



ISRAEL NEWS

*A collection of the week's news from Israel
From the Bet El Twinning / Israel Action Committee of
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Both the Palestinian cross-border operation in June 2006 that led to the kidnapping of Cpl. Gilad Schalit to Gaza, and Hizbullah's similar raid in July 2006 that fomented the summer war in Lebanon demonstrated the dire consequences

of Israeli land giveaways. Neither the onslaught from Gaza nor the war from Lebanon would have happened if Israel hadn't left Gaza in 2005 and Lebanon in 2000.

For Kadima it was clear that to survive the events of the summer of 2006, it needed to develop a story line to hide the truth. In Lebanon, hiding the truth meant choosing defeat over victory.

For anyone with even a vague notion about strategy, it was clear at the time that the only way to protect northern Israel from Hizbullah was to deny Hizbullah the use of southern Lebanon as a base of operations. To do that, Israel needed to conquer and maintain control over southern Lebanon. Nothing else could end the Iranian proxy's ability to rain its missiles down on Israel. And given the jihadist nature and foreign command of Hizbullah, Israel has no capacity to deter the paramilitary force.

For Kadima's leaders however, a reconquest of south Lebanon would involve recognizing that their land surrender strategy was wrong. Their governing rationale would be discredited.

So instead they opted for defeat. Rather than fight Hizbullah to victory, they attacked their domestic political opponents by claiming that only warmongers would support a reconquest of south Lebanon. In so doing, they discredited the only viable strategy for victory while sending IDF forces to Lebanon to fight battles whose sole purpose was to run down the clock until the US stepped in and negotiated a truce with the terror army.

The US-mediated ceasefire, which legitimized Hizbullah as a political force and paved the way for its rearmament and takeover of the Lebanese government, was a disaster for Israel. But for Kadima it was a great success. Livni spun the ceasefire as a massive diplomatic accomplishment for herself and Kadima. The willing media went along with the fiction.

Although all the spinning in the world couldn't convince the public to support Kadima's planned unilateral withdrawal from Judea and Samaria, Kadima was able to salvage the gist of its defeatist strategy. By pretending that Israel hadn't failed in Lebanon, and defending the view that victory isn't an option, Kadima deftly replaced its unilateral surrender strategy with as strategy of surrendering land in the framework of a "peace process" with the pro-terror, corrupt, unpopular, and anti-Israel Fatah-led PA in Ramallah. That "peace process" in turn kept the land surrender policy on the table by asserting that the main obstacle to peace is Israel's unwillingness to give its land to the Palestinians.

A similar pattern unfolded with Kadima's handling of Operation Cast Lead. Here too it was clear to any semi-sentient observer that the only way to defend southern Israel is to reconquer Gaza. For as long as Hamas controls territory it will use it to fight Israel. And given Hamas's subservience to Iran, its jihadist ideology and its Syrian-based leadership's distance from the front, it is obvious that Israel has no capacity to deter Hamas.

But for Kadima, which owes its existence to its leaders' execution of Israel's 2005 pullout from Gaza, acknowledging that Israel has no option other than reasserting control over Gaza was not an option. Then too, a reconquest of Gaza would discredit Kadima's new-old signature issue of giving away Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria.

And so, rather than fight to win, Kadima again fought for US intervention. Livni and Olmert claimed again that only warmongering extremists supported reconquering Gaza, and announced that Israel's goal was to deter Hamas. For its part, the media blocked all discussion of whether or not it is possible for Israel to deter Hamas and cooperated in demonizing anyone with the temerity to note that the only way to secure southern Israel is to control Gaza.

Then, as elections approached, Kadima declared that deterrence had

Commentary...

Kadima's Strategy For Success By Caroline Glick

Provoked by the Palestinians' escalating missile campaign, on Sunday evening the Ashkelon Parents Association voted not to send their children to school on Monday.

Ever since the outgoing Kadima government ended Operation Cast Lead in Gaza on January 20, the Palestinians have steadily stepped-up their missile war against Israel. Over the weekend the IDF acknowledged that six weeks later, daily Palestinian missile barrages against Israel have returned to pre-Operation Cast Lead levels. Moreover, the IDF warned that over the past six weeks, Hamas and its sister terror groups have rebuilt their missile arsenals both through imports of Iranian arms from Egypt and through local production lines. They have also brought in fairly advanced anti-aircraft missiles capable of shooting down IAF helicopters.

The proximate cause for the decision to close down schools was the weekend missile strike against a high school in Ashkelon. The direct hit caused massive damage both to the school and to surrounding apartments. IDF inspectors assessed that the Grad missile the Palestinians used in the attack had been locally upgraded. Its warhead was two and a half times bigger than usual.

As Ashkelon's children settled into their living rooms instead of their classrooms on Monday morning, a few hundred kilometers to the south representatives from 80 countries and international organizations convened in Sharm el-Sheikh to pledge billions of dollars in aid to Hamas-controlled Gaza. The US, represented by Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, pledged \$900 million in assistance.

Also on Monday, The Jerusalem Post reported that the US is curtailing its military aid to Israel. Under new Pentagon guidelines, the Ministry of Defense must give a detailed accounting of how it uses every item it purchases with US aid money. As a consequence, the Defense Ministry issued new instructions to the IDF that from now Israel's purchases from the US will be limited to defensive armaments and systems aimed at preserving its "qualitative edge" against its enemies.

To understand how it came to pass that six weeks after Operation Cast Lead, the US has joined the nations of the world in funding Hamas and is curtailing its military assistance to Israel, it is necessary to understand Israel's domestic politics. Specifically, since as Israel's leaders during Operation Cast Lead Prime Minister Ehud Olmert and Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni are responsible for Israel's current predicament, it is necessary to understand their Kadima party's operating rationale.

The main rule of politics that has guided Kadima since its founding in November 2005 is never be perceived as failing. For the past three years, with the active collusion of the local media, Kadima has managed to control the flow of information to the public and so successfully covered up the abject failures of its strategic policies. Its success in last month's elections is testament to its extraordinary capacity to spin and obfuscate information.

This Kadima practice was first implemented in the lead-up to the 2006 elections. At the time, the media worked with Kadima to suppress information about the strategic significance of Hamas's electoral victory in the January 2006 Palestinian Authority elections. They also blocked reportage and public discussion of the massive build-up of Iranian-supplied arms in Gaza following Israel's withdrawal from the area in September 2005, and the transformation of Gaza's disparate terror cells into Hizbullah-trained and styled paramilitary brigades.

The need for the cover-up was obvious: An open discussion of post-withdrawal developments in Gaza would have demonstrated to the public that Kadima's signature policy of unconditionally surrendering land to the Palestinians was, to put it mildly, insane.

been achieved and pulled IDF forces from Gaza. They told us that the continued Palestinian missile offensive against the south was nothing more than the last gasps of a defeated foe. And the media went along with them.

In the lead-up to the elections, the international diplomatic backlash against Israel was underplayed and the strategic meaning of Hamas's continued missile war was widely ignored by both Kadima and the media.

Now, as the Likud-led rightist bloc is forming the next government, information about Israel's actual situation is finally being reported. Not only did Israel not deter Hamas, the inconclusive end of the campaign has paved the way for a massive diplomatic onslaught against Israel and a diplomatic campaign to legitimize Hamas.

Today Israel is being blamed for Hamas's war against it.

Kadima's favorite Palestinian "peace" partners in Fatah are leading an international campaign to indict IDF commanders as war criminals.

While last weekend's bombing of yet another Israeli school was met with international indifference, international leaders lined up to have their photographs taken outside the UNRWA school in Gaza that the IDF attacked in January after Hamas combatants used the building as a missile launching pad against Israeli civilians.

Then there is the US-backed international campaign to force Israel to surrender control over its borders with Gaza to Hamas. Last week Clinton joined her European counterparts in demanding that Israel permit cement, aluminum tubes and other missile components to enter Gaza in order to alleviate the "humanitarian suffering" of the poor Gazans. Furthermore, like Europe, the Obama administration supports the establishment of a Hamas-Fatah government.

In the meantime, Kadima pretends that there is nothing to worry about. As The Jerusalem Post reported on Friday, both Livni and Olmert refuse to actively oppose the international campaign to criminalize IDF commanders because doing so would involve criticizing Fatah leaders with whom they claim to have such wonderful ties. Similarly, the Obama administration cannot be criticized because that would mean that Kadima has failed to maintain US support for Israel.

And that's the point. With its policy of never acknowledging failure, Kadima's strategy for dealing with the aftermath of Operation Cast Lead has been on the one hand to ignore what has happened, and on the other hand, to blame Likud for what is transpiring.

Rather than attack Hamas and Fatah in international forums and so defend Ashkelon's schoolchildren at least diplomatically, Livni devotes herself to attacking Prime Minister-designate Binyamin Netanyahu for refusing to back Palestinian statehood.

Netanyahu's view is clear. Surrendering control over Judea, Samaria and Jerusalem to the Palestinians will endanger Israel. For as long as that remains the case, it is impossible to support Palestinian statehood.

Likud's position is indisputable. But it is also a denunciation of Kadima's governing strategy. So Livni denies the truth to advance her party's interests and condemns Likud for recognizing reality.

In so doing, she has paved the way for an international boycott of the Likud-led government. The Palestinians and their allies throughout the world are already arguing that there is no difference between Likud and Hamas since both of them reject the so-called "two-state solution." Clinton is expected to demand that Netanyahu publically endorse Palestinian statehood during her visit here.

As we absorb the spectacle of world leaders lining up to give their money to Gaza while Israeli schoolchildren are forced to stay home from school, we must understand how we got here. We are here because Kadima has placed its political success above Israel's security. (Jerusalem Post Mar. 2)

III Winds From Washington By Isi Leibler

There are ominous vibes emanating from Washington signaling impending confrontations between the Obama administration and the incoming Netanyahu government.

Over recent weeks the administration has appointed to senior government postings, personnel with track records of hostility towards Israel such as James Jones and Samantha Power.

But what utterly shocked friends of Israel was the selection of former US Ambassador to Saudi Arabia, Chas Freeman, to head the National Intelligence Council. Freeman, who will determine what intelligence is to be presented to the president and personally attend his intelligence briefings, is a bitter foe of Israel. Until now he actually headed the Saudi-funded Middle East Policy Council where he justified Palestinian terror

against Israel and even tried to rationalize Hamas behavior. Last year he accused the Bush administration of "supporting right wing Israeli governments to undo the Oslo Accords and to pacify the Palestinians rather than make peace with them". He also dismissed the two state solution as too little and too late "because what is on offer looks to Palestinians more like an Indian reservation than a country".

There were also disconcerting statements from George Mitchell, Obama's Middle East envoy. Some Israelis recollect that in the course of his involvement in the region during the Clinton era, his obsessive even-handedness resulted in an inability to distinguish between terrorists and victims. His failed 2001 plan was a classic manifesto of moral equivalency, repeating mantras about cycles of violence and condemning both sides equally for lacking restraint.

Hitherto, the US administration and Israel agreed not to negotiate with Hamas unless it unequivocally reneged on its objective to destroy the Jewish state. Mitchell has now planted the seeds for a confrontation with the incoming Netanyahu government by asserting that the divisions between the two Palestinian factions represent a major obstacle towards achieving a settlement and urged Hamas and Fatah to unite. He failed to explain the benefits of submerging the weaker Fatah into the more powerful Iranian proxy whose extremism matches that of the Taliban.

THERE ARE other troubling signals. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton is providing Gaza with close to a billion-dollar bailout to be transferred through tainted bodies like UNWRA which will unquestionably strengthen Hamas. Clinton also angrily insists that Israel open border crossings, dismissing the fact that Gilad Schalit remains incarcerated and that Hamas continues launching missiles and shooting at Israelis.

Senate Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman John Kerry ominously suggested that while ultimately Israel must decide, the US would try to steer its ally in a direction that was good for Israel and the international community. Congressman Gary Ackerman, chairman of the House Subcommittee on the Middle East and South Asia, until now a strong supporter of Israel, made bizarre remarks bracketing "the same destructive dynamic which creates terrorism and the march of settlements and outposts" and "leads to the firing of rockets and perpetration of settler pogroms." Democrat Congressman Robin Baird urged the administration to reassess aid to Israel to pressure the new government.

Former US ambassador to Israel Dan Kurzer, a long-standing Obama Middle East adviser, warned that "a government headed by Benjamin Netanyahu which included Avigdor Lieberman would be a bad combination for American interests" which would be loath to "embrace a government that included a politician who was defined as a racist."

But the greatest shock was the initial decision by the administration to participate "for the time being" in the preparatory committee for the Durban II conference, scheduled in Geneva on April 20. The original Durban "anti racism" conference in 2001 was a vile anti-Semitic hate fest boycotted by the Bush Administration. The Durban II Preparatory Committee is under the auspices of the Orwellian named UN Human Rights Commission, an evil body dominated by a coven of Moslem states and tyrannical regimes creating an obscene parody of human rights.

The committee is currently chaired by Libya, whose president accused Israel of responsibility for the genocide in Darfur and also recently recommended that Israeli Jews be resettled in Alaska. Iran and Cuba are deputy chairs. The drafts for Durban II reaffirm the call to delegitimize Israel, the only country singled out for human rights violations. The Jewish state is defined as a "foreign occupation founded on settlements, and operated by laws based on racist discrimination... a contemporary form of apartheid and a security threat to international peace".

The Canadians last year announced that they would boycott Durban. The US may have done likewise had our confused Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni not prevaricated and naively hinted that Israel might yet participate if the organizers changed course.

It was thus disgraceful that after seven years of the US treating this vile body as a pariah, aware that global anti-Semitism was at an all time high, the Obama administration dispatched a delegation to the preparatory committee. They did so under no illusions that the organizers could be persuaded to alter their disgusting program.

Anne Bayefsky, a senior fellow of the Hudson Institute, detailed on her Web site (www.EyeontheUN.org) the utterly demeaning and groveling manner in which the US delegation did raise concerns about efforts to muzzle freedom of speech (such as the use of allegations of Islamophobia to block all criticism of Islam), about demands to criminalize profiling,

and about discrimination based on sexual orientation. But inexplicably, they remained absolutely silent concerning the vile references to Israel in the drafts and even failed to respond when invited to comment about Iranian objections against a European proposal to condemn Holocaust denial.

The passive participation of the United States at a gathering dominated by anti-Semites whose objective is to "reaffirm the Durban Declaration" was shameful and legitimized the resurrection of the hate fest by this wretched group. Bayefsky was justified in accusing the Obama administration of abandoning and betraying Israel as well as sacrificing basic American values in order to conform to the new policy of reaching out to Iranians and other extremist bodies.

Confronted by an eruption of public indignation, the administration subsequently withdrew from this despicable forum. But enormous damage has already been incurred, and some European countries who initially intended absenting themselves may still participate.

Although the jury is still out, we face difficult times. In order to obtain accolades from the Arab world, the Obama Administration is planning to distance itself from Israel or pressure her into making concessions which undermine her basic security needs, we must maintain a united front and stand firm.

Our American Jewish allies and friends of Israel must gird themselves for new challenges. In contrast to the Bill Clinton and George W. Bush eras when support of Israel was synonymous with US policy, they may now find themselves conflicting with a powerful administration intent on distancing itself from Israel. They are also being undermined by a minority of noisy renegade Jews who shamelessly lobby the administration to employ what they describe as "tough love," a code message for threatening Israel with sanctions if it does not obey their demands for further unilateral concessions. American Jewish leaders now face the challenge of convincing a hopefully pragmatic President Obama - whom they overwhelmingly supported in the election - that appeasing an Iranian terrorist proxy and prematurely creating a Palestinian state controlled by Jihadists can only undermine prospects for peace and harm US interests. (Jerusalem Post Mar 2)

That Surreal Gaza Reconstruction Conference By Daniel Pipes

Was I the only one rubbing my eyes in disbelief yesterday, as the Egyptian government hosted an "International Conference for the Reconstruction of Gaza"?

It took place in Sharm El-Sheikh, attended by delegations from 71 states, plus 16 regional, international, and financial organizations. Its stated goal was to raise US\$2.8 billion, of which \$1.3 was for rebuilding what had been destroyed in the course of Israel's recent war on Hamas (the rest would be sent to the Palestinian Authority to help improve its standing). The actual amount raised at the conference was \$4.5 billion which, when added to previously committed funds, means the grant total for Gaza and the PA comes to \$5.2 billion, to be disbursed over a two-year period. A delighted Egyptian foreign minister called the amount "beyond our expectations." U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton called it "a very productive conference"

Among the larger donations included a Gulf Cooperation Council contribution of \$1.65 billion over five years and a U.S. government pledge of \$900 million from the American taxpayer (of which \$300 million will go for Gaza rebuilding).

Husni Mubarak of Egypt, Nicholas Sarkozy of France, Silvio Berlusconi of Italy, Ban Ki-moon of the United Nations, Amr Moussa of the Arab League, and Mahmoud Abbas of the Palestinian Authority gave speeches.

Why my disbelief at this spectacle: I wonder if those eminentoes and worthies really believe that warfare in Gaza is a thing of the past, and that the time for reconstruction is nigh?

They must not read dispatches from southern Israel, which report the daily warfare that continues there. Take a representative news item from Yedi'ot Aharonot, dated February 28, "Experts: Grads in Ashkelon were advanced."

the two Grad rockets that landed in Ashkelon Saturday morning[Feb. 28,] were new and improved models, capable of greater destruction than those usually fired from Gaza. One of the rockets hit a school in the southern city, and succeeded in penetrating the fortification used to protect it from projectiles. ... The Grad rockets that hit Ashkelon were two of only five or six locally manufactured 170 mm rockets ever fired at Israel, experts say. The rarely used rockets have a range of 14 km

(8.6 miles) and are capable of massive damage, evident from the destruction witnesses described on the scene of Saturday's attack.

In an official protest to the United Nations, the Israel's Ambassador Gabriela Shalev noted that "there have been nearly 100 rocket and mortar attacks from the Gaza Strip" since the ceasefire on January 18, or over two per day. These have been increasing in number, with 12 rockets were fired at Sderot on March 1 alone.

Responding to these attacks, the Israeli cabinet resolved on March 1 that "should the firing from the Gaza Strip continue, it would be met by a painful, sharp, strong and uncompromising response by the security forces." Prime Minister-designate Binyamin Netanyahu echoed this bellicosity, reportedly telling a European leader that he would not sacrifice Israel's security "for a smile."

(Saudi foreign minister Saud Al-Faisal, in unexpected agreement, noted that rebuilding Gaza would be "difficult and fool-hardy, so long as peace and security do not prevail" there.)

What the hell are the donor countries doing, getting in the middle of an on-going war with their high-profile supposed reconstruction effort? My best guess: this permits them subtly to signal Jerusalem that it better not attack Gaza again, because doing so will confront it with a lot of very angry donor governments - including, of course, the Obama administration.

Adding to the surreal quality is a blithe disregard for Israel's security needs. Consider the attitude of Douglas Alexander, international development secretary for Britain's Labour government, who pledged £30 million of his taxpayers' funds to rebuild houses, schools, and hospitals in Gaza. "There is a desperate need for tough restrictions on the supply of goods to be relaxed," he said, demanding next that "Israel must do the right thing and allow much-needed goods to get through to those men, women and children who continue to suffer."

That's very humanitarian of Mr. Alexander, but he willfully ignored Israeli expectations that Hamas will confiscate steel, concrete, and other imported construction materials to build more tunnels, bunkers, and rockets. After all, Hamas appropriated prior deliveries intended for civilians, and so blatantly that even the usually docile United Nations Relief and Works Agency protested.

Husni Mubarak might warn Hamas not to treat the donors' pledges as a "conquest of war," but it will assuredly do precisely that. U.S. Rep. Mark Kirk (Republican of Illinois) got it right: "To route \$900 million to this area, and let's say Hamas was only able to steal 10 percent of that, we would still become Hamas' second-largest funder after Iran."

So, under the cheery banner of building, in Clinton's words, "a comprehensive peace between Israel and its Arab neighbors," donor states are not only defying Israel to protect itself from rocket fire but they are funneling matériel to Hamas.

Is this ignorance or mendacity? I suspect the latter; no one is that dumb. (FrontPageMagazine.com Mar 30)

Europe's Woes America's Warning By Nidra Poller

It is difficult to imagine how European nations could find the will and the ways to counter the subversive forces they have invited upon themselves and allowed to flourish for more than three decades. The current phase of global jihad, already underway in the much vaunted decolonization process, coalesced with the seizure of power in Iran by Ayatollah Khomeini (who had been living as a pampered refugee in France). But the American reader should be wary of concluding that Europe is lost...and the United States is standing firm.

On the contrary, all of Western civilization is under fire. As promised during the campaign, Barack Hussein Obama is making a radical change in American policy. Not of course the glorious change his worshippers promised themselves, but a troubling shift toward dhimmitude. The newly elected president lost no time in pleading guilty as charged by Muslim authorities and promising to refrain from further rebellion in order to receive their benevolent indulgence.

Similar methods produce similar results. Jihad forces in Europe--and in the United States--used Israel's Cast Lead operation in Gaza as a pretext to organize virulent, violent pro-Hamas demonstrations. Because Europe is further down the path to surrender, the enraged pro-Hamas mobs were more violent, destructive, and physically threatening here than in the United States. But in both cases they advanced their dominion. This should be recognized as authentic conquest of territory by enraged mobs bearing down on hapless victims in an ominous show of force and not, as

claimed and widely accepted, citizen demonstrators exercising their right to free speech.

If you can carry signs equating the Magen David with the swastika, if you can scream “Jews to the ovens” in the face of Zionists in Ft. Lauderdale Florida, if you can storm into a synagogue in Caracas, Venezuela and terrorize the congregation, if you can bully the police in England, smash up the Place de l’Opéra in Paris, burn Israeli and American flags, shout Allahu Akbar without meeting resolute opposition, it means you can keep going and ultimately fulfill those murderous promises. Do American Jews understand what was acquired by these phony demonstrations that are really paramilitary operations? Wherever those enraged mobs set foot they transformed the streets into de facto waqf territory.

Each successive crisis is an opportunity to ratchet up Jew hatred and the concomitant assault on Western civilization, achieving, step by step, tacit acceptance of the unspeakable. Here is how it works: first, the provocation. Jihadist attacks—thousands of rockets launched against Israel, a few airplanes flown into the WTC, capture and beheading of hostages, roadside bombs, inhuman pizzeria bombers, nuclear weapons programs—finally provoke a riposte. Bingo! The Muslim wailing machine goes into action. It is immediately picked up by complicit Western media and transmitted, with a Good Journalism stamp of approval, to public opinion. Israel, the United States and anyone else who dares to fight back is accused of war crimes, peace crimes, and original sin. This justifies subsequent acts of subversion and aggression against the free world.

When the United States used its formidable military force and assumed its international responsibilities, European nations, with rare exceptions, exploited opposition to “the war in Iraq” to undermine the American superpower. This agitation was exploited in turn by jihad interests to advance the Islamization of Europe...and by ricochet to influence domestic politics in the United States as Obamamania surfed on the theme of repairing America’s battered image.

The European Union, with France in the lead, vaunting its diplomatic savoir faire, competes with the U.S. for influence in the Middle East, and always seems to pull in the Arab direction. French ceasefire diplomacy restrained Israel’s capacity to defeat Iranian proxies—Hizbullah in 2006, Hamas today. The harsh criticism of Israel and the U.S. that underlies this self-righteous peacemaking fuels domestic pro-jihad protest marches that end in attacks against police and property, further undermining government authority in Europe and endangering local Jewish populations.

All of this subversive activity is advanced by what I call “lethal narratives.” These are stories of what is happening generated by global jihad and relayed by Western media and officialdom. Unlike propaganda, which is used in conjunction with military activity aimed at defeating an enemy in battle, lethal narratives are used in lieu of military action. Promotion of enemy propaganda in past conflicts was limited to a small minority of traitors and fellow travelers; today, lethal narratives are swallowed by all but a minority of résistants, who are marginalized, labeled extremists, persecuted and prosecuted. Muslim Brotherhood sympathizers who stormed through European cities screaming “death to Israel, death to the Jews” go scot free but Dutch politician Geert Wilders is prosecuted for “hate speech” for showing the connection between these same declarations, from Qur’anic verses to contemporary sermons, and murderous acts such as 9/11.

The lethal narrative, a tissue of lies made credible by a superficial journalistic veneer, becomes the accepted version of what is happening. G.W. Bush lied about Saddam’s WMDs, the neocons wanted a war in Iraq, torture at Guantanamo, hundreds of thousands of civilian casualties, an unbeatable insurgency, the war spawned a thousand terrorists for every one that was killed, etc. Another tissue of lies was issued during the Cast Lead operation: the homemade rockets were harmless; Gaza is an open prison; the Gaza population suffered a humanitarian crisis, no food, water, electricity, medicine; Israel engaged in intentional massacre of civilians, bombing mosques, UN schools, babes in arms and, the last straw, deliberately killed the daughters of the good-hearted doctor who practices in both Gaza and Tel Aviv.

In less than a decade life has become problematic for European Jews. It started with the al Dura blood libel on September 30, 2000 and has steadily worsened since. During periods of relative calm, we tell ourselves that the nightmare is over. When the tension exacerbates, as happened during the Gaza operation, it becomes obvious that we have no future anywhere in Europe—and Europe has no future anyway!

France, with the largest Muslim and Jewish populations and the greatest diplomatic ambition, is emblematic of the Western European condition. The

Sarkozy government is sincerely troubled by the upsurge of anti-Semitism—approximately 150 incidents reported since the start of Cast Lead. The president promises to put an end to this unacceptable behavior but declares, in the next breath, that “Islamophobia” will be punished as severely as anti-Semitism, falsely implying that Jews are attacking Muslims, and effectively blocking an honest investigation of the Islamic sources of Jew hatred

On another level, the “Obama effect” works against Jews in France and more generally in Europe. Thrilled by the multicultural chic of a black president in the powerful U.S., Europeans vow to give more than equal opportunity to their own “visible minorities” in the hopes of getting themselves a YesWeCan president in the near future. Unfortunately, the integration of law-abiding Muslims into European society also serves as cover for infiltration by subversive Muslims.

Political enfranchisement of European Muslims in the absence of genuine acceptance of Western values is another destabilizing factor. Instead of promoting a peaceful climate of mutual respect, the rise of Muslims into executive positions in public and private sectors may lead to ethnic favoritism that will be prejudicial to Jewish colleagues and candidates, rebuffed to get even for an alleged previous supremacy or punished whenever there is a flare-up in the Middle East. Serious problems in public education, up to the university level, further compromise the future of Europe and more precisely of European Jews.

The far left, unashamedly aligned with European jihad movements, proudly marched with pro-Hamas mobs that systematically ended their “demonstrations” with attacks against property and the police. Fearful of losing ground, the parliamentary left also sidles toward this constituency, hiding its perfidy behind dubious humanitarian concerns. CID [Centre d’information et de documentation de démocratie et de Moyen Orient] reports from Brussels that all political parties except the droite libérale marched along with the keffiyeh-wrapped mobs that shouted “death to Israel, death to the Jews.” Another aggravating factor is the economic crisis, exploited by the left to mobilize and channel discontent into increasingly aggressive demonstrations, strikes and civil disobedience, while the right, hungry for capital, welcomes sharia finance with open arms.

In 2003, when Jewish boys from Hashomer Hazair were beaten up by anti-war protestors, I described the incident as a “peace march verging on pogrom.” Alain Finkielkraut applied the term to the 2005 banlieue riots, then withdrew it as inappropriate. Was it an exaggeration? Or foresight? There can be no doubt that the enraged mobs storming through European and American cities will go further.

No longer content to throw fire bombs or ram burning cars into synagogues, they now want to break in during services. Thirty men traveled from Mulhouse to Strasbourg for that purpose. Their plan failed...that time. Carjackers in a Parisian suburb, discovering their victim was Jewish, slashed his neck four times with exquisite cruelty until the blood flowed. That crime was denounced as anti-Semitic but the culprits have not been found, and other incidents are left hanging with question marks, as if to calm the populace. A Jewish doctor was shot dead in another Parisian suburb, the warehouse of the biggest kosher food distributor in still another was burned down.

Europeans who do cherish their freedom try to organize, speak out, influence their governments. They see—or saw—America as a refuge, a haven, a beacon of liberty. Many see Israel as a sterling example of résistance against global jihad. Though life looks quite normal on the surface, we are living in a perilous, highly volatile situation in which, precisely, normal life is a battlefield. As these lines are written, Iran announces the launch of a satellite that could leave southern European cities no less vulnerable than Sderot. The news landed like a monster walking into a bustling café. The excited chatter about peace talks and negotiation and friendly outreached hands falls silent. If existential fear has finally stricken the heart of European governments, all is not lost.

The writer is an American who moved to France in 1972 and is a journalist, novelist, and translator. (NaomiRagen.com Mar 1)

שָׁלוֹם שַׁבָּת **Shabbat Shalom**
שְׂמַח פּוּרִים **Purim Sameach**