

PALESTINIANS DON'T DESERVE A STATE, AND GIVING THEM ONE WOULD BE A GRAVE MISTAKE FOR ISRAEL By Don Feder

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In his February 26th speech to the American Enterprise Institute, President George W. Bush predicted, "Success in Iraq could also begin a new stage in Middle Eastern peace and set in motion progress toward a *truly democratic Palestinian state*." He then gave his "personal commitment" to The Road Map, a plan concocted by Russia, the European Union and United Nations for an imposed settlement of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

This plan calls for a number of interim steps toward the imposition of a Palestinian state "containing the maximum contiguous territory." Israel is to have no control over the borders and airspace of "Palestine," thus no control over the importation of military hardware from throughout the Arab world.

This envisioned 23rd Arab state is to be created in two stages. Following elections, there will be a state with temporary borders and international recognition by the end of 2003. Permanent borders are to be established after the resolution of such thorny issues as the so-called right of return (the Palestinian demand to flood the rest of Israel with hundreds of thousands of refugees and their descendants), the status of Jerusalem and the fate of 250,000 Jews living in Arafatistan.

In his June 24, 2002 speech, the president assured us that a Palestinian state would only come after the removal of Arafat, the election of a new leadership "not compromised by terrorism," the cessation of all terrorist acts and an end to incitement by the Palestinian Authority. Other than some window dressing – Arafat appointing his colleague Mahmoud Abbas (a Holocaust denier who supports the murder of Jews on the West Bank) prime minister of the PA– none of those conditions have been met.

Still, the administration has announced that as soon as the war is over, it will begin to push for implementation of The Road Map. Based on past experience, expect token efforts to be accepted as Palestinian compliance, while suicidal concessions are demanded of Israel.

No matter. Even if Arafat & Co. scrupulously adhered to The Road Map's conditions, a Palestinian state would still be the grave of Israel.

To understand why, consider what's been going on in the Palestinian Authority since the Iraq war started. Demonstrators have crowded the streets chanting, "Death to America. Death to Bush." An official of Arafat's PLO told Al-Jazeera TV, "Iraq's battle is Palestine's battle."

Fiery sermons are regularly broadcast on Palestinian television, including one by Sheikh Ibrahim Mudayris expressing the hope that "Americans will drown in their own

blood.” The PA renamed a city square in Jenin to honor the suicide bomber who murdered four American soldiers on March 27th.

Hamas (a member of Arafat’s PLO) enlisted terrorists to fight U.S. forces in Iraq. And Arafat sent Saddam his “warmest greetings” and “deepest prayers to Allah, may He ... strengthen our brotherly ties, cooperation and solidarity.” In the past, those brotherly ties have included Arafat’s active support for Iraq in the Persian Gulf War and Saddam paying \$25,000-bounties to the families of Palestinian suicide bombers.

This is the face of a future Palestinian state – not the diplomatic delusions of a peaceful and democratic Palestine living in harmony with Israel – but fundamentalism, irredentism and terrorism.

Since Oslo, the Palestinians have given every indication that they will follow in the footsteps of every other Middle East tyranny. The Palestinian Authority inculcates virulent anti-Semitism in its media, school curriculum and religious broadcasts. Since September 2000, Palestinians have murdered 761 Jews and wounded more than 5,000 – almost 80 percent civilians. A March 8, 2003 poll showed 70% of Palestinians support these atrocities.

Yes, but the Palestinians must have a nation of their own, the international community insists. Why? The “Palestinian people” is an invention of Arab propagandists. PLO executive committee member Zahir Muhsein admitted this in a 1977 interview with a Dutch magazine. (“Only for political reasons do we speak today about the existence of a Palestinian people, since Arab national interests demand that we posit the existence of a distinct Palestinian people to oppose Zionism.”)

Arab inhabitants of Israel speak the same language, practice the same religion and observe the same customs as Arab Moslems throughout the region. They would be completely at home anywhere in the Middle East.

In the 1920s, the British lopped off 77 percent of Mandate Palestine and presented it to the Hashmite dynasty. It became Trans Jordan, latter the Kingdom of Jordan. If there is a Palestinian Arab homeland, it is located on the East Bank of the Jordan.

There has never been an independent Arab state on any of the land designated the West Bank – or on the rest of Israel, for that matter. The territory targeted for a Palestinian state was illegally occupied by Jordan for 19 years and liberated by Israel in 1967. It is Biblical Israel (Abraham is buried in Hebron, not Tel Aviv.) -- the land promised by God to Abraham’s descendants in perpetuity. Moslems currently control 99.9 percent of the land in the Middle East. Including the West Bank and Gaza, the Jews have a nation half the size of California’s San Bernardino County.

A Palestinian state living in peace and harmony with Israel? But, of course – just the way Nazi Germany peacefully co-existed with the rump Czech state, after Hitler acquired the Sudatenland. Land for peace has a distinguished lineage.

Speaking to Arab audiences, Arafat frequently refers to the “phased plan,” a strategy adopted by the PLO in 1974. In an interview with Jordanian television, shortly after Oslo, Arafat explained this strategy: “Since we cannot defeat Israel in war, we do this *in stages*. We take any and every territory we can of Palestine, and establish sovereignty there, and we use it as a springboard to take more. When the time comes, we can get the Arab nations to join us for the final blow against Israel.” That remains Arafat’s dream – one shared by the Palestinian people and Arabs throughout the region – to expunge the existence of Israel in stages.

You can have a Jewish state or a Palestinian state. You can not have both.

Why? Consider the topography of Judea and Samaria, designated the West Bank. The Judean mountains are the high ground. (Pre-1967 Israel is a costal plain.) If Israel controls them, invaders from the East have to fight their way up these heights. In Palestinian hands, Israel’s heartland – with 80 percent of its population, most of its industry and military assets – would be within range of mortars, Katyusha rockets and shoulder-held Stinger missiles. Every plane taking off from Tel Aviv’s Ben Gurion Airport would become a target. Jerusalem would be surrounded on three sides by hostile territory.

If it loses the land West of the Jordan, instead of an Eastern border 40 miles in length, Israel’s new border will be over 200 miles long, impossible to police.

A nation needs strategic depth to survive a surprise attack. The redrawn map of Israel will be nine-miles wide at its narrow waist. A tank column could race across it, and cut the country in half, in short order.

In the decade since Oslo, Arafat has consistently violated his pledges regarding the size of his “police force” and weapons. Even with Israel controlling the borders of the Palestinian Authority, it’s proven difficult to block the importation of arms. The Karine A, Arafat’s illegal arms ship seized in the Red Sea in January, 2002, contained 50 tons Iranian of weapons, including Katyusha rockets, anti-tank missiles, land mines, sniper rifles, mortar shells and explosives. With the Jordanian and Egyptian borders in the hands of a sovereign Palestinian state, weapons – including tanks and anti-aircraft guns – would pour into the Republic of Jihad.

A Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza would become a staging area for the conquest of the rest of “Palestine.” In the next war, troops and armored columns from Syria and other Arab combatants would have unimpeded access through Palestine to the rump Israeli state.

In an article in the December 1999 issue of Commentary, Yuval Steinitz, a member of the Knesset for the Likud party, notes that once the disputed territories have been severed from the rest of the nation, “the tiny area of the Jewish state, together with its over-reliance on reserve forces ... casts a giant shadow of doubt of another kind altogether: namely, over its ability to withstand a lightening strike. An enemy’s penetration into the heart of Israel could prevent the mobilization and equipment of its military reserves in addition to interrupting many other vital operations.”

Palestinian forces would be used as an advance column for the main Arab army – infiltrating Israel (across that 200-mile long border), conducting guerrilla operations, disrupting mobilization, cutting supply lines and communications and cause panic in civilian areas.

What amazes me is that – given the record of the “Palestinians,” their frequently stated intensions and Israel’s geographic vulnerability – anyone one in his right mind could imagine that a Palestinian state would exist in peace and harmony with Israel.

President Bush says he wants to bring democracy to the Middle East. If he’s serious about creating a Palestinian state, he will end up destroying the only democracy in the Middle East – Israel.

The obstacle to peace in the region isn’t the “plight” of the Palestinians or their lack of a state – it’s Arab revanchism coupled with Islamic fundamentalism. The idea of a sovereign Jewish state anywhere in the Middle East, is intolerable to devout Moslems and Arab nationalists alike – a sacrilege to the former and a mortal affront to the latter.

You will not find a more unlikely candidate for democracy than Arab Moslems. There is a reason why, among the 22 nations of the Arab world, not one even approaches popular rule – why they consistently produce leaders like Nasser, Assad (father and son), Khomeini, Khadafy, Arafat, Saddam and bin Laden.

Nor is there a religion less likely to co-exist with other faiths than Islam. From Nigeria, to Egypt, to the Balkans, to Pakistan, the Kashmir and the Philippines, Islam is at war with Christians, Hindus and Jews. The idea that a Palestinian state will be the sole exception to what historian Samuel Huntington calls “Islam’s bloody borders” goes beyond wishful thinking.

A Palestinian state would make a mockery of our own war on terror, reward the terror masters and create another Iraq on the borders of our only reliable ally in the region. The only peace it would bring to Israel is the peace of the grave.

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