deal of the Century” Peace Plan for the Middle East. Both Prime Minister Netanyahu and his electoral opponent Gen. (ret) Benny Gantz were at the White House for the announcement. So were a bunch of international diplomats, including three from Arab nations. The Palestinians refused to attend the unveiling of the plan, and firmly rejected it sight-unseen.

The proper question at this point about Palestinian rejectionism ought to be: “Who cares?”

Anyone surveying the history of Israeli-Palestinian relations already knows that the Palestinians’ goal is the eradication of Israel. The difference in the new plan, however, is that the initial major steps in its implementation can be done unilaterally by Israel, even with no Palestinian participation.

Having refused four major peace initiatives in the past 25 years, the Palestinians are well-schooled in rejectionism. Each of those earlier plans—starting with the Clinton initiative in 2000—would have given them a state roughly corresponding to the original 1949 armistice lines from Israel’s War of Independence.

But the Palestinians’ many “unconditional” demands—like the right of return for 5-7 million Arab refugees and their descendants to Israel proper—created built-in excuses for walking away from the table. The new plan explicitly rules out this refugee demand.

This time, the Palestinian leadership didn’t even walk up to the table, having severed all relations with the United States in 2017 over America’s recognition of Jerusalem as the Jewish capital. Similarly, other than some security and bureaucratic coordination with Israel, they have refused all bilateral negotiations with Netanyahu and his government.

But their latest rejectionism could very well do them in, once and for all. In prior negotiations, the U.S. would strong-arm Israel to make concessions to PA President Mahmoud Abbas and his predecessor, Yassir Arafat. The Palestinian

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**Aid to Israel Makes the U.S. Safer**  
 U.S. aid to Israel is really not aid at all. The \$5.8 billion sent annually to Israel is an investment in our own country's security, returning many times its cost.

**What are the facts?**  
 Several American politicians have proposed withholding U.S. aid to Israel unless it allows more to support a Palestinian state with its economy to be based in the West Bank. The West Bank is not part of Israel. It is occupied territory. The West Bank and Gaza are not part of Israel. It is occupied territory. The West Bank and Gaza are not part of Israel. It is occupied territory.

**Linkage of U.S. aid to Israel with a Palestinian state is misguided.**  
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leadership would then pocket those concessions, and use them as the new baseline in future peace negotiations with Israel.

Happily, that half-century-old (losing) diplomatic strategy of Israeli concessions has been abandoned by President Trump. Indeed, the new peace plan specifies a future Palestinian state located in the disputed territories, but rejects the idea that the 1949 armistice lines are relevant to the current day.

The offered Palestinian state—under the new plan—would occupy about 70% of Judea and Samaria (aka The West Bank). The remaining 30% would be annexed by Israel—importantly including the length of the Jordan River Valley, which would at last give Israel a formal, defensible border with the Kingdom of Jordan

The entirely contiguous Palestinian state would be contained inside Israel's borders, and Israel would enforce border control. This is vital, to prevent the nascent demilitarized state from becoming an arms-and-terrorists armory like the Gaza Strip is now.

And, by the way, the new State of Palestine will receive a \$50 billion baby-gift from international donors, including America.

Characteristically, Abbas and Company have rejected any interest in massive benefits for the Palestinian people—including statehood—if Israel also derives benefits from an agreement.

But, as noted above, “*Who cares?*”

An Israeli-American team will draw up the detailed maps of areas to come under Israeli sovereignty in the coming weeks. All Israeli settlements will be included in the annexation, and all Palestinian cities, villages and farms will be set aside for the new Palestinian state. To give the Palestinians time to reconsider and get over their absolute rejectionism, no Israeli construction will take place for four years on the proposed State of Palestine's lands.

The Palestinians—and their allies—can scream all they want to the Security Council, but the United States will veto any and all restraining resolutions targeting Israel.

Arab countries, who once would have thrown a fit over Trump's plan, have actually issued moderate statements, encouraging everyone—including their Palestinian brethren—to explore possibilities under the plan.

Many of these erstwhile fanatical supporters of “the Palestinian Cause” seem to have calibrated their reactions, as they ask “Who cares what the rejectionist Palestinians say, yet again? We need to worry about Iran, our own internal domestic stability, and so many other things.”

The Palestinians have spent decades overplaying their hand—through intransigent negotiating position, violations of pacts and, of course, terror and death. The world seems to be catching on to their lethal game, and we can expect more “*Who cares?*” shrugs as the Trump plan moves into implementation in the coming weeks and months.

As to whether Abbas and his cronies get around to actually creating a State of

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Palestine— although handed to them on a silver platter loaded with gold—a valid response would likewise be “*Who cares?*”

In discussions with friends, families and colleagues, emphasize that Israel’s security is far more assured under the new American plan, and that a new path for the Middle East has been launched that can at last bring peace and stability to that troubled part of the world.

In addition, I hope you’ll also take a minute, while you have this material front and center, to visit FLAME’s lively [new Facebook page](#) and review the P.S. immediately below. It describes FLAME’s new *hasbarah* campaign—outspokenly questioning the validity and wisdom of the so-called two-state solution. Perhaps the Trump proposal can make it more valid and wise.

Best regards,

Ken Cohen

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

P.S. Many politicians in the U.S., as well as in Western Europe, hold steadfastly to the notion of a two-state solution for resolving the Palestinians’ conflict with Israel. However, it’s become clear as stability in the Middle East deteriorates, power balances shift and the Palestinians themselves continue to reject peace initiatives, that a two-state solution may be no solution at all. That’s why FLAME has created a new *hasbarah* message called “**Is a Two-State Solution Still Possible?**” I hope you’ll review this hard-hitting paid editorial, which will run in coming months in the *New York Times* and *Washington Post*. It lays out seven tough questions that must be answered before two states can seriously be considered. This piece will also be sent to all members of Congress, Vice President Pence and President Trump. 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 realistic policies in relation to Israel, the Palestinians and the entire Middle East.

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The logo for FLAME, featuring the word "FLAME" in a bold, white, sans-serif font. The letter "A" is stylized with a flame-like shape above it.

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About the Middle East  
PO Box 3460  
Berkeley, CA 94703

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