

# When "Peace" Means War

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By Robbie Friedmann

It may have taken four decades to realize that Arafat is nothing but a certified terrorist but clearly the last couple of years have pointed out that his terror is not only aimed at Israel but at his own people. With one side of his mouth he speaks of *peace* and with the other he directs provocation and sabotage against Israel but also against his very own appointed officials ("Arafat is Said to Fund Truce Foes," Charles A. Radin and Sa'Id Ghazali, *Boston Globe*, 23 July 2003): "Defiance of the Abbas government by paramilitary groups that are loyal to Arafat and are affiliated with his Fatah movement is the latest in a growing number of signs that the Roadmap initiative is in danger of breaking down."

Much ink was smeared on newspapers about the *truce* or the so-called *cease-fire* but the *hudna* (the regrouping to hit again) declared by the Palestinians was achieved after much internal debate and has a specific time limit which means that once that point is reached they will have *legitimacy* to renew the acts of violence. Clearly, the Palestinian gymnastics around declaring the *hudna* demonstrate the weakness of the Palestinian Authority (PA) and the internal disagreements reflects Arafat's efforts to undermine Abu Mazen's authority ("The Domestic Palestinian Dispute Over the Hudna," B. Tchernitzky, MEMRI, Inquiry and Analysis - Palestinian Authority, 25 July 2003, No. 144). However, as Tchernitzky indicates, "the affair, in its entirety, is primarily another reflection of the years-long inability of the PLO to be the sole representative of the Palestinian people."

In the meantime, despite the declared *hudna* the PA continues with its malicious relentless incitement against Israel. This week the PA's largest daily, *Al Quds*, published the cartoon of the crucifixions of Iraq and *Palestine* and depicted Jesus being arrested by Israeli soldiers on PA TV. This, of course, from the same fountain of truth and justice that supported Iraq in 1991 and again in 2003 ("PA Daily Cartoons: 1. US Octopus is Dismembering Saddam 2. Iraq and "Palestine" are "Crucified" Itamar Marcus, Palestinian Media Watch Bulletin, 24 July 2003). The PA continues to glorify suicide bombers and added the first female suicide terrorist to its pantheon of heroes ("PA TV Glorifies First Woman Suicide Terrorist - Wafa Idris," Palestinian Media Watch Bulletin, Itamar Marcus, 24 July 2003).

Despite the appearance of relative calm in the area, media watchdog groups warn that the talk about peace and stoppage of incitement is premature or simply misunderstood ("Seven Minutes of Peace Promotion," Itamar Marcus, Palestinian Media Watch, Media Update, 20 July 2003) suggesting that a single clip - broadcast once - of a *song peace* does not change the nature of the messages that serve as the daily spiritual propaganda diet for Palestinian viewers of all ages: "The satisfaction expressed at the removal of *Shahid* glorification clips is likewise premature, and shows a lack of understanding of the Palestinian world. The PA is now running summer camps attended by thousands of children and a dominant theme, as reported in their media, is *Shahid* and suicide bomber adoration. This is a direct continuation of the PA educational policy for many years, teaching children to admire terrorists who killed large numbers of Israelis,

by naming schools, sporting events, educational programs and institutions, after those terrorists."

Moreover, it is also reported that these summer camps are funded by the United Nations ("U.N. is Funding Summer Camps Honoring Terrorists, Itamar Marcus, Palestinian Media Watch Bulletin, 25 July 2003). Yet some are still talking about the diplomatic moves in the Middle East as the *peace process* and are making more out of a single Palestinian *peace song* than is warranted by facts and history ("Why the Peace Process Moves," Jackson Diehl, *Washington Post*, 21 July 2003).

Once in a very rare while an Arab writer points out the weaknesses and deficiencies of Arab societies and Arab leadership that are the causes of much of the trouble for which they are so eager to blame others. In this case it is an Arab diplomat under the (writing) name of Mustafa who opined that the recent Palestinian wave of violence is actually a crime against the Palestinians, that Arab leaders neglected their societies in order to fight Israel, that Arab intellectuals must assume responsibility for Arab society, and that the leadership is obsessed with the past ("[An Arab Diplomat on the Leadership Crisis in the Arab World](#)," MEMRI, Special Dispatch - Reform in the Arab and Muslim World, 22 July 2003, No. 540).

It is perhaps best viewed as an exception that points to the rule and indeed at the same time that his writings appear, it is also evident that the Muslim religious leadership continues to support suicide bombings in its conferences all over Europe ("[Al-Qaradhawi Speaks In Favor of Suicide Operations at an Islamic Conference in Sweden](#)," MEMRI, Special Dispatch - Jihad and Terrorism Studies Project, 24 July 2003, No. 542). It recommends suicide operations and provides the *reasoning* and ideological justification for carrying terror (suicide) acts ranging from vilifying and dehumanizing Israel as a colonial force to suggesting that *under pressure* the Muslim is permitted to use means that are *otherwise* prohibited.

So now, a terrorist in a suit is welcomed by the White House as the leader in whom it "has confidence" and to whom not only financial assistance is pledged but he is assured the White House will press Israel on the fence which is "snaking" in the *West Bank* ("Bush Outlines Steps to Ease Palestinian Poverty," Associated Press, *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, 25 July 2003).

The Palestinian Prime Minister (who still reports to Arafat) repeated three things on this visit: Demand, demand, and demand. First, he demanded the removal of all settlements. (This is far more than the Roadmap's stipulation of freezing settlements built after the Arab violence began in September 2000.) Second, he demanded that Israel be blamed for every problem in the area (as if the Palestinians have no responsibility in this matter), and third, he demanded the release of all prisoners, an issue not even mentioned in the Roadmap ("Bush Hosts Abbas, Pushes Effort," Bob Deans and Margaret Coker, *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, 26 July 2003).

At least on the prisoners issue President George W. Bush stated rather clearly that there is no reason to release prisoners as "Nobody is going to accept a situation in which they become less secure." But apparently it is acceptable to question a fence that is being erected to protect Israelis from additional terror attacks. Therefore, other than the issue of the prisoners it appears that the three years of violence rewarded the Palestinians handsomely. One should not be surprised when

they turn the spigot of violence again as it has served them so well in the past. Even the photos of Saddam's sons will not convince them otherwise.

In the discussion about terrorism and the war against it (as well as the war on Iraq) the media is filled with terms like, war, peace, truce, and cease-fire. The problem is that these terms mean different things to the parties involved. The Arabs for example, can wage war and by calling it *Jihad*, can shamelessly call it a peaceful effort ("The Meaning of Peace: CAIR vs. Daniel Pipes," Bat Yeor, *National Review*, 23 July 2003): "In this sense Muslims believe that expansion through war is not aggression but a fulfillment of the Koranic command to spread Islam as a way to peace. The resort to force to disseminate Islam is not war (*harb*), a word that is used only to describe the use of force by non-Muslims." Hence Islamic wars are not wars, but meritorious efforts to liberate the world from disbelief (*jahaliyya*) by its submission to Islam. Only submission brings peace, and it is the non-Muslim's failure to submit that provokes war.

Ironically, this religious approach is mirroring very well its secular counterpart: communism. In a sense, promoting the ideology that communism was inherently good and any harm and suffering (such as killing, the gulag) that took place was "necessary" to get to the "final stage" when the situation of all will be "good" because of the global victory achieved with a "classless society." Substitute communism with Jihad and the two suddenly seem to have much more in common - despite the obvious differences - than originally meets the eye. The problem with this of course is that the cleansed stage is never achieved and in the process of seeking it millions are murdered.

And at least one battle is fought on the home front. Arab advocacy groups are vehemently opposed to the appointment of Daniel Pipes to the board of the U.S. Institute of Peace ("The Meaning of Peace: CAIR vs. Daniel Pipes," Bat Yeor, *National Review*, 23 July 2003). As the battle over Pipes is moving into high gear, the State Department has a new advisory committee that is stacked with strong anti-Israel personalities ("[New State Dept. Committee Filled With Critics of Israel](#)," IMRA, 19 July 2003). Even one of the token Jews on the committee has demonstrated his criticism of Israel portraying Israel as responsible for the Arab terror campaign against her.

Some voices of reason are heard nonetheless pointing out that the U.S. and Israel have shared values that make them targets for terrorism. Therefore, it is in the interest of democracies to support a sister democracy when it is threatened and not to cave in to terror. Israel is correctly described as the only country in the region that has a majority of Jews; as the only country in the region that gives people of all faiths and nationalities full religious, civic, and political freedom; and with two exceptions, it is not recognized by any other Arab states ("Moral Clarity and the Middle East: Why we support Israel," William J. Bennett, *National Review*, 22 July 2003).

In fact, Bennett goes beyond the cliches of helping a sister democracy. He takes a rather strong stand in the age when Israel is expected by friends and foe alike to make as many concessions as possible and suggests recognizing Israel's capital in Jerusalem.

"Indeed, most Americans today would be surprised to learn that, in fact, the U.S. embassy in Israel is not in Jerusalem. If we, as a nation, want to maintain our moral clarity in supporting

democracy, we should be very clear that we will not tolerate any other capital for Israel, and we shall not maintain any other location for our embassy. If the United States would comply with what both major parties in this democracy have agreed to, that would send the most morally clear message we could: Israel is our ally, Jerusalem is its capital, and we will not cave in to the demands of terrorists."

Surely, the Palestinian Prime Minister must be elated that Bennett is not in the White House. It now remains to be seen what happens when the Prime Minister of Israel visits the White House. He might start by congratulating President Bush for the successful *targeted assassination* of the Hussein brothers, a policy that subjected Israel to tons of criticism when it exercised it against Hamas terrorists. He might then continue by suggesting not exceeding the parameters of the Roadmap and not include such issues as prisoners and settlements. And he might end by posing the cardinal question: Why have the Palestinians done nothing to dismantle the terror organizations and what is President Bush going to do about that.

It is high time the West stops interpreting terror the same way its perpetrators do. It is also high time to understand that there are three options made available to us: convert to Islam, die if we do not, or fight. Israel and the U.S. seem to have decided to fight but it is still a very long uphill road.