OMNI ISRAEL-PALESTINE NEWSLETTER #2, Compiled by Dick Bennett FOR A CULTURE OF PEACE, February 16, 2012. (#1 Feb. 22, 2011)

Here is the link to all OMNI newsletters:
http://www.omnicenter.org/newsletter-archive/ For a knowledge-based peace, justice, and ecology movement and an informed citizenry as the foundation for resistance and change.

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After you have read the Newsletter, ACT NOW: Call the state Department (202-647-5291 and press 1 to leave comment) then call the white house 202 456 1111,it takes just a few minutes.

View Trailer:

In the Fall of 2009 a group of US veterans and war resisters traveled to Israel/Palestine to meet with their Israeli counterparts in an effort to strengthen connections and share experiences. *Occupation Has No Future* uses this trip as a lens to study Israeli militarism, examine the occupation of the Palestinian West Bank, and explore the work of Israelis and Palestinians organizing against militarism and occupation.

Through conversations with Israeli conscientious objectors, former soldiers, and Palestinians living under occupation, *Occupation Has No Future* creates a survey of the current atmosphere in the State of Israel and the West Bank. The film explores the Israeli social environment that creates such heightened militarism and leads to attitudes of fear, exclusion, racism, and ultimately aggression; and examines the consequences of Israeli policies both for the Palestinian people as well as for Israeli civil society.

Additionally, this documentary looks at the Israeli anti-militarist movement and those Israeli youth refusing conscription, refusing orders, and choosing to partner with a growing grassroots Palestinian campaign of civil disobedience to defeat the occupation. Honest about the extremely daunting challenges, *Occupation Has No Future* ultimately tracks the hope of a growing number of Israelis and Palestinians to live together, free from occupation, with peace and justice.

Directed by David Zlutnick
(USA; 2010; 84 minutes)

Click here to view a short video from Upheaval Productions — *No More Shooting and Crying: Israeli Soldiers After Their Service* — made from deleted scenes of *Occupation Has No Future*.

Click here to read an interview with director David Zlutnick, published on *Truthout, ZNet, and other outlets*.

Click here to read an article about the film by director David Zlutnick, published in *CounterPunch, Truthout, War Times, ZNet and other outlets*.

Click here to check out other media related to *Occupation Has No Future*, including interviews and articles.

**ICELAND RECOGNIZES PALESTINIAN STATE**

David Harris-Gershon:”In Historic Move, Iceland Becomes First Western European Nation to Recognize Palestinian Statehood”
On Tuesday, Iceland became the first Western European nation to pass a parliamentary motion recognizing Palestine as an independent state. The motion – symbolically passed on the United Nation’s annual day of solidarity with the Palestinian people – backs a Palestinian state on 1967 borders, calls on both Israel and Palestine to reject violence and

Secret paper reveals EU broadside over **plight of Israel's Arabs**

Memo seen by *The Independent* highlights tensions between Tel Aviv and Europe.

Donald Macintyre, *The Independent*, Tuesday 27 December 2011


**A growing gulf between Israel's Jewish and Arab communities** is highlighted in a critical EU paper which breaks new ground by suggesting that the international community has a role in ensuring "genuinely equal treatment" for the country's Arab minority.

The confidential 27-page draft prepared by European diplomats and seen by The Independent charts a wide range of indicators showing that Israeli Arabs suffer "economic disparities ... unequal access to land and housing ... discriminatory draft legislation and a political climate in which discriminatory rhetoric and practice go unsanctioned."

[...]While EU leaders regularly criticise Israel over its activities in occupied territory – including the growth of settlement building – the draft is unusual in tackling a highly sensitive issue within Israel's borders.

[...]The draft affirms that Israel's treatment of its minorities within its borders should be seen by the international community as a "core issue, not second tier to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict".

The diplomats also highlight a recent spate of Knesset bills which "would have denied some Israelis their citizenship, legalised discrimination in access to housing, and limited freedom of speech". While the paper acknowledges that the "most discriminatory" elements of such legislation have largely been softened or eliminated, such bills "have a chilling effect on Jewish-Arab relations".

It also points out that despite "robust anti-incitement laws" and the fact that the Israeli Prime Minister "eventually" issued a condemnation, no action was taken against 47 state-employed municipal rabbis who called for Jews not to let property to Arabs.

The paper points out that while being up to 20 per cent of the population, Israeli Arabs own only 3 per cent of the land. It says Arab average earnings are only 61 per cent of those in the Jewish community, with 50 per cent of Israeli Arabs living in poverty, according to the OECD.

**Just Foreign Policy** is a membership organization devoted to reforming US foreign policy so it reflects the values and interests of the majority of Americans. The archive of the Just Foreign Policy News is here:

[http://www.justforeignpolicy.org/blog/dailynews](http://www.justforeignpolicy.org/blog/dailynews)

Take Action on the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People November 29, 2011. Anna Baltzer, US Campaign to End the Israeli Occupation

[uscampaign@endtheoccupation.org](mailto:uscampaign@endtheoccupation.org) via [uark.edu](http://uark.edu) to jbennet
Dear Dick,

In 1976, in commemoration of what is now 63 years of Palestinian dispossession and exile, the United Nations declared November 29 to be the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People. This year, Peter Miller, president of Americans United for Palestinian Human Rights and co-chair of the US Campaign's Steering Committee, addressed the U.N. General Assembly. Peter's speech, which took place this morning at the U.N., can be viewed and read here (the speech begins at one hour and 17 minutes into the recording).

Today the Palestinian people's resilience and struggle for freedom continue. Bedouin families of Al-Arakib in the Negev Desert have rebuilt their homes more than 20 times to maintain their presence there. Villagers of Nabi Saleh in the West Bank continue to nonviolently protest settler and army violence and land confiscation, remaining steadfast in the face of the army's intimidation tactics and extreme brutality. Children in Gaza whose schools have been bombed attend makeshift classrooms, persisting to get an education. Survivors of the Nakba, the catastrophe of Palestinian dispossession in the 1947-48 war, continue to preserve and pass down their testimonies and the keys to their homes, refusing to forget or to give up their internationally recognized right to return to the homes and lands from which they were expelled.

Also today, Minnesota citizens from the exciting Minnesota Break the Bonds campaign gathered at the State Attorney General's office to serve a lawsuit on the state's Board of Investment, demanding that it divest from Israel Bonds, based on moral, ethical and legal grounds.

Dick, MN BBC is asking for your support! Sign this letter telling members of the Minnesota State Board of Investments to stop investing in Israeli apartheid!

These are only two of the many actions by US Campaign member groups over the past two weeks. On November 15, activists in 15 cities across the United States organized actions and educational events in solidarity with the Palestinian Freedom Riders, who challenged the Jim Crow-style segregation inherent in the Israeli occupation. You can find an exciting play-by-play chronology of the Freedom Riders' actions at The Struggle, and a summary of the day's events--in the West Bank and the U.S.--here at Jewish Voice for Peace, a US Campaign member organization.

Here is just a small sampling of U.S. actions supporting the Palestinian Freedom Riders as part of the growing worldwide campaign to challenge Veolia, a French multinational corporation that profits from the Israeli occupation by operating buses on Israeli-only roads, among other things:

- In Los Angeles, activists demonstrated and boarded buses run by Veolia to educate passengers about Israel's apartheid policies as part of a campaign targeting Veolia contracts with the city.

- Boston activists launched a campaign challenging the Massachusetts Bay Commuter Rail Company's contract with Veolia by distributing fliers to educate and mobilize Boston residents.

- In Baltimore, activists demonstrated at Penn Station during rush hour, singing a freedom song and drawing connections between the Palestinian and American struggles for equality and human rights, linking Veolia's profiteering from racism and exploitation in Israel/Palestine to the City of Baltimore's unequal government contracts.

There were also more actions in Seattle, Tacoma, Portland, Phoenix, Sacramento, Chico, Oakland,
Chicago, New York City, and Washington, D.C.! Check out the photos on Mondoweiss and Flickr, and watch Jewish Voice for Peace's round-up video here.

Palestinian filmmaker Sana Kassem put together this excellent video drawing parallels between the U.S. Civil Rights Movement and the struggle of the Palestinian Freedom Riders.

Our National Advocacy Director, Josh Ruebner, published this article in Counterpunch supporting the Freedom Riders—just one of dozens of articles published recently worldwide.

Last Saturday, activists in 10 European countries staged more than 60 actions as part of a Day of Action calling on supermarkets and governments to "Take Apartheid off the Menu."

Today, on the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, let us celebrate Palestinian steadfastness and renew our commitment to ending U.S. complicity with Israeli occupation and apartheid as part of a growing, exciting, global movement for freedom, justice, and equality.

Onward! Anna Baltzer National Organizer

The US Campaign aims to change U.S. policies that sustain Israel's 44-year occupation of the Palestinian West Bank, Gaza Strip and East Jerusalem, and that deny equal rights for all.

CSU Faculty Challenge Reinstatement of Study Abroad Program in Israel

Members of the faculty at California State University have written to the chancellor in opposition to reinstating CSU's study abroad program in Israel. Their letter cites the Israeli government's violations of Article 50 of the Fourth Geneva Convention, which requires the Occupying Power to facilitate the proper functioning of educational institutions in occupied territories.

http://www.csun.edu/~vcmth00m/studyabroad.html

GLOBAL MARCH TO JERUSALEM March 2012

The nonviolent March to Jerusalem will come from all over the world. It emulates the example of Gandhi’s 1930 march to the seacoast to harvest salt and challenge the British law. This March will challenge the unjust and illegal occupation and appropriation of Jerusalem by Israel. The March is a Palestinian-led movement of organizations world-wide. The goal is for all to in Jerusalem on Land Day, March 30, 2012. For a list of North American orgs. endorsing the March see the website www.gmj-na.org Email: organize@gmj-na.org Address:

GMJ—North America 2022 Blake St., Suite F Berkeley, CA 94704

BOOKS

--Naseer Aruri's Dishonest Broker is about the destructive role of the US in Israel/Palestine.
Boyle, Francis. *The Palestinian Right of Return Under International Law.* Clarity P, 2011. The just resolution of the Palestinian right of return is at the very heart of the Middle East peace process.


Strole, Jeane. *BDS: The Global Struggle for Palestinian Rights.* Covers the grassroots, Palestinian-led Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions movement. "A world party and we are all invited": BDS by Omar Barghouti, a review of the book

MICHAEL LERNER
*Tikkun* magazine@tikkun.org via uark.edu

to jbennet 11-27-11

So here is what Avrum Burg and Jimmy Carter have to say about Rabbi Lerner's newest book (published Nov. 22, 2011):

*Embracing Israel/Palestine* is a terrific book by a pioneer of global transformation. Out of love for both Israelis and Palestinians as equal creations of God, Rabbi Lerner offers us the deepest way out of the bloody conflict. Not just a political agreement, not a simple “real estate” and power sharing transaction, *Embracing Israel/Palestine* draws from a deep psychological and political understanding of the dynamics of the Middle East. Lerner’s book is coming out of a loving heart and a powerful analytic mind. He offers us a strategy of trust that could heal and repair the mentalities of fear that limit the current perspectives that dominate our politics.

—Avrum Burg, former chair of the Jewish Agency and World Zionist Organization, speaker of the Knesset, and interim president of Israel

Rabbi Michael Lerner provides us with a brilliant and hopeful vision of how to transform the Middle East from a cauldron of violence to a vanguard of peace. I hope every American will read this book and apply its lessons to change how we deal with the Middle East. For several decades Lerner has been a remarkably courageous rabbi, defying the orthodoxies of some in his own community to insist that Biblical teachings require recognizing the equal value to God of both Israelis and Palestinians. Challenging the extremists on all sides, Lerner insists on the practical and ethical necessity to embrace both Israel and Palestine with compassion and love.
Lerner presents us with a path to peace that will require our replacing the strategy of domination and war with what Lerner appropriately describes as the far more effective path to homeland security: the strategy of generosity and genuine caring for the well-being of everyone involved. This is practical and effective advice for the world. I hope every American will read this book and apply its lessons in change how we deal with the Middle East.
— Jimmy Carter, 39th president of the United States of America

**Beautiful Souls**

*Saying No, Breaking Ranks, and Heeding the Voice of Conscience in Dark Times*, by Eyal Press

Farrar, Straus and Girou, 2012

On the Swiss border with Austria in 1938, a police captain refuses to enforce a law barring Jewish refugees from entering his country. In the Balkans half a century later, a Serb from the war-blasted city of Vukovar defies his superiors in order to save the lives of Croats. At the height of the Second Intifada, a member of Israel’s most elite military unit informs his commander he doesn’t want to serve in the occupied territories.

Fifty years after Hannah Arendt examined the dynamics of conformity in her seminal account of the Eichmann trial, *Beautiful Souls* explores the flipside of the banality of evil, mapping out what impels ordinary people to defy the sway of authority and convention. Through the dramatic stories of unlikely resisters who feel the flicker of conscience when thrust into morally compromising situations, Eyal Press shows that the boldest acts of dissent are often carried out not by radicals seeking to overthrow the system but by true believers who cling with unusual fierceness to their convictions. Drawing on groundbreaking research by moral psychologists and neuroscientists, *Beautiful Souls* culminates with the story of a financial industry whistleblower who loses her job after refusing to sell a toxic product she rightly suspects is being misleadingly advertised. At a time of economic calamity and political unrest, this deeply reported work of narrative journalism examines the choices and dilemmas we all face

... more

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... less

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**Reviews**

Praise for *Beautiful Souls*

“Proving time and again that the boldest renegades are just regular people with independent minds—rather than dyed-in-the-wool radicals—Beautiful Souls underscores dissent’s populist potential. Acts of conscience, as Press puts it, 'have a way of reverberating.'” —Hannah Levintova, *Mother Jones*


Chris Hedges, “Israel and Palestine”

**The World As it Is: Dispatches on the Myth of Human Progress**

*By Chris Hedges*

- **Publisher's Weekly**
  **March 7, 2011**

Former New York Times correspondent Hedges (The Death of the Liberal Class) offers a collection of his recent articles (many culled from his regular column at Truthdig.com), grouped under a handful of topics: "Politics," "**Israel and Palestine,**" "The Middle East," "The Decay of Empire." It's indicative of the longtime war correspondent's experienced eye and commitment to social justice that these areas include subject matter of especially pressing concern, whether the task is understanding the assault underway on organized labor in Wisconsin and elsewhere, liberal disillusionment with Obama, or the dynamics of foreign dictatorships subsidized by the U.S., as in the
timely "Inside Egypt" and other dispatches providing vivid background and astute observations on a roiling Middle East. Hedges is equally direct and damning in assessments of Israel's ongoing occupation and colonization of Palestine, including some stirring reportage from within the shadow of the mammoth and destructive separation wall. While things may be changing given the current international upsurge of mass public democratic action, the author's pointed descriptions of the dangers of American "political passivity" deserve careful consideration along with much else in these powerfully written pages. (Apr.)

Join International Week against the Apartheid Wall, November 9-16! http://www.endtheoccupation.org/section.php?id=149

OBAMA
"Politics Throws Palestine Under the Bus"
Jim Lobe, News Analysis, Sept. 25, 2011, NationOfChange. : "Not only did the allegedly most 'anti-Israel' president ever [Obama] repeat, for the nth time, that 'America's commitment to Israel's security is unshakeable,' but also made crystal clear that Washington will veto any Palestinian application to the U.N. Security Council for statehood in his speech this week to the U.N. General Assembly. Not once did he refer to Jewish 'settlements' on Palestinian lands; nor did he even use the word 'occupied' to describe those lands and their people in an address that was largely, if ironically, devoted to celebrating this year's Arab struggles to end autocratic rule in their region." READ | DISCUSS | SHARE http://www.nationofchange.org/politics-throws-palestine-under-bus-1316963696

QUMSIYEH’S INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PEACE ESSAY: OBAMA, USA, PALESTINIANS, ISRAEL
[HumanRights] International day of peace Sept. 21, 2011
Reply |Mazin Qumsiyeh mazin@qumsiyeh.org via uark.edu to jbennet,

International day of peace
by Mazin Qumsiyeh, Professor and author based in the Bethlehem People Warehouse (aka Ghetto)

In his first speech at the UN, President Obama stated that he prohibited torture and ordered Guantanamo prisons closed. He also said he will work to cut the nuclear arsenal of the US and Russia and move towards a world without nuclear weapons. He said that peace must be pursued by actions of all nations working together and that the era of unilateralism is finished. He said he will work aggressively to advance peace based on two states: Israel and Palestine. He said, "America does not accept the legitimacy of continued Israeli
settlements”. All were big fat LIES. And now comes Obama with new lies in front of the UN and at this International day of peace. Here he shows Palestinian leaders did not give him any briefing on history. I hope any Palestinian leaders should object strongly and with facts and figures to these misstatements [my brief comments in brackets]:


BDS ENDORSEMENT

- Home
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- A BDS (Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions) Primer
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- Principles
- BDS Endorsement

In late July, 2011, the Palestine Israel Network’s Steering Committee joined the Episcopal Peace Fellowship’s National Executive Council in endorsing the International Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions Campaign against Israel until it complies with international law and universal principles of human rights. Network members are encouraged to study the origins and rationale for the campaign and to learn of the many levels at which it may be engaged. A BDS Primer is included on the PIN website with references to other organizations and websites for further study and opportunities for engagement.

The Palestine Israel Network’s beginnings lay in the recognition that on behalf of our Palestinian and Israeli brothers and sisters we, individually as Christians and corporately as a Church, are called to a more robust fulfillment of our baptismal covenant to ...strive for justice
and peace among all people, and to respect the dignity of every human being. We heard the call of the Palestinian Civil Society in 2005 and the call of Christians in the Kairos Palestine document of 2009, both asking us to embrace the non-violent strategy of BDS to help end the occupation and bring justice and peace to all the people in that troubled land. In order to fulfill our covenantal promise and respond to the earnest call of our Palestinian brothers and sisters, we commend the BDS campaign to all our members.

Underlying our baptismal covenant and the call from oppressed people is a holy imperative, articulated by the prophets of Israel and embodied in the person and ministry of Jesus to do justice, to love kindness and to walk humbly with God. In pursuing this strategy we recognize our motivation must be love, not retribution.

Christians have a long and distinguished history of engaging strategies of non-violent resistance in the form of boycotts, divestment and civil disobedience to help end injustice. They were employed in the Civil Rights Campaign in this country and were an effective tool in the campaign to press for fair wages and decent working conditions for farm workers in the American West and South. The boycott of international oil companies in support of the long and courageous struggle by so many to end apartheid in South Africa was endorsed by the Episcopal Church’s General Convention in 1988. And in 1991 it called upon the President and Congress to reinstate sanctions against South Africa until it was assured that the process for ending apartheid was irreversible. In relation to the Middle East conflict the Episcopal Church has consistently recognized the illegality of Israeli settlements in the Gaza Strip and the Palestinian Occupied Territories of the West Bank and East Jerusalem. Through its policy of corporate engagement it petitioned Motorola in 1994 to end sales to Israeli settlements located in the Palestinian Occupied Territories. And at that year’s General Convention it called upon the United States government to withhold financial support of Israel to the extent it helps fuel the growth of illegal Israeli settlements in the Gaza Strip, the West Bank and East Jerusalem.

Many years have been spent engaging a strategy of supporting and encouraging initiatives toward justice and peace at the official level of the “peace process”. We were encouraged by
the 1993 Oslo Accords and the prospects of movement toward a final status agreement. But Oslo has been an enormous disappointment for the Palestinian people and, effectively, a cover for Israel to extend its control of the West Bank through the growth and expansion of extensive new settlements. Current efforts to revive the “peace process” have revealed the degree to which United States foreign policy is held captive by the Israeli lobby. As things stand today, there is a fundamental flaw to the concept of a negotiated peace between Israel and the Palestinians. At the negotiating table, Israel and the Palestinians are far from equal parties. One is the occupier; the other, the occupied. One has enormous military power; the other has none. If it had the will, the administration and the U.S. Congress could help equalize the power differential, but to this date, it has not chosen to.

As a rabbi recently asked, “Does anyone know of any colonial power that has voluntarily relinquished its power and control?” Sadly, the answer is no. We wish Israel were the exception, and our Jewish friends have particular reason to wish it, but it is not.

We engage the non-violent strategy of BDS to help correct the power differential. We engage BDS in the hope that it will help “persuade” Israel that ending the occupation and granting equal rights to its Palestinian citizens is in its own self interest. Boycotts seldom do serious economic damage to the boycotted, but the strategy has proven to be the most effective way to educate the world to an enormous injustice and mobilize efforts to move all parties to a just and peaceful solution.

As Martin King observed, “the arc of history is long, but it bends toward justice”. And as President Obama added, it does not bend on its own. It needs each of us to do our part. We invite you to study the rationale and principles of the BDS movement and to join us and a growing international community in this non-violent strategy to end injustice and to launch us on that long path to peace.

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MORE BOOKS
-- A New Voice for Israel. "by Jeremy Ben-Ami. It's a highly moral book, IMO, pro-peace and pro-Israel (and pro-Palestinian, too). - Art
and don't miss the link to her interview at: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t91McXHxiXY  (8:48min)
Book may be ordered at: http://www.amazon.com/Palestine-Israeli-School-Books-Propaganda/dp/1845118138
[from Mazin Qumsiyeh)

Zunes, “US Congress' colonialist mentality”
In my latest article, I slam Congress for adopting a resolution opposing the rights of Palestinians in the occupied territories to independence outside of the highly-limiting criteria set down by the right-wing Netanyahu government and call on those who support human rights and international law to withhold their support for these pro-colonialist Democrats and the organizations that support them: http://www.truth-out.org/congress-and-its-colonialist-agenda/1310502773

You can read other recent articles of mine examining Congressional Democrats’ poor record on human rights and international law through the following links:
Progressive Defense of Weiner Overlooks His Right-Wing Foreign Policy
Netanyahu’s Speech and Congressional Democrats’ Embrace of Extremism
Democrats Push Through Yet Another Anti-Palestinian Resolution
A “Progressive Hero?” Time to Think Outside of the Boxer
Congress Defends Murder of American Peace Activist and Other War Crimes
Senate Again Undermines Obama’s Middle-East Peace Efforts
The Other Oil Spill
Harry Reid’s Anti-Islamic Agenda
U.S. Lawmakers Support Illegal Annexation
The Gaza War, Congress and International Humanitarian Law
Lebanon Intrusion
The Democrats and the “Human Shields” Myth
Why the Dems Have Failed Lebanon
You can find additional articles of mine on human rights, Israel/Palestine and other issues at:
Former CIA Official: Israel Will Bomb Iran In September
MJ Rosenberg, Media Matters, July 15, 2011
http://politicalcorrection.org/fpmatters/201107150010
A longtime CIA officer who spent 21 years in the Middle East is predicting that Israel will bomb Iran in fall, dragging the United States into another major war and endangering U.S. military and civilian personnel (and other interests) throughout the Middle East and beyond.

Earlier this week, Robert Baer appeared on the provocative KPFK Los Angeles show Background Briefing, hosted by Ian Masters. It was there that he predicted that Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu is likely to ignite a war with Iran in the very near future.

Robert Baer has had a storied career, including a stint in Iraq in the 1990s where he organized opposition to Saddam Hussein. (He was recalled after being accused of trying to organize Saddam's assassination.) Upon his retirement, he received a top decoration for meritorious service.

Baer is no ordinary CIA operative. George Clooney won an Oscar for playing a character based on Baer in the film Syriana (Baer also wrote the book).

He obviously won't name many of his sources in Israel, the United States and elsewhere, but the few he has named are all Israeli security figures who have publicly warned that Netanyahu and Defense Minister Ehud Barak are hell-bent on war.

Baer was especially impressed by the unprecedented warning about Netanyahu's plans by former Mossad chief Meir Dagan. Dagan left the Israeli intelligence agency in September 2010. Two months ago, he predicted that Israel would attack and said that doing so would be "the stupidest thing" he could imagine. According to Haaretz:

"When asked about what would happen in the aftermath of an Israeli attack Dagan said that: "It will be followed by a war with Iran. It is the kind of thing where we know how it starts, but not how it will end."

The Iranians have the capability to fire rockets at Israel for a period of months, and Hizbollah could fire tens of thousands of grad rockets and hundreds of long-range missiles, he said.'

According to Ben Caspit of Israeli daily Maariv, Dagan's blasts at Israel's political leadership are significant not only because Mossad chiefs, in office or retired, traditionally have kept their lips sealed but also because Dagan is very conservative on security matters.

Caspit writes that Dagan is "one of the most rightwing militant people ever born here. ... When this
man says that the leadership has no vision and is irresponsible, we should stop sleeping soundly at night."

Dagan describes the current Israeli government as "dangerous and irresponsible" and views speaking out against Netanyahu as his patriotic duty.

And his abhorrence of Netanyahu is not uncommon in the Israeli security establishment. According to Think Progress, citing the Forward newspaper, 12 of the 18 living ex-chiefs of Israel's two security agencies (Mossad and Shin Bet), are "either actively opposing Netanyahu's stances or have spoken out against them." Of the remaining six, two are current ministers in Netanyahu government, leaving a grand total of four out of 18 who independently support the prime minister.

In short, while Congress dutifully gives Netanyahu 29 standing ovations, the Israelis who know the most about both Netanyahu and Israel's strategic situation think he is a dangerous disaster.

But according to Baer, we ain't seen nothing yet.

There is almost "near certainty" that Netanyahu is "planning an attack [on Iran] ... and it will probably be in September before the vote on a Palestinian state. And he's also hoping to draw the United States into the conflict," Baer explained.

The Israeli air force would attack "Natanz and other nuclear facilities to degrade their capabilities. The Iranians will strike back where they can: Basra, Baghdad," he said, and even Afghanistan. Then the United States would jump into the fight with attacks on Iranian targets. "Our special forces are already looking at Iranian targets in Iraq and across the border [in Iran] which we would strike. What we're facing here is an escalation, rather than a planned out-and-out war. It's a nightmare scenario. We don't have enough troops in the Middle East to fight a war like that." He added, "I think we are looking into the abyss."

Masters asked Baer why the U.S. military is not mobilizing to stop this war from happening. Baer responded that the military is opposed, as is former Secretary of Defense Robert Gates, who used his influence to thwart an Israeli attack during the Bush and Obama administrations. But he's gone now and "there is a warning order inside the Pentagon" to prepare for war.

Washington Post: Israelis and Arabs march in Jerusalem for Palestinian statehood
Daniel Argo, from the Israeli group Sheikh Jarrah Solidarity, the main organizer of the march, asserted that Palestinian statehood would free Israel from the burden of occupation. "The struggle for Palestinian independence is also a struggle for freedom for Israelis," Argo said.

VFP & Other Allied Organizations Sign on to the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions Movement

Veterans For Peace has renewed its strong commitment to the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) movement. BDS is a non-partisan grassroots initiative that seeks to pressure Israel to comply
with international law and recognize fundamental Palestinian rights.
This is important considering the pressure the Israeli government is putting on BDS supporters and other Palestinian supporters.
Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions Statement  vfp@veteransforpeace.org

Reply |Gershon Baskin gershonbaskin@gmail.com to ipcri-diplomat., IPCRI-News--Vi., ipcri-vip gershonbaskin@gmail.com: :
“Reform! The end is at hand!” By GERSHON BASKIN
11/07/2011

Israel needs to stop digging its heels in and instead take steps on the road to peace.

There is a well-documented phenomenon in societies as they reach the final stages of a deeply rooted, bloody conflict. I call it “digging in the heels against the current.” During this final phase, some societies show their ugliest face. I am talking about the stronger side, the one required to make truly hard concessions on real assets such as land. Such societies face a growing sense that the world fails to see the justice on their side. Indeed, the world usually supports the side perceived as the “underdog,” even when that side uses terrorism to support its cause. The world sympathizes with its weakness and often discounts its shortcomings.

The stronger sides often loses any sense of its own strength and adopts an attitude of weakness. By portraying its weakness internally, it ends up justifying behaviors which it would normally have condemned. Israel is not the first nation in this situation.

There are many examples of societies that failed to accept the inevitable and, instead of acting with intelligence and dignity, sacrificed their own humanity in defense of their ‘right’ to defy what almost everyone else sees as their wrong. The final two years of South African apartheid were among the most repressive and aggressive of its too-long existence. The final period of British rule in India witnessed atrocities committed by the most civilized army on Earth at the time. The last years in Sudan provide another example of horrendous brutality, misery and death.

When Israel resorts to calling pro-Palestinian activists trying to enter the country legally through its international front door “hoolligans,” “terrorists,” and “Hamas lovers,” and needs 600 policemen to prevent their entry, something is happening here that needs introspection.

When Israeli society feels a deep sense of threat because a few hundred pro-Palestinian sailors aboard a group of 10 barely seaworthy boats try to break the siege of Gaza, then something is happening beneath the surface that should not be ignored or explained away as anti-Semitism or de-legitimization campaigns.

There was no real threat from the recent flotilla. Yet the perceived danger was expressed with existential urgency.

When Israel feels threatened by Palestinian villagers who organize a march from their village to their spring every Friday for the past two years (in Nebi Saleh), and has to resort to shooting hundreds of teargas grenades at 50 protestors armed only with flags and songs, and the public justifies this state-sponsored violence by calling the villagers terrorists, then we have entered that final stage of the
conflict described above.

THE LEGISLATIVE agenda of this Knesset, sponsored by this government and promoted by hate and fear mongers, is further evidence that Israel is digging its heels in against a current whose strength is increasing. The ‘Nakba Law,’ the allegiance oath, the Anti-political NGO laws, the Anti-boycott Law – all these are symptoms of a society which has lost control of its own sense of legitimacy, and therefore uses a temporary coalition majority to impose limits on its own democracy in order to create a façade of strength and determination.

Israel is in a race against time, and if it doesn’t change course, it’s going to lose.

Israel’s speedometer and compass are currently focused on September or shortly beyond, but even if the current government manages to convince enough countries not to support the Palestinian bid in the UN, the end of Israel’s control over the Palestinian people cannot be stopped.

Israel wants and needs security. It wants and needs recognition of its legitimacy.

Israel wants and needs to resolve the Palestinian refugee issue within the Palestinian state. It wants and needs recognized and secure borders. Israel wants and needs the entire world to recognize Jerusalem as its capital. None of these can be attained without first meeting similar needs and desires of the Palestinian people.

But instead of declaring its readiness to recognize a Palestinian state, Israel is busily working to prevent its emergence.

All declarations of support for a two-state solution are irrelevant in the face of the hard reality that the Israeli prime minister, foreign minister and all its diplomatic service are actively trying to prevent the Palestinian people from achieving liberty. This is how most of the world perceives it; this is how every Palestinian sees it.

THE OPPORTUNITY is at hand to turn the page on this conflict and to begin a new era. Israel can change the way that almost every Palestinian views it. Israeli recognition of a Palestinian state on the basis of the Obama principles – ’67 borders with agreed territorial swaps, real security arrangements, a non-militarized Palestinian state, Israel as the homeland of the Jewish people and Palestine the homeland of the Palestinian people, and a willingness to open sincere, honest and time-bound direct negotiations – would be like a magic wand. Both sides would be compelled to enter negotiations, and both would then have to make hard decisions and painful compromises.

Instead, Israel is digging in its heels.

It will use its strength, sometimes with sophistication and cunning – as it did with the flotilla and the airlift of pro-Palestinian activists – and sometimes with mere force, as it does every Friday all around the West Bank. But none of this will buy security, legitimacy, or the end of conflict with the Palestinians.

This conflict will not simply go away.

The Palestinian people will not bury their yearning for freedom and independence.
The majority of nations around the world will not forever, and not even for a long time, bow to Israel’s refusal to remove its control over the Palestinian people.

The end of this conflict is inevitable. It has been long; it has been painful and bloody. It has created deep-rooted hatred, anger and despair. It generates fear, and fear feeds the sense that it is impossible to arrive at peace. There are ways to make that route a lot less dangerous. In the end, Israel and Palestine will live in peace and we all know, more or less, what a peace agreement must look like.

Why do we still refuse to see the inevitable?

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