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## FALSE PROPHETS WON'T FACE THE FACTS

ACCORDING to the "Palestinian Covenant" of the PLO – the most anti-Semitic document since the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion* – the Jews are not a nation, have no right to a state, have no roots or rights in Palestine, and indeed, when "The Day" comes, individual Jews who arrived in the land after 1917 will simply have to go away.

In terms perhaps less crude but no less clear, the genial idea that the Jews have no national rights has been expressed by other Arab leaders and thinkers. It is, in fact, the "ideological" justification for the Arab leaders' campaign to rob the Jewish people of its homeland, to rid Palestine of its Jews and to ensure Arab dominion over an unbroken stretch of Asia and Africa between the Persian Gulf and the Atlantic Ocean.

Fifty-seven years ago, in August 1929, the Arabs in one city in Palestine, under the inspiration of Yasser Arafat's predecessor, Amin el-Husseini, decided to get rid of all the Jews within their reach without recourse to covenants or other formalities. They simply fell upon them, defenceless as they were, and slaughtered them. A mere handful escaped, by chance or through the compassion of an Arab neighbour.

The city was Hebron, one of the four holy cities in Jewish tradition, where the nation's patriarchs are buried, where a Jewish community had subsisted over many troubled centuries. It was essentially a centre of learning, populated largely by yeshiva students and teachers, lacking all defence measures and skills.

The town remained *judenrein* for 38 years, until the Six Day War. The Arabs, fearful of the dire retribution which they believed was their due, did not resist. They met the approaching Israeli army unit with white flags, and not a hair from a Hebron Arab head was touched.

THE implications of the 1929 horror were conjured up by a recent article in *The Jerusalem Post* ("Widening Rift," April 23, 1986). The author there stated categorically that the Jews now living in Hebron, and indeed in all the "occupied areas" (presumably those "occupied" in the Six-Day War) "have made their dwelling-place in an area which is not theirs to live in." He then goes on to lambast those Jews with a notable catalogue of pejoratives: they represent, he says, an "archaic Judaism, rigid, formalistic, separatist, ethnocentric and xenophobic." All this because they wish to live in areas of their national homeland not preferred by the author of the article, and who believe that the way to ensure that the security and the very existence of the national home and its people shall not again be threatened is by living throughout the whole extent of the land.

The author of the article, having decreed that the verdict of expulsion executed by the Hebron Arabs in 1929 is irreversible, then asserts unblushingly that he and his like are the spokesmen of a moral and humanistic creed, and Jewish to boot.

He might be horrified to learn that if he were telling the truth, and his sentence of death were valid for Jewish life in Hebron (and Kfar Etzion and the Jordan Valley and the Old City of Jerusalem and the rest of the "occupied areas") it would apply equally to Lod and Ramle and Jaffa and Haifa – indeed to all of Palestine. Let it not be hidden from him that wherever he, the author himself, has "made his dwelling place" in the Land of Israel,

his living there is no more and no less licit than that of the Jews on whom he pours his scorn and his hatred.

The right of the Jewish people to its homeland in Eretz Yisrael, and the right of every Jew to live and visit throughout its territory is not something that fluctuates according to the whims of an Amin el-Husseini, or Arafat, or Hussein, or Schultz or Thatcher, or Peres or Begin – of David Krivine, the author of the article.

Nevertheless, it is not irrelevant to remind the apologists that recognition of the unchanging Jewish national affinity to Palestine was part of the warp and woof of Western culture over the centuries. Recognition of the existing 3,000-year-old right was at the heart of the League of Nations mandate for Palestine – which defined its purpose as the “reconstitution” of the Jewish National Home. What is more, the territory embraced by that recognition included not only Hebron, and the rest of the “occupied areas” but also the lands of Palestine across the Jordan.

SO MUCH for “areas not theirs to live in.” The article also poses a problem of truth, or rather its suppression. After all, it does not only ignore the historic background of Hebron. (Why otherwise summon up the *hutzpa* to tell Jews they have no right to return to occupy the place of their murdered forerunners?) It does not mention the fact that the solution it urges to the conflict (giving the Arabs territory in return for being “accepted” by them) has been tried; and that the only response of the Arabs has been an annihilatory onslaught. Did not the Jewish leaders in 1947 agree (foolishly) to give up all but a sliver of territory, because they believed naively that Arab greed would thereby be appeased? And did they not keep on repeating the offer despite repeated, and bloody, proof of Arab rejection?

No; Mr. Krivine should write an honest article to explain why the tiny Jewish State has since its infancy had to maintain a gigantic defence establishment, why it had to fight for its life when it did not even have access to Hebron (or to Jerusalem’s Old City, or to the rest of Judea and Samaria), why men and women of Israel – Jews and Druse and some Moslem citizens too – must give up years of their lives to military service.

If prepared to face this historic truth and its implications – let him *then* come and tell us that the way we could have kept the peace, in 1948 and 1967, was by refraining from living in “areas which are not ours to live in.”

The frustrations and the disturbing irrationalities of the small, but voluble, minority of apologists is understandable. They are reminiscent of the resentment, the derision, the hatred, that were poured out by a large segment of the British public in 1938 on the head of Winston Churchill, who was painted as the war-mongering villain of a piece in which Hitler and the Germans were depicted as reasonable, peace-loving, much-sinned-against victims of Czech intransigence.

They, indeed, have no solution for the problem posed by the Arab doctrine of the annihilation of the Jewish State and the reduction of the Jews, at best, to the status of *dhimmi*s (degraded, tolerated citizens) in an Arab sovereignty. They have gradually battered themselves (and now are arrogantly trying to batter everybody else) into the belief that somehow the Jews are to blame for their own troubles.

Not all the Jews of course, not they themselves, the good, moral, humanistic Jews, but the others. To describe the others, they lapse into the kind of language favoured traditionally by anti-national assimilationists or nowadays, by self-hating Jews like Bruno

Kreisky or Noam Chomsky; the others are “rigid, formalistic, separatist, ethnocentric, xenophobic” – Jews, that is, who refuse to be bulldozed by false prophets of peace. And so the humanists bluster, and rave, and suppress the truth.

They and we all are caught in a problem to which there is no ready solution in sight. The Arabs have not given up their purpose of dismantling the Jewish State and gaining sovereign control over the whole country – whether in two stages or in a one-stage war; and the only rational prospect of their abandoning that purpose is that they have no hope of achieving it.

Some years ago in *The Jerusalem Post*, it was the same author of the article discussed here who wrote that his grandfather would turn in his grave at the notion that Jews were prepared to give up part of Eretz Yisrael. Alas, it is not only the tranquility of his and all our grandfathers that is disturbed. What should concern him and us is that if his ideas are consummated it is today’s and tomorrow’s grandchildren that will pay the price: *bechiya le’dorot*.

*See Letter to the Editor on the following page*

*Readers Letters – 17 June 1986*

**FOES WITHIN**

*To the Editor of The Jerusalem Post*

Sir, – My compliments to Shmuel Katz on his excellent article of May 9, “False prophets won’t face the facts.” I heartily endorse his views.

It has been a constant source of frustration to see literate and competent writers scanning Israel so intently to pick out every little blemish and distort it out of all proportion. What a pity they don’t use their energies and skills to fight the many external enemies seeking to wipe out Israel.

It is an old story in our history: we have as much to fear from the foes within as from those without.

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