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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*

peace efforts. That might have given them a state, as well as chance at a prosperous future.

But they were no more interested in peace in 2020 than they were in 2000, 2001 and 2008, when they rejected even more generous offers, or in any of the opportunities for peace

they passed up over the years. Israeli statesman Abba Eban's quip that the Palestinians "never miss an opportunity to miss an opportunity" has never been more relevant. The only difference between now and 1973 when Eban first spoke those words is that it is now Arab states that are saying it, not Israelis.

The Palestinians think they still have some allies. The European Union may be irrelevant to Middle East security issues, yet it can still help subsidize the corruption in Ramallah. And Palestinians can always turn to Iran and perhaps to Qatar, which has helped bankroll Hamas in the Gaza Strip. But a drift towards the radicals will only further damage a cause that most of the Arab world now recognizes is hopelessly out of touch with reality and modernity.

The question now is whether the U.S. presidential election will lead to a return to policies that have long enabled Palestinian rejectionism. There's little doubt that Biden's foreign-policy team would be staffed by those who cling to the myth that Palestinians want a state alongside Israel, rather than one instead of it.

Yet even the most dedicated believers in pressure on Israel to make suicidal concessions must now recognize that the Palestinians are incapable of making peace. Palestinian national identity is still inextricably tied to a futile war on Zionism in which they must concede defeat.

It remains to be seen if Democrats are as stuck in the past as the Palestinians. If American voters give them the chance, will they be so blinded by hatred of Trump that they will try to wreck the progress that he has achieved? If so, Arabs and Israelis, as well as the Palestinians who know their leaders are failing them, will be the ones to pay the price of such folly. (JNS Sep 9)

Commentary...

More than a Missed Opportunity for Palestinians

By Jonathan S. Tobin

If you had any doubt that the era in which the Arab world would continue to grant a veto over Middle East peace to the Palestinians was over, this week's drama in Cairo put an end to it. In a meeting in the Egyptian capital, the Arab League, an entity that was founded in 1945 in order to help coordinate the war on Zionism, has made it clear that it is opting out of the Palestinian's century-old battle against the idea of a Jewish state.

The Arab League's rejection of Palestinian efforts to condemn the United Arab Emirates' decision to normalize relations with Israel is almost as much of a milestone as the agreement that was pushed by the Trump administration. The Palestinian Authority and their Hamas rivals raged against the UAE's decision as a "betrayal." But the Arab states will no longer be dragged into supporting such a pointless conflict.

Predictably, the Palestinians are reacting to their defeat not by drawing conclusions from events and rethinking their approach. Instead, they are doubling down on rejectionism and damning their one-time allies.

But they aren't the only ones who should be assessing whether their ideas have been rendered obsolete. Americans who have spent decades trying to pressure Israel to enable a two-state solution that would end the conflict should also recognize that the reaction to the normalization agreement demonstrates that their assumptions about the Palestinians' willingness to make peace have also been finally demolished.

That means that the establishment figures who hope to return to the helm of American foreign policy should former Vice President Joe Biden defeat President Donald Trump in November would also be well-advised to reconsider their plans to revive former President Barack Obama's Middle East policies. The spectacle that unfolded in Cairo isn't just a reaffirmation of Trump's successful effort to bring Israel and the Sunni Arab states together. It's a wake-up call for those who haven't yet recognized that the boat has sailed on efforts to persuade the Palestinians to finally take "yes" or an answer when it comes to peace.

The quest for a two-state solution was the centerpiece of U.S. diplomacy for several administrations run by both Republicans and Democrats. Even Trump, whose "Peace to Prosperity" proposal changed the emphasis of the effort from pressure on Israel to an "outside-in" approach in which Arab states would persuade/bribe the Palestinians to give up their war on the Jewish state, had as its end goal two states.

The Palestinians rejected multiple offers of an independent state made by past administrations and wouldn't cooperate even with Obama's efforts to tilt the diplomatic playing field in their direction. So their refusal to work with Trump's foreign-policy team was unsurprising.

But the kleptocracy that runs the P.A. and its leader, Mahmoud Abbas, were slow to realize the impact of Obama's tilt towards Iran on Arab states that were more afraid of Tehran's aggressive Islamist regime than they ever were of the Zionists. That led the Arab states to acknowledge that Israel was a strategic ally in their effort to repel Iran's quest for regional hegemony, as well as a lucrative trading partner. That realization led not just to closer under-the-table ties between Israel and Saudi Arabia, but to Trump's successful effort to persuade the UAE to make the decision to normalize relations with the Jewish state.

That led to this week's Palestinian fiasco in which the same Arab League that voted the "three no's" in Khartoum following the 1967 Six-Day War—no peace with Israel, no recognition of Israel and no negotiations with it—made clear it no longer has any use for a Palestinian national movement that is unable to make peace.

If the Palestinians were more interested in advancing their interests than in reaffirming their ideological opposition to the legitimacy of a Jewish state—no matter where its borders are drawn—they could have bargained with Trump. They could have taken advantage of the offers of aid that Arab states were prepared to make in order to subsidize

The UAE-Israel Deal Spells Big Trouble for Iran By John Hannah

Watching Israel's national carrier, El Al, make its maiden trip to the United Arab Emirates on Monday, including an overflight of Saudi Arabia, was itself history-making. The passenger list—a group of top American and Israeli officials, led by President Trump's senior aide and son-in-law, Jared Kushner—only added to the moment's significance. But it's the work that these officials do with their Emirati counterparts in the coming weeks and months that has the potential to fundamentally alter the Middle East's strategic landscape, especially for countering the Iranian threat.

Make no mistake: The normalization deal is a major blow to Iran's already-battered regional standing. Sure, it's not the first breakthrough that Israel's had with an Arab country. The peace treaties with Egypt and Jordan have been on the books for decades.

But the UAE deal is the first in a generation, ending a 26-year long dry spell. It's also the first with one of the six Gulf Arab states that sit directly on Iran's doorstep. The Emirates, whose population (minus expatriates) might, with some creative accounting, approach one fortieth the size of Iran's, acted in brazen defiance of the Tehran-led resistance camp on an issue—peace with the Zionist entity—absolutely central to the Islamic Republic's ideological creed. Talk about a lack of fear or respect for Iranian power. You couldn't do better than the videos of beaming Emirati children celebrating the Israeli delegation's arrival by waving the Jewish state's flag alongside balloons decked out in blue and white, its national colors.

The UAE's decision to forge what amounts to an open alliance with Israel and the United States, the Iranian regime's two most implacable foes, couldn't have come at a worse time for Tehran when both countries have declared open season on weakening the Islamic Republic. U.S. sanctions have put Iran's economy under siege. An American drone recently killed Iran's most important general.

Israel attacks Iranian targets and personnel in Syria, month after month, with near-total impunity. And lest we forget, someone, somehow, has been penetrating the heart of Iran's nuclear program, completely undetected, and blowing stuff up.

It's impossible to measure the psychological effects of these kinds of public humiliations on a tyrannical regime. But that doesn't lessen their potential importance. Iran's theocracy has been hemorrhaging legitimacy for years, especially among its youth. Several outbursts of large-scale protests since 2017 have focused on

ending the regime itself. An uprising last November required a full-on massacre of at least 1,000 people to extinguish.

The UAE's outright repudiation of the Islamic Republic's resistance narrative is precisely what Iranian demonstrators seek when they chant "no to Gaza, no to Lebanon, I give my life only for Iran." Just as Emiratis smashed the taboo of normalization to pursue their national interest in establishing full relations with the Middle East's most technologically-advanced economy, as well as its foremost military power, many Iranians long for a government that will put their wellbeing first, rather than wasting their national patrimony on far-off adventures to liberate Jerusalem, destroy Israel, or prop up a homicidal tyrant in Damascus.

No doubt, many Iranians also realize full well that it's precisely those hyper-aggressive policies that are driving old enemies together to make common cause against the Islamic Republic. In response to the UAE deal, one former Iranian politician accurately opined that "We have scared the Arabs and pushed them towards Israel." Another warned that "we are finding ourselves in a situation where our neighboring Arab countries are turning to Israel to confront Iran." Arab-Israeli normalization is a powerful reminder for Iranians of both the venality and abject failure of the Islamic Republic's imperialist policies, triggering a backlash that has left them increasingly isolated, impoverished, and insecure.

The situation is only likely to worsen. Whether next week, next month, or next year, all indications are that there's a line of additional Arab states getting ready to jump on the normalization bandwagon. That's certainly the goal of senior U.S. officials like Kushner and Secretary of State Mike Pompeo as they launch a full-court press to engage other countries from Bahrain to Oman to Sudan on the issue of formalizing their relations with Israel as soon as possible.

The administration is exactly right to do so. Momentum, like psychology, is another one of those intangibles in international affairs that is hard to measure but can be critically important. With the UAE deal in hand, Washington has the wind at its back and should press its advantage. The United States has a profound interest in ensuring that the UAE deal—as important as it is—is not just a one-off event, but the start of a normalization wave that helps establish a new American-led order in the Middle East, centered around an open alliance between America's staunchest Arab friends and its most important strategic partner, Israel, that seeks to bolster regional stability, prosperity and security. It goes without saying that seeing not just one of its Arab-Muslim rivals, but a group of them in fairly rapid succession overcoming their differences with Israel to join hands under an American umbrella would be a genuine nightmare for the Iranian regime.

Even on its own, the UAE-Israel deal raises a new set of dire challenges for the Islamic Republic that could dramatically worsen its strategic predicament. First, these are the two most dynamic and innovative economies in the Middle East. Integrating their capabilities across the full spectrum of human endeavor, as their respective leaderships appear fully committed to doing, will almost certainly bolster their wealth, influence, and power, much to the disadvantage of a hostile Iran. The opportunities for cooperation are almost limitless—from finance, healthcare, food security, and water desalination to energy, space, cyber, and joint R&D on next-generation technologies.

But perhaps more importantly, Israel and the UAE field two of the Middle East's most capable militaries and intelligence services. While neither country will want to say much about it publicly, the geopolitical significance of their joining forces to deter, counter, and, if necessary, defeat Iran's threat should not be underestimated. The Emirates plays host to hundreds of thousands of Iranians who travel back and forth to the Islamic Republic. Thousands of Iranian-linked businesses still use the UAE as one of their last commercial and financial hubs. Not to put too fine a point on it, but this could eventually be a goldmine for an Israeli Mossad working in full collaboration with its Emirati counterparts.

Militarily, the implications could be even more profound for Iran not just because the UAE will, eventually, likely acquire American F-35s, the most advanced combat jet in the world, that will dramatically enhance its ability to attack targets across Iran. And not just because Israel, as part of Washington's corresponding obligation to maintain its qualitative military edge, will probably gain access to important new capabilities to thwart the Iranian threat. But also, critically, because of something related to what the pilot of Monday's El Al flight to Abu Dhabi announced as the plane crossed into Saudi airspace: a trip that otherwise would have exceeded 7 hours in order to circumnavigate the Persian Gulf only took 3 hours and 20 minutes. In other words, normalization has the potential to dramatically shrink the significant challenges of time and space that have bedeviled Israeli contingency plans for attacking Iran for years. That's especially true if the Israeli

military eventually secures the ability to make use of UAE bases. Reducing what would have been a several thousand mile problem to just a few hundred miles resolves a lot of operational obstacles, significantly boosting the credibility and likely success of any independent Israeli military option to destroy Iran's nuclear program, should it prove necessary.

The UAE-Israel deal has the potential to alter the Middle East's balance of power fundamentally to the advantage of U.S. national interests. The Iranian regime knows that and will no doubt fight back. Its leaders have already leveled bellicose threats against the Emirates for their alleged betrayal of Islam. And if two deadly explosions that rocked restaurants in Abu Dhabi and Dubai on the day of the El Al flight's arrival turn out not to be accidents, it would hardly be shocking to find that forces linked to Iran were somehow involved. While girding themselves to counter those dangers and more, the United States and its regional allies should be doing everything in their power to ensure that they don't miss the extraordinary opportunity that now exists to change the history of the long-troubled Middle East in a far more positive direction.

The writer, senior counselor at the Foundation for Defense of Democracies, previously served as national security advisor to former Vice President Dick Cheney. (Real Clear Defense Sep 4)

Hamas's Head-Scratching Policies By Yoav Limor

The arrest of Mahmoud Mekdad, a resident of the Bedouin town of Segev Shalom who was recruited by Hamas to plant a bomb at the Bilu junction, provides evidence, and not for the first time, of the group's efforts to carry out terrorist attacks in the heart of Israel.

This activity is covert and separate from the organization's campaign in Gaza. While in Gaza, its policies are extremely self-restrained due to Israeli deterrence and Hamas's aversion to another military clash—mainly in order to facilitate the Strip's civilian rehabilitation—its brazen terrorist activity in Israel indicates a willingness to take things very far.

Hamas has amplified this effort a great deal in recent years, managing it from abroad in the wake of the Gilad Schalit prisoner swap, primarily via deputy leader Saleh Arouri, who was released in that deal. From its main headquarters in Turkey, Hamas has orchestrated terrorist activity in Judea and Samaria. Through the mechanism he constructed, Arouri has forged connections with Hamas activists in Judea and Samaria for the purpose of creating a localized terrorist infrastructure there.

Arouri, who has since relocated from Turkey to Qatar and then to Lebanon, was extremely ambitious in his aspirations, but quite limited in terms of his capabilities. Despite his prodigious efforts (that came with a hefty price tag), he failed to achieve his goal of "drowning Israel in blood."

The headquarters he manages is still active in several countries, including Turkey and Lebanon, but its effectiveness is very limited in scope, mainly due to the success of the Shin Bet, which in the vast majority of cases has been able to dismantle infrastructure, apprehend terrorists and seize weapons before they are used.

Arouri's accumulated failures spurred Hamas' leadership in Gaza to assume control of these operations. In Gaza, too, this activity is overseen by terrorists released in the Schalit deal who were exiled to Gaza and have widespread terrorist contacts both in Judea and Samaria and among Israeli Arabs—as evidenced by the aforementioned arrest of Mekdad.

This guidance takes on many forms: from direct or encrypted directives—through various technological means (i.e., email, WhatsApp and other messaging platforms, such as Telegram in Mekdad's case), handwritten notes delivered by couriers (family members, Palestinians receiving medical treatment in Israel and businessmen)—to exploiting innocent or susceptible individuals, including Arab Israelis with family ties in Gaza.

Hamas has turned these methods of operation into an art form. This poses a significant challenge to the Shin Bet, which since 2019 has had to deal with hundreds of attempted terrorist attacks in Judea and Samaria directed from Gaza. That none of these terrorist attacks occurred is a testament to the Shin Bet's counter-terrorism efforts. But it also indicates the scope of the threat: One attack that slips under the radar could spark a conflagration.

It's hard not to scratch our heads over the policy guiding Hamas's efforts to strike in the heart of Israel. One such successful attack—the abduction and murder of three teenage boys in 2014—escalated into "Operation Protective Edge." Hamas limped away from that fight battered and bruised and deterred for years to follow, but it appears it hasn't learned its lesson.

The latest foiled terrorist attack proves that Hamas is

implementing a two-faced policy—Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde—that could take it down a path it doesn't want and, as a byproduct, invite the very same devastation onto Gaza that its other policy seemingly is trying to prevent. (Israel Hayom Sep 8)

The Distorted Western Discourse on Israel By Alan Baker

Regrettably and increasingly, Western intellectual discourse regarding anything connected to Israel has been taken hostage by pseudo-intellectual, radical leftist extremists who, using distorted information, flawed facts, “progressive” language and accepted buzzwords, seek to enhance and expand existing efforts to deny and undermine Israel’s legitimacy as a Jewish and democratic nation-state.

This ideological goal of dismantling Israel is particularly evident in a curious July 9, 2020, article published in radical leftist Australian literary journal *Overland*, titled, “Fighting against a Racist’s Peace: What It Means to Oppose Annexation.” The author is the child of Palestinians, Tasnim Mahmoud Sammak, whose doctoral research project at Melbourne’s Monash University seeks to explore what she describes as the “emergence of radical political subjectivities and imaginaries.”

Her ultra-radical language indicates a thought process based on misconceptions and flawed assumptions. The abundant use of extreme, radical leftist buzzwords indicates an inherent lack of seriousness and intellectual honesty.

What is perhaps even worse is an apparent linkage that emerges in this article between pseudo-intellectual leftist modes of thinking and extreme, fanatical Palestinian terror and incitement to Israel’s destruction.

The following are some examples of such exaggerated, illogical and inciting terminology used in the article.

This is an often repeated and meaningless cliché using pseudo-intellectual terminology intended to appeal to extreme ultra-liberal, leftist elements that are opposed to the very existence of Israel as a state and deny, as a matter of principle, the claims and rights of the Jewish people.

Israel has valid historical, legal and political claims to its sovereign territory and land, as well as to the land it presently administers.

In addition to the long-term historical evidence of Jewish presence, as set out in the writings of Persian, Greek, Roman and other historians who visited the area in the early centuries, and in biblical sources, extensive archeological evidence, publicly available, affirms the existence and presence of a Jewish national population in the area for over 3,000 years. The “return to Zion” has been a central theme of Jewish prayers for two millennia.

These Jewish claims have been acknowledged legally and internationally by the 1917 Balfour Declaration affirming the right of the Jews to re-establish their national homeland, the 1921 San Remo Declaration, which transposed the Balfour Declaration into an internationally recognized document and reaffirmed in the subsequent League of Nations Palestine Mandate and the United Nations Charter.

This land has never been part of any sovereign entity since the termination of the Ottoman Empire more than 100 years ago, and as such, Israel has not colonized and is not colonizing the land of any other state or entity.

For more than 120 years, the Zionist movement has been universally recognized as the national liberation movement of the Jewish people and is no different from other ethno-national movements.

To single out and condemn Zionism in such a manner is tantamount to singling out the Jewish people and denying them a fundamental right that is possessed by all other national peoples.

Israeli settlements that were established since 1967 were in full compliance with customary international norms, on land that was not privately owned by any local Palestinian, nor were they part of any sovereign Palestinian entity. Residents of Israel’s settlements were neither forcibly nor illegally transferred into the area in violation of international conventions. On the contrary, their presence there is subject to the agreed-upon reciprocal peace negotiation process set out in the 1993-5 Oslo Accords, intended to determine, through negotiation, the ultimate permanent legal status of the area, including the specific issue of settlements.

To describe Israel and its policies as a “settler-colonial, ethno-nationalist project” displays utter blindness and lack of understanding of the actual meaning of such a phrase and even demonstrates considerable ignorance. The use of such terminology deliberately denies the historical, factual and legal realities on the ground, and ignores the various accords between the Palestinians and Israel that have been internationally acknowledged and accepted.

This wild assumption is simply wrong.

Israel’s widely acknowledged and internationally-renowned legal system ensures that all state and military activities, whether by officials, military forces, or individual soldiers, is under strict supervision by Israel’s legal authorities—civilian and military—including its Supreme Court.

Such a framework permits no element of impunity.

Similarly, in the international sphere, Israel’s actions in responding to aggression and acts of terror are fully compatible with its international rights to defend itself against such acts.

Israel is faced with ongoing aggression and terror, whether in the form of periodic, massive rocket fire against its sovereign territory, including its towns and villages, or tunnels dug under and into its sovereign territory in order to enable offensive infiltration by terrorists intent on committing attacks against its population.

Similarly, the willful, daily deployment of explosive devices against Israel’s soldiers stationed along the Israel-Gaza dividing line, the release of explosive and incendiary devices attached to balloons deliberately and willfully aimed at creating mass conflagrations of agricultural land, the deliberate pollution of the air through the mass burning of tires, as well as other acts of terror against Israel’s population and innocent civilians—all entitle Israel to take appropriate precautions to defend itself against such unbridled terror.

To describe such actions in terms of “criminal impunity” is indicative of a willful lack of awareness, a deliberate attempt to misrepresent reality, as well as ignorance of the relevant provisions of international humanitarian law and international criminal law.

These false and flawed allegations represent the weapons and ammunition of Palestinian political warfare for decades. More recently, these libelous and baseless accusations have also underpinned Western, leftist pseudo-intellectual propaganda. Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat advanced this slander in his first United Nations General Assembly address in 1974. It was adopted by Western NGO groups at the discredited 2001 U.N. Durban Conference on Racism and has since maintained its prominence in radical circles seeking to delegitimize Israel.

The glib use of the term “apartheid” as a means of denigrating Israel epitomizes the lack of understanding of the racist phenomenon of apartheid and an even wider misunderstanding of the character of Israel as an open, pluralistic, and democratic society.

Any comparison of Israel to the former apartheid regime in South Africa has been outright rejected by those with an intimate understanding of the old apartheid system, especially South Africans. The aim of such propaganda, besides delegitimizing the very basis of the existence of the State of Israel, is to cynically manipulate the international community and to encourage imposition of an international sanctions regime against Israel modeled on the actions against the former apartheid regime in South Africa. South African black human rights activists, writing in the 2020 Jerusalem Center book “Israelophobia,” exposed this misuse of the former South African apartheid system.

On the contrary, Israel is a multi-racial and multi-colored society. Israel’s Arab citizens and residents enjoy constitutional equality and freedom of expression. They exercise a strong and influential political presence in Israel’s parliament (Knesset). Arab citizens play a central role in all spheres of Israeli society. Arab judges serve in Israel’s court system, including as Supreme Court justices. Israeli Arabs serve as heads and senior staff of hospital departments and Israeli universities. Similarly, Arabs serve in Israel’s diplomatic and consular corps, as well as filling senior posts in the police and army.

Each religious community in Israel has its own religious court system, applying Sharia, Canon, Druze and Jewish law respectively and equally.

Unlike those Arab and other countries in which one religion is declared the state religion, or Western countries where Christianity is the predominant religion, or even those Muslim countries such as Iran and Saudi Arabia where certain areas, towns and roads are restricted to “Muslims only,” where women are treated as second-class citizens and gay people as criminals, Israeli law regards Judaism, Islam and Christianity as official religions and constitutionally ensures complete freedom and equality to all.

The incitement to or practice of racism in Israel is a criminal offense, as is any discrimination on the basis of race, religion, sex, or gender. Israeli schools, universities and hospitals make no distinction between Jews and Arabs.

To accuse Israel of being a racist and apartheid state displays basic ignorance of Israel’s democracy and a lack of understanding of the former South African apartheid system that was finally disbanded in 1994.

This is a common and misleading misconception prevalent in

pseudo-intellectual leftist propaganda that has permeated international organizations such as the United Nations and its Specialized Agencies and even the International Criminal Court. It has even succeeded in influencing Western political parties in the United Kingdom, Ireland and the United States, as well as some Jewish communities in those countries.

Whether politically or legally, there exists no such thing as “internationally recognized Palestinian land” or “Palestinian territory.” There has never existed a Palestinian sovereign entity, and, therefore, there exists no such thing as sovereign Palestinian land.

Other than a plethora of non-binding, politically-generated resolutions initiated by the Arab states in the United Nations and repeatedly adopted by an automatic majority in the U.N. General Assembly since the early 1970s, expressing nothing more than the “wishful thinking” of those states sponsoring and supporting them, there exists no binding, authoritative international determination, resolution, decision, or declaration that acknowledges or recognizes Palestinian statehood or Palestinian land.

On the contrary, the PLO and the Palestinian leadership committed themselves in the Oslo Accords to negotiate the issue of the permanent status of the territory, thus affirming the fact that any reference to “Palestinian land” has no legal basis pending the outcome of such negotiation.

As such, any reference to Palestinian land, territory, or state prejudices the outcome of a negotiating issue aimed at determining the ultimate fate of the territory.

Such negotiation has yet to reach fruition.

In light of many videos showing random knife attacks by incited Palestinians against Israeli passers-by, it is incredible to see how radical elements have manufactured and distributed a blatantly false narrative, boldly and openly accusing Israel of randomly executing people in cold blood.

It is no less incredible to see the extent to which these lies are accepted by the international media, by leading Western and Arab political personalities, and even by various foreign and Israeli academics, who rush to accuse Israel’s police and security forces of carrying out “indiscriminate,” “barbaric” or “extrajudicial” executions, when they are defending themselves against these attacks.

By allowing themselves to be influenced by such manipulative lies and by propagating them, the international media and some leading Western political personalities are giving encouragement and license to the Palestinian leadership, as well as to the pseudo-intellectual leftists, to continue incitement to violence and to justify a policy of rendering payment to those who commit acts of terror against Israelis.

Claims by Palestinian leaders considered by the international community to be “moderate,” justifying such terrorist knifings and citing “lack of hope” or “desperation” by the perpetrators of such terror, cannot be considered acceptable by any moral standard.

On the contrary, international law has criminalized any form of encouragement and incentive to commit acts of terror.

Even the U.N. General Assembly resolves annually that “Criminal acts intended or calculated to provoke a state of terror in the general public, a group of persons or particular persons for political purposes are in any circumstances unjustifiable, whatever the considerations of a political, philosophical, ideological, racial, ethnic, religious or other nature that may be invoked to justify them.”

“The Palestinian guerrilla struggle is connected to the global BLM (Black Lives Matter) movement through an interlinked vision to dismantle racist settler-colonial structures and systems”

Any attempt to mislead the international public by claiming that Palestinian terror tactics of firing rockets at Israel’s civilian population, illegally sheltering rocket emplacements and weapons storage facilities among their own civilian population and willfully conducting ecological warfare through arson constitute a “guerrilla struggle” is an insult to the intelligence of the international public.

Similarly, current attempts by left-wing “intellectuals” to draw a false connection and comparison between the Palestinian terror campaign against Israel and its citizens, and the BLM movement, is nothing but a misguided and ill-advised attempt to climb onto the BLM bandwagon.

Such an unfortunate and ill-advised linkage undermines and takes hostage in a false and misleading manner many of the genuine and well-meaning aims of rectifying social and racial ills prevalent within parts of the American society.

Above all, such a false and flawed linkage of American domestic civil and human rights challenges with a 100-year terror-driven political conflict over territory equates and identifies the BLM movement with Palestinian terror, and as such, undermines the integrity of the BLM movement.

“The siege of Gaza is collective punishment on the Palestinian

population for democratically electing the wrong party, Hamas”

It is widely acknowledged that the Palestinian Authority’s control in Gaza was usurped by Hamas, an internationally-designated terror organization sponsored and supplied with arms by Iran. Hamas and other terror groups in Gaza, such as the Palestinian Islamic Jihad, have turned the area into a base for mounting terror attacks against Israel.

To this end, Hamas produces, smuggles into the area and stockpiles missiles, guns and ammunition for use against Israel and its civilian population. It periodically directs such missiles randomly at Israeli civilian targets, in violation of all accepted norms of international humanitarian law.

In light of this acknowledged situation of armed conflict directed against Israel and its civilian population, Israel has the prerogative to prevent the introduction of weapons and materiel that could serve the belligerent purposes of Hamas, including through such means as a naval and land blockade. The institution of such a blockade is well established in international law and practice.

In accordance with the findings of the U.N. Secretary General’s Panel of Inquiry on the 2010 Gaza flotilla incident:

“Israel faces a real threat to its security from militant groups in Gaza. The naval blockade was imposed as a legitimate security measure in order to prevent weapons from entering Gaza by sea and its implementation complied with the requirements of international law.”

Despite the ongoing, declared hostile intentions of the Hamas administration in Gaza, and its construction of tunnels and manufacture of rockets for use against Israel, Israel maintains an ongoing civilian policy enabling the transfer of commodities via the different overland crossings, civilian entry to and from the Gaza Strip with emphasis on the evacuation of Palestinian patients for medical treatment in Israel, the promotion of projects by the international community, and coordination of operations and aid in agriculture, transportation, trade and industry.

The perception of the creation of the State of Israel as a “catastrophe” (nakba) and a colonizing entity reflects a constant and ongoing Palestinian narrative rejecting the creation of a national state for the Jewish people in any part of Mandatory Palestine.

This absolutist and “cancellation culture” narrative, adopted by radical Western leftist elements, sanctions and encourages uncompromising struggle against Israel as the common national aim of the Palestinians.

The State of Israel was not established as an alternative, colonizing entity in place of an Arab state. Rather, it was established as a fruit of the decolonization of the former Turkish Ottoman Empire together with other independence movements in the region at the beginning of the 20th century. From before its birth, Jewish pioneers and refugees of Israel accepted and supported the existence of the Arab residents of the area. Israel always intended to exist together in peace with an Arab state in the area of Mandatory Palestine. This constitutes a founding principle of Israel’s Declaration of Independence.

Distorting and presenting Israel’s creation as a “catastrophe” serves to falsify and overturn the historical narrative from one of inherent denial of the right of existence of a Jewish state through aggression and rejectionism, to one of victimhood and denial of rights.

Through well-orchestrated international brainwashing and incitement, the Palestinian leadership, together with radical leftist elements in the West, seek to further this false and fictitious narrative, which is understood by educated and informed students of modern history to replace the facts of the events of 1948.

Those subscribing to this false narrative, rather than relying on historical facts and evidence, are, in fact, being manipulated into becoming party to this deception.

The distortion of Western intellectual discourse by radical leftist elements, and the attempt to insert such distortion into current political processes and narratives in the West, constitutes misleading, deceptive and wishful thinking, totally divorced from reality and the facts of history and from the fundamental rules of and the law and diplomacy.

The writer is director of the Institute for Contemporary Affairs at the Jerusalem Center and the head of the Global Law Forum. He participated in the negotiation and drafting of the Oslo Accords with the Palestinians, as well as agreements and peace treaties with Egypt, Jordan and Lebanon. He served as legal adviser and deputy director-general of Israel’s Foreign Ministry and as Israel’s ambassador to Canada. (Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs Sep 7)