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April 26, 2022



Time for Israel to Change the Status Quo on the Temple Mount

Dear Friend of FLAME:

Provoked by Palestinian leaders' lies, Jerusalem's Temple Mount has become a war-zone. Palestinian riots, assaults and weapons-stockpiling atop Judaism's holiest site have spiraled out of control, and it has become a tinderbox for violent anti-Zionist rage.

Last week's latest al-Aqsa rampage should convince Israel that it's time to drastically alter the governance scheme known as the "status quo." Israel can no longer tolerate the Temple Mount's use as a protected staging area for insurrection.

The utterly false accusation by Palestinian politicians and religious figures that Israel plans to destroy the Temple Mount's al-Aqsa Mosque has been relentlessly marketed to Palestinians. With no evidence, Muhammad Hussein, the Grand Mufti of Palestine, recently direly warned of the “danger” in Israel’s plans to “demolish the al-Aqsa mosque.” Today, that slander is accepted by 73% of Palestinians.

This “[al-Aqsa lie](#)” is so persistently powerful that it served to justify the Intifada in 2000 and innumerable acts of terrorism—including Hamas’ massive missile war last April.

The situation on the Temple Mount is the result of an arrangement created in July, 1967 by then-Israeli Defense Minister Moshe Dayan. He called it the “status quo,” implying it merely preserved the Jordanian rules preceding The Six-Day War.

In that war, Israel defeated Jordanian and other Arab armies that were intent on exterminating the nation of Israel and all of its Jews. Jordan had, 19 years earlier, illegally invaded and conquered Judea and Samaria, renamed the areas as the West Bank, and annexed them. This area included the Temple Mount in

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Jerusalem.

During Jordan's occupation, Israelis were banned from these territories . . . including the Temple Mount.

So when Moshe Dayan claimed that he was "preserving the status quo" in 1967, he was peddling a fantasy about the site's history. In fact, the Ottoman-era "status quo" *never* pertained to the Temple Mount, but *only* to feuding Christian denominations' sites.

Dayan, the military genius who had just crushed his Arab enemies, felt Israel should be magnanimous in victory. He was a secular Zionist who had little connection religiously to Judaism. He saw national ardor and religious passion as separate.

Dayan explained in his memoirs that in his "status quo" formula, he was hoping to prevent Israel's *national* victory from creating an ongoing *religious* debacle. He didn't realize that for millions of Muslims, the political and the religious realms are one.

Even the phony "status quo" Dayan installed hasn't lasted: It's gotten worse for Israel and worse for Jews, decade after decade.

Under the Dayan "status quo":

Jews had access at all times to the Temple Mount to visit—but not to pray.

Now, Jews have limited access to visit (and often are completely barred from the Mount). Arab gangs roam the Mount, harassing—even assaulting—any Jew even suspected of praying.

Back then, Israel retained full security control over the Mount.

Today, Israeli policemen must don combat protection to try to stop Arab riots on the Mount. The cops' standing orders are to not enter the Al-Aqsa Mosque itself, even when murderers take sanctuary there, or when large stores of weapons are stockpiled inside, making it resemble an armory more than a holy place.

Then, the sovereignty of Israel over the Temple Mount was assured.

Now, massive excavations by Palestinians—with no Israeli oversight—routinely destroy the priceless archaeological record of two Jewish Temples and an entire era of Jewish culture. Israel lifts not a finger to prevent this rape of its own past.

When Israel captured the Temple Mount in 1967, its soldiers hoisted an Israeli flag there. Dayan ordered it taken down, and dictated that *no flags* were to fly on the Temple Mount.

Today, the Temple Mount is festooned with a sea of Hamas and PLO flags. A single Israeli flag? No: That's "too provocative."

These and other signs of the erosion of the Dayan plan demonstrate that there is no such thing as the "status quo"—there is just a Palestinian enclave that serves

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as the core of an anti-Zionist revolt.

Israeli citizens and policemen are routinely assaulted and murdered there. Israeli worshippers at a Sukkot festival at the Kotel—below the Temple Mount—were bombarded with stones and steel bars by rioting Arabs above. Days ago, a similar barrage was unleashed on Passover worshippers.

This state of anarchy should not be tolerated by *any* society.

At this point, nothing short of revoking the “status quo” will do. A policy meant to ensure peace and tolerance in a holy site has become an enabler and energizer for Arab rejectionism and violent hatred of Israel.

Cancelling the “status quo” will surely attract condemnation from many, including U.S. Secretary of State Blinken. According to a State Department press release, “Secretary Blinken emphasized the importance of upholding the historic status quo at the Temple Mount for peace.”

He is utterly wrong, and he disregards the history and the nightly videos of the rioting on the Temple Mount. He should listen to the bloodthirsty anti-Semitic tirades of PA leaders and Temple Mount religious officials last week. The situation on the Temple Mount is an incubator for hatred and war, not peacemaking.

Jordan’s King Abdullah II—whose father Hussein was allowed to preserve authority over the Temple Mount under Dayan’s misguided policy—will surely respond with outrage. He has played a double-dealing game with Israel and the Palestinians throughout his reign.

But without the water and other resources generously provided by Israel since Jordan’s 1994 peace treaty, Jordan would be a very thirsty, very impoverished country. Let King Abdullah II make his disgruntled speech.

Israel needs to oust the Hamas-supported officials on the Temple Mount, and find new, tolerant-minded, peace-seeking Muslim leaders from anywhere to administer the Temple Mount.

Please point out to friends, family, colleagues, and your elected representatives that Israel has a sovereign duty to its people and their safety, especially at its holiest place. Israel has a moral duty to provide open access to this revered site for all peaceful visitors regardless of their religious affiliation.

Emphasize that a constructive Muslim alternative authority on the Temple Mount can be the core for achieving Middle East peace and perhaps even brotherhood between Israeli Jews and Arabs at a holy place in the holy land.

I hope you’ll also take a minute, while you have this material front and center, to forward this message to friends, visit FLAME’s lively Facebook page and review the P.S. immediately below. It describes FLAME’s new *hasbarah* campaign—which further exposes “The Israel Genocide Slander” and the anti-Semites who make this false accusation.

Best regards,

Ken Cohen, Editor

Facts and Logic About the Middle East (FLAME)

P.S. Whoopi Goldberg's comments recently about the Holocaust underscored perhaps the greatest "public relations" problem Israel faces: Lies, slander and misinformation. One of the greatest of these falsehoods is the accusation of genocide against the Jewish state. Last May, actor Mark Ruffalo tweeted that Israel commits genocide. A college student in a public forum told Vice President Harris that Israel commits "ethnic genocide." I think you'll agree that the only antidote to these lies is the truth. To clarify the outrageous accusation of genocide by Israel, FLAME has created a new *hasbarah* message called "[The Israel Genocide Slander](#)." I hope you'll review this convincing, fact-based paid editorial, which ran in the *Washington Post*, *New York Post*, *Chicago Tribune*, *Houston Chronicle*, *Orlando Sentinel* and other media nationwide. It spells out why the State of Israel does not and has never committed genocide—and why accusers should be branded anti-Semites. This piece will also be sent to all members of Congress, Vice President Harris and President Biden. 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 Biden stay committed to fighting anti-Semitic actions by individuals, politicians and commercial companies.

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