



Opinion and Analysis, Week ending 12 March 2014

1. Israeli Palestinian politics coming to a town near you **Greg Nicolson, *Daily Maverick*, 10 March 2014**

Issues of Israeli-Palestinian politics are coming to a town near you! It's Israeli Apartheid Week again and with 155 events planned to rally against the Israeli state, there's sure to be either a fuming pro-Palestinian or pro-Israeli around the corner. It's hot, like a red beret, with the youth, you know. But if it's all too much, you can catch Simphiwe Dana – and maybe a protest and counter-protest – for free!

<http://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2014-03-10-israeli-palestinian-politics-coming-to-a-town-near-you/#.Ux189s7-6BI>

2. The permanent crisis of the Russian State **Stephen Blank, *inFocus Quarterly Winter 2014, March 10, 2014***

Over time it has become increasingly clear that this state cannot, for the most part, obtain domestic or external legitimacy or create a government equal to the tasks of economic and political modernization except through Stalinist mobilization, which is no longer possible. Hence the current situation of a permanent legitimacy and capacity crisis that will last as long as the present system continues.

<http://www.jewishpolicycenter.org/5150/the-permanent-crisis-of-the-russian-state>

3. Islam's inadvertent patterns **Daniel Pipes, *Washington Post*, 10 March 2014**

How does Islam shape the way Muslims live? The religion's formal requirements are the narrow base for a far wider structure of patterns that extend the formal rules of Islam, stretching them in unexpected and unplanned ways.

<http://www.danielpipes.org/14152/islam-patterns>

4. Arab refugees and Jewish refugees: the inextricable link **Lyn Julius and Stanley Urman, *Jerusalem Post*, 9 March 2014**

The United States should not foot bill alone for international fund for compensation for Arab and Jewish refugees.

<http://www.jpost.com/Opinion/Op-Ed-Contributors/Arab-refugees-and-Jewish-refugees-the-inextricable-link-344808>

5. Iran: pulling the strings of terror **Dr Ephraim Kam, *Israel Hayom*, 9 March 2014**

Despite Israel's success, the Iranians continue to attempt to send weapons -- perhaps because they have in fact sent several successful weapons shipments under the radar. So despite such foiled attempts, Hezbollah, Hamas and Islamic Jihad's respective weapons stockpiles are substantial, and an integral part of each of them came from Iran.

http://www.israelhayom.com/site/newsletter_opinion.php?id=7641

6. The Iran deal: Keeping Israel on board

Shai Feldman, Oren Setter, *The National Interest*, 8 March 2014

Given these conflicting considerations, can the U.S. and Israel maintain their informal alliance while maximizing the odds that the talks recently launched would produce an optimal comprehensive nuclear deal with Iran?

http://nationalinterest.org/commentary/iran-deal-keeping-israel-board-10016?page=show&utm_source=Salithru&utm_medium=email&utm_term=*Mideast%20Brief&utm_campaign=Mideast%20Brief%203-10-14

7. Money, Politics and Israel's Defence

Shoshana Bryen, *Gatestone Institute*, 7 March 2014

Missile defence buys time and the Administration should appreciate -- and fund -- that. When the President is leaning hard on Israel to be forthcoming and flexible on issues of its own short and long-term security, the signal that missile defences are expendable sends the wrong signal to both friends and adversaries. Does the president really believe that Hamas, the Palestinian franchise of the Muslim Brotherhood -- supported, oddly, by Iran -- would throw in the revolutionary towel if Israel makes a deal with Mahmoud Abbas for the West Bank?

<http://www.gatestoneinstitute.org/4207/obama-budget-israel-missile-defense>

8. BICOM Briefing: The Iranian threat to Israel

Analysis, *BICOM*, 6 March 2014

The Iranian regime is ideologically opposed to Israel's existence and its leaders routinely call for its destruction. President Rouhani has described Israel as a cancer.

<http://www.bicom.org.uk/analysis-article/19169/>

9. Israel: A failed state

Charles Abelson, *Times of Israel*, 6 March 2014

<http://blogs.timesofisrael.com/israel-a-failed-state/>

1. Israeli Palestinian politics coming to a town near you

The late Former President Nelson Mandela's words echoed though Johannesburg's Workers' Museum on Sunday. Images of the exploited and oppressed marked the walls. The Marikana strikers before and after their massacre were on two walls; foot-soldiers in a system of racial capitalism, those who built the country but could never advance beyond the ladder's first rung, on the others.

"Our freedom is incomplete without the freedom of the Palestinians." Mandela's words featured on t-shirts and in speeches. They gave credence to accusations that the Israeli state is an example of a heinous system, the Apartheid State.

The 10th annual Israeli Apartheid Week commences this week. Supported by 75 South African organisations with 155 events planned, it's going to be the biggest one yet, said organisers at the launch on Sunday. The Workers' Museum saw speaker after speaker

(someone from the audience even forced his way to the front to have his say). The campaign seeks to increase awareness of the nature of the Israeli state, which organisers believe fits the definition of Apartheid, the plight of Palestinians, and boost support for the Boycott, Disinvestment and Sanctions (BDS) campaign against Israel.

Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu started Sunday's event as a supporting statement he sent was read out. "I have witnessed the systemic humiliation of Palestinian men, women and children by members of the Israeli security forces. Their humiliation is familiar to all black South Africans who were corralled and harassed and insulted by the security forces of the Apartheid government," said Tutu.

Palestinian Ambassador Hafiz Nefal said Israel does not support peace talks and continues to erect settlements on the West Bank and in Jerusalem, continues the siege on the Gaza Strip and has increased security checkpoints and the arrest of political prisoners. "All these activities make it clear that Palestinians are under a regime that can possibly be described as worse than the South African Apartheid regime. Thus, it makes pure sense to increase the solidarity with the Palestinian people," said Nefal.

Miko Peled, a former Israeli army general who's written a book, *The General's Son*, on the issues at hand was billed as a special guest. "You cannot talk about Palestine without talking about South Africa," he said, adding that this generation would be defined by the fight for Palestine. "The struggle has to focus not as some people try to do on some kind of elusive peace process... but the end of Zionism, just like we had to fight for the end of Apartheid for there to be change."

The event was supported by structures of the Tripartite Alliance. Cosatu's second deputy president Zingiswa Losi commented, "It remains a test of our humanity and is a stain on our conscience that in this century and this day we are still witnessing Apartheid." It being election season, she tied the relevant issues into 7 May: "We must do it for the fighting people of Palestine too. Their struggle is our struggle. Their victory is our victory."

She was highly critical of the Democratic Alliance's (DA) position on Palestine and presumably meant that voting ANC is a vote for Palestinian freedom.

Over the phone, DA spokesperson Mmusi Maimane said the party supports a two-state solution consistent with the UN's position. On comparisons to SA's Apartheid state, Maimane said, "Similarities can be drawn in that it requires a negotiated settlement." The DA is not endorsing any events of the week but Maimane said as a liberal organisation members can take their own positions on deciding whether to support or attend events. (Some members of the Tripartite Alliance criticised the DA when stories emerged after its brief union with Agang SA that it had taken funding from billionaire Nathan Kirsh, who is linked to building the wall separating Israel and the West Bank.)

The ANC is one of the 75 organisations supporting Israeli Apartheid Week and resolved at its Mangaung conference to strengthen support for Palestinian solidarity. "The ANC is unequivocal in its support for the Palestinian people in their struggle for self-determination, and unapologetic in its view that the Palestinians are the victims and the oppressed in the conflict with Israel," said Obed Bapela, chair of the party's NEC subcommittee on international relations, this week.

The South African Communist Party also supports the campaign and in a statement this week said in 1973 "the UN adopted the International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid (ICSPCA). According to ICSPA, Apartheid involves 'inhuman acts' committed for the purpose of 'establishing and maintaining domination by one

group' over another, and systematically oppressing them." It added, "No human being deserves the devastation of life and the atrocities experienced by the Palestinian people who are denied a fundamental right to have a viable state in peaceful co-existence with the other communities of states."

The issue seems particularly to have caught the attention of young activists and politicians, who were the driving force behind Sunday's launch. Suraya Dadoo, who recently released *Why Israel? A South African perspective on the issue*, said international solidarity helped liberate South Africa when locals were silenced. "Now as young South Africans we are compelled to speak out against an Apartheid system that we know exists somewhere else... To put it very simply, it's time for us to pay it back."

Basheera Surty, 27, is from Runners for the Freedom of Palestine, whose members take part in marathons while carrying the Palestinian flag. It will hold various runs this week to raise awareness. During the Johannesburg Nike run, she got into a debate with an Israeli citizen, arguing that although she's South African, it's important to show international solidarity. There are many ways at university campuses that youth can engage in the issue, from protests, runs, to film events and discussions, she said.

Israeli Apartheid Week national convenor Muhammed Desai pointed out the movement's focus on BDS, which, as former South African Ambassador to Israel Ismail Coovadia said earlier in the afternoon, reflects the international sanctions campaign against SA. It's moving at "supersonic speed", said Desai. "You have the University of Johannesburg terminating its relationship with Israel. You have Reggies toy stores terminating its relationship with the Jewish National Fund. You have Karsten Farms, a South African agricultural company, that used to have a relationship with Israel terminating that relationship." Having clear targets and making an impact (Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has deplored the movement) makes it "energising", said Desai.

The battleground is often at university campuses, he added, where the pro-Palestinian and pro-Israeli lobby groups both try to influence students. Neither the Israeli Embassy, the South African Zionist Federation, nor the Stop BDS group could be reached before deadline. But online there's much criticism of Israeli Apartheid Week.

African Christian Democratic Party President Kenneth Meshoe says the accusation that Israel is an Apartheid state is "inaccurate", "malicious", aims to demonise Israel and belittles the suffering of black South Africans. He says, "As a black South African who was born under Apartheid in the administrative capital of South Africa, Pretoria, I know what Apartheid is. I experienced it. My parents experienced it. But having been to Israel on a number of occasions, I know that nothing is happening in that country that I've seen or read can be compared to Apartheid in South Africa." Services are not racially segregated and if Mandela was in Israel he would never have had to take up arms, says Meshoe in a video encouraging people to go and see for themselves.

A website, www.israelapartheidweek.co.za, agrees. An introductory video warns, "During Israeli Apartheid Week radicals around the world will try to subvert South African history. They will attempt to distort the true meaning of Apartheid by diminishing its horrors and using the history of Apartheid for their own selfish political gains." The site says we should focus on issues in Iran, Syria, Saudi Arabia, Egypt and other Arab countries while supporting Israel's peace process. "No one trusts the organisers of Israeli Apartheid Week," the video continues, with images of rockets being fired. "Most people understand that Israeli Apartheid Week is merely a tactic to destroy Israel and wipe Israel off the map," it warns.

But it's not all doom and gloom. As part of the campaign, Simphiwe Dana will give a free concert at Wits University on Friday evening, while numerous other events, including one addressed by ANC Deputy Secretary General Jessie Duarte (ok – that's pretty gloomy), will take place across the country.

2. The permanent crisis of the Russian State

A permanent legitimacy and capacity crisis exists today in Russia and the state's nature ensures that this cannot be otherwise. Indeed, we have arguably entered into what Soviet historians called a revolutionary crisis, i.e. a long-term crisis of the state culminating in a revolution or fundamental transformation because that system cannot function any longer and collapses under the combined stresses of domestic failure and international competition. But understanding this state is particularly difficult. Western analysts are trapped in a self-imposed labyrinth of an ethnocentric American or Western approach to politics that sees Russia merely as an authoritarian construct. To call Russia authoritarian is tantamount to observing that the sun rises in the East.

To understand both the masquerade and the reality of the Russian state we must understand that Russia is trapped in what Claude Levi-Strauss called a frozen [political] culture. Today's Russian state fundamentally remains the patrimonial Muscovite state originating in the medieval formation of the Tsar surrounded by his Boyars, an aristocratic tier of society that formed the early supreme council, the Duma. This system characterized both Tsardom and Soviet power. Over time it has become increasingly clear that this state cannot, for the most part, obtain domestic or external legitimacy or create a government equal to the tasks of economic and political modernization except through Stalinist mobilization, which is no longer possible. Hence the current situation of a permanent legitimacy and capacity crisis that will last as long as the present system continues.

The Nature of the System

What is the nature of this patrimonial neo-medieval system?

- First, the Tsar owns the entire state and national economy. They are his property or patrimony to dispose of as he sees fit. Putin and Medvedev's notorious "castling" move in September 2011 of switching the presidency and prime minister's positions showed that both men viewed the state as their personal possession. This fact entails certain critical consequences.
- The Tsar along with his officials can seize anyone's property without accountability to anyone. Indeed, they answer to no person or institution except to higher officials like the Tsar who, in turn, only answers to his conscience.
- Consequently there are no property rights in Russia. Whatever Russian law says, property is held on condition of service to the state or loyalty to it. Without property rights there can also be no human, civil, or political rights since government does not answer to any law. As Medvedev observed, legal nihilism pervades Russian life.
- Therefore this state reincarnates the Muscovite service state where office and property were fused as in feudalism. Officials who direct political institutions acquire state-granted rents as compensation for their service. This makes the state a rent-grantor and them rent-seeking officials. Accordingly, corruption is intrinsic to the system. The system is not corrupt, rather corruption is the system, otherwise nothing would get done. The system works through informal deals, not legal agreements. This pervasive corruption stemming from the huge amount of state property "owned" by these new plutocrats reinforces the autocrat and his servitors' sense that they own the state and can do with it what they like, for it is their property.

- As the state and national economy have expanded, any effort to impose a rule of law or perfect hierarchy, or Putin's vertical of power upon them is inherently problematic. A law-governed state or any kind of systematized state is utterly antithetical to Russia. Nevertheless rulers, including Putin, have had no choice but to try and make the government work according to its own premises and impose, or devise some sort of system. Consequently state policies are repeatedly obstructed and blocked within the bureaucracy notwithstanding the masquerade of perfect omnipotent autocracy.

As the state and economy expand, the Tsar's officials have also expanded their remit power to ensure their hold on power and property. Thus they create extensive patronage networks often of family members and other Boyar families into which they marry their children to create alliances and extend these networks. Nepotism and patron-client networks are therefore equally intrinsic to the system, which could not exist otherwise. Governance or administration is inconceivable outside of these networks, which make the system function but simultaneously preclude any hope of systematization or of sufficient advances in state capacity to meet contemporary socio-economic challenges. Ultimately the ruler, to maintain his authority must constantly balance among the competing factions at court and do so in symbolic and tangible political-economic terms by dispensing rents for services performed to these quarrelling groups of rival Boyars. This was as true of Alexander II and even Stalin as it is of Putin.

Putin's Russia

Putin's Russia remains a paradigm of what North, Weingast, and Wallis call in *Violence and Social Orders: A Conceptual Framework for Interpreting Recorded Human History* a limited access order or natural state. And they explicitly label Putin's Russia as such. Such orders are based on personal or personalized norms of rule, are weakly developed in regard to social organizations, and cannot therefore rely on third-person enforcement of legal norms or contracts. Long-term economic growth in such states approaches zero, meaning that for every period of growth there is one of decline in per capita income. These systems' deficiencies regarding formation of impersonal and binding institutions also mean that they are much more permeated by violence unless potentially violent elements are bought off by rents:

Systematic rent-creation through limited access [to assets] in a natural state is not simply a method of lining the pockets of the dominant coalition; it is the essential means of controlling violence. Rent-creation, limits on competition and access to organizations are central to the nature of the state, its institutions, and the society's performance. Limiting the ability to form contractual organizations only to members of the coalition ties the interests of powerful elites directly to the survival of the coalition, thus ensuring their continued cooperation with the coalition.

Thus rule by force and imperial expansion are also intrinsic to the system, a fact that sets all of Russia's neighbours on permanent watch.

In such a state reforms from above and markets, though not a "market," are not ruled out and economic growth can occur albeit under severely limiting conditions. But those reforms are invariably circumscribed lest they undermine the system's foundations, i.e. the concentration of power at the top and in the capital, extreme centralization, an unlimited autocrat, the service state, the absence of contractual guarantees of property or of the accountability of officials to the law.

Clearly democracy, liberal, socialist, or any other kind, is inconceivable in this system. While such states can evolve towards "open access orders" that characterize the modern democracies of Europe, America, and Asia; they can also regress. Indeed, North, et. Al.

state explicitly that Putin's Russia is regressing. Current trends in Russian economic policy guarantee stunted growth, obstruct technological innovation, preserve low productivity and thus a high cost of labour, generate hostility to foreign technology and investment, and promote massive corruption.

Around these enduring political and economic relationships justificatory, often quasi-religious cults of personality and ideologies grow up. Likewise in such a politicized economy, political outcomes trump economic results, rendering the former inherently sub-optimal over the short and long-term. Since this system fuses political and economic power, along with ideological power, all efforts to modify, let alone transform this system and its accompanying structure of relationships are politicized. Ideologically as well, there is a very deeply rooted Messianism, or sense of Russia's unique place in world history. Either due to its mission – religious or Marxist – it has territorial scope joined with an equally deeply rooted Caesaro-Papist ideology that made the Tsar the incarnation of God on earth and the head of the church. In Marxist terms, the Secretary General was the embodiment of the contemporary understanding of history's dialectic.

Can Change Occur in Russia?

For substantive economic and political reform to occur, the state's "mass mind" must also change as well. Political, economic, and ideological reform are all inherently and structurally linked as necessary factors of genuine progress, as the Gorbachev years showed us. Maya Eichler writes in "Explaining Post-communist Transformations: Economic Nationalism in Ukraine and Russia":

Post-communist transformations are fundamentally about conflicts over restructuring political and economic power in society. The transformation path adopted is not simply a question of common sense [of "market and democracy"]; it is inherently political and hotly contested by economic and political actors. Struggles over the form property should take, the control of economic resources, and government policy take place not only at the economic and political level but [also] in the ideological realm. The main issue for those groups seeking power and stability therefore becomes how to legitimate a particular path of transformation and make it appear incontestable.

Absent coherent concurrent reforms in all these areas we get, as we did in 1990-93, systemic breakdown. But this also means that the state and economy exist in a permanent condition of instability, even crisis, whether it be an urgent or slow-burning, long-term crisis. Yet reform is so contrary to the interests of this deeply entrenched elite that it does not take place absent an urgent, as opposed to slow-burning, crisis.

Likewise, historically the main preoccupation of the state has been war, and the resources, including manpower, of the state have generally been subjected to the quest for a military that can prevail over all enemies, often technologically stronger ones. This phenomenon has several important consequences for Russia. Most important, it entails what Vitaly Shlykov calls "structural militarization." This militarization takes many forms, both rhetorical forms and actual policy outcomes. We see it today in the huge but futile military spending that has only modernized 19% of Russia's armed forces from the level of 10% in 2008. Yet war and military threats, as noted above, remain essential structural components of this regime.

As Shlykov wrote in "Back into the Future, Or Cold War Lessons for Russia," this phenomenon pervades the economy.

This skewed economic setup, when the economy does not respond to a fall in arms procurement and prevents the re-funnelling of resources from the military to the civilian sector, can be described as structural militarization, in contrast to militarization that can be

measured through the share of military spending and military production in the national budget, GDP, etc. In a structurally militarized economy, arms procurements can come to a halt (which is what happened in Russia by the mid-1990s), but this will not automatically make the civilian sector more effective. Furthermore, it is possible for the economic situation in such a country to worsen. Paradoxically, in a structurally militarized economy, resources are mainly wasted not in the defence sector but in the civilian one. Because the economy is in extremely poor shape, even the maintenance of the civilian sector requires a colossal amount of resources: raw materials, energy, machinery and equipment. To support its pathetic agricultural complex, the U.S.S.R. had to produce six or seven times as many tractors and several times as much fertilizer as the United States.

Moreover, large parts of the population, not least the armed forces, are essentially bound to their masters and the state for substantial periods of time and have no rights against their masters. They are, as Aleksandr' Herzen called the serfs, "baptized property." As such they are individually and communally obliged to serve the state. Consequently, and given the privileges that accrue to officers who can command this population, there is an inherent demand for a large army. Officers and elites have a hard time believing that they do not need a large mobilization base for internal as well as external purposes and that they cannot have a permanent call upon Russia's material and manpower relations. Invoking a permanent threat that justifies a large military establishment is a very attractive way to do that.

Clearly this entrenched system cannot and will not reform itself and cannot but cause a permanent state of siege in its neighbourhood. But it also therefore cannot surmount its systemic crisis except by transforming itself, which is impossible. That an explosion will come is all but certain. Only the date, manner, and circumstances of its occurrence are unknown. But all these considerations, taken together should suffice to make us constantly vigilant and constantly aware of Russia's abiding importance in world affairs.

3. Islam's inadvertent patterns

How does Islam shape the way Muslims live? The religion's formal requirements are the narrow base for a far wider structure of patterns that extend the formal rules of Islam, stretching them in unexpected and unplanned ways. A few examples:

The Koran strictly bans the consumption of pork, leading to the virtual disappearance of domesticated pigs in Muslim-majority areas, then their replacement by sheep and goats. These latter overgrazed the land which led, as the geographer Xavier de Planhol observes, to "a catastrophic deforestation" that in turn "is one of the basic reasons for the sparse landscape particularly evident in the Mediterranean districts of Islamic countries." Note the progression from Koranic dietary injunction to the desertification of vast tracts of land. The scriptural command was not intended to cause ecological damage, but it did.

Islam's unattainably high standards for governmental behaviour meant historically that existing leaders, with their many faults, alienated Muslim subjects, who responded by refusing to serve those leaders in administrative and military service, thereby compelling rulers to seek personnel elsewhere. This led to their systematically deploying slaves as soldiers and administrators, thereby creating a key institution that lasted a millennium from the eighth century.

Islamic doctrine ingrains a sense of Muslim superiority, a disdain for the faith and civilization of others, which has had two vast implications in modern times: making Muslims the most

rebellious subjects against colonial rule and obstructing Muslims from learning from the West to modernize.

Those scriptures also imbue a hostility toward non-Muslims which in turn generates an assumption about non-Muslims harbouring a like hostility toward Muslims. In modern times, this projection has created a susceptibility to conspiracy theories which have had many practical consequences: for example, because only Muslims worry that anti-polio vaccinations secretly render their children infertile, polio has effectively become a Muslim-only scourge in 26 countries.

The annual pilgrimage to Mecca, the Islamic *hajj*, began in the seventh century as a local custom that then became an international meeting that facilitated the transfer of everything from Islamist ideas and political movements (the Idrisis of Libya) to luxury goods (ivory) plants (rubber to Southeast Asia, rice to Europe), and diseases (meningococci, skin infections, infectious diarrheal and blood-borne diseases, and respiratory tract infections, including perhaps the brand-new MERS-CoV).

Other Islamic injunctions also have unintended, negative health implications. The imperative for modesty has led some Muslim women to wear full head and body coverings (niqabs and burqas) which cause Vitamin D deficiency, discourage exercise, and are implicated in a host of medical problems, including rashes, respiratory disease, rickets, osteomalacia, and multiple sclerosis.

The daytime fast during Ramadan often leads observant Muslims to exercise less and to “tend to overeat upon breaking their fast, and usually the meal involves heavy, fatty foods that are high in calories,” notes the head of the Emirates Diabetes Society. One survey in Jidda, Saudi Arabia, found 60 percent of respondents reporting excessive weight gain after Ramadan.

A preference for first-cousin marriages, which harks back to pre-Islamic tribal practices (to keep wealth in the family and to benefit from daughters’ fertility) over approximately fifty generations has led to widespread inbreeding with negative consequences, including about twice the incidence rate of such genetic disorders as thalassemia, sickle cell anaemia, spinal muscular atrophy, diabetes, deafness, muteness, and autism.

With regard to women, injunctions about *mahram* protection by male relatives, and a vastly lower social and legal status combined to create such inadvertent patterns as physical seclusion, obsession with virginity, honour killings, female genital mutilation, and (Saudi-style) gender apartheid. Polygamy creates permanent anxiety in wives.

Although orphans enjoy an honoured status in Islamic law (*kafala*), that honour is tied to a tribal structure incompatible with modern society, resulting in Muslim orphans today persistently discriminated against, even by Muslims in the West.

Islam’s scriptures have provided the base from which many other patterns evolved, including: the establishment of dynasties through conquest, not by internal overthrow; recurrent problems with dynastic succession; power leading to wealth, not the reverse; the near absence of municipal governments; inadequate regulation of cities; laws arising from ad hoc decisions, not formal legislation, reliance on *hawalas* for money transfers, and the practice of suicide terrorism.

Inadvertent patterns, sometimes called Islamicate, change over time, with some (slave soldiers) becoming defunct and others (polio) starting only recently. These patterns remain

as powerful today as in pre-modern times and are key to understanding Islam and Muslim life.

4. Arab refugees and Jewish refugees: the inextricable link

Suddenly Jewish refugees from Arab countries have been catapulted into the headlines. The Kerry peace framework proposals will, it is rumoured, contain a clause recommending compensation for both Jewish refugees and Palestinian refugees. This is music to the ears of us activists on behalf of Jewish refugees. It's what we have been fighting for, for decades.

At last, the rights of over 856,000 Jews displaced from Arab countries will be recognized and redressed. What's not to like? Already discordant voices are being heard. In this newspaper, Sarah Honig's February 13 column entitled: "Another Tack: A Page from Barker's Playbook" suggested that a reported proposal to compensate Jewish refugees along with refugees from British Mandate Palestine is just a means for US Secretary of State John Kerry to sway the "hawks" of the Israeli electorate – Jews from Arab countries and their descendants.

At its core, advocating for the rights of Jews from Arab countries is not about money. Recognizing rights and redress for Jewish refugees is a quest for truth and justice, the prerequisite for true reconciliation between and among peoples in the region.

While under international law the legitimate rights of Jews forced to flee Arab countries are neither identical to, nor symmetrical with, those of Palestinian refugees, there is significant linkage between these two refugee populations, underscoring the need to deal with both simultaneously: Both refugee populations were created by the Arab countries' refusal to accept the 1947 UN Partition Plan and attacking Israel; both became refugees during the same period in history; and both were declared to be bona fide refugees, under international law, by the appropriate UN Agencies – UNHCR and UNRWA.

In the international, political arena, Jewish refugees have been inextricably linked to Palestinian refugees. The historic UN resolution 242 on the Arab-Israeli conflict stipulates, that a comprehensive peace settlement should necessarily include "a just settlement of the refugee problem," language that, according to the expressed intent of the UN Resolution's co-authors, would be inclusive of Arab and Jewish refugees.

The 1991 Madrid Peace Conference created a Working Group on Refugees whose mandate was to "...consider practical ways of improving the lot of people throughout the region who have been displaced from their homes" – generic language applicable to both Palestinian and Jewish refugees. The 2002 Road map to Middle East Peace also refers in Phase III to an "agreed, just, fair and realistic solution to the refugee issue," language applicable both to Palestinian and Jewish refugees. The intention in all of these seminal blueprints for peace is for both refugee populations to be addressed in tandem.

Rights for Jewish refugees have been enshrined in legislation, as a matter of government policy, for years, both in Israel and in the United States. In 2008, the US Congress' House Resolution 185 proclaimed that, in Middle East peace negotiations, "any explicit reference to the rights of Palestinian refugees must be matched by a similar reference to the rights of Jewish refugees." In 2010, Israel's Knesset passed a Law which requires that: "As part of negotiations to achieve peace in the Middle East, the government will include the subject of providing compensation for the loss of assets of Jewish refugees from Arab countries."

So who will pay? There are those who pessimistically believe that compensation for Jewish refugees will never materialize.

Surely it won't come from the Palestinians. And Arab states in the throes of internecine warfare won't want to pay. Even President Barack Obama may be loathe to pay out from the US's depleted coffers.

Compensation for Arab and Jewish refugees is not a new idea. The concept, which was first proposed by president Bill Clinton in 2000, was for the creation of an international fund to which many states would contribute, including the US.

But Uncle Sam should not foot the bill alone. Multilateral involvement would provide the legitimacy and commitment – as well as financial support – to cement the peace. The G-8, the EU, the Arab League, Arab countries, Israel and others as well – should all participate and contribute.

Arab participation is paramount; a genuine peace can only be achieved when all culpable Arab states accept responsibility and express regret for the injustices they perpetrated on their Jewish citizens.

Some believe it illogical that such an International Fund could be created, with a mandate to provide compensation to both sides involved in the same conflict. In fact, in 1991, the United Nations established just such a precedent for the victims of the first Gulf War, by creating a unique Compensation Commission that can serve as a model for providing restitution equitably to both Jewish and Palestinian refugees.

The responsibility to create an International Fund, and the lion's share of its endowment, would have to be borne, of course, by the US. The cost of compensating refugees on both sides with a few billion dollars is a drop in the ocean compared to the \$6 trillion that the US has expended on its wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. It is a small price to pay for the ultimate prize – a permanent end to the Arab-Israeli conflict.

5. Iran: pulling the strings of terror

The Iranians have already gotten used to it. From time to time, they send massive weapons shipments to their allies in Lebanon, Syria, Gaza, Iraq and other countries by land, by air or by sea. And from time to time, when these arms are meant to harm Israel, and when the intelligence community attains precise information about such shipments – the IDF attacks them. These strikes are accomplished through weapons seizures in the Red and Mediterranean seas, or by air assaults on weapons convoys – typically in Lebanon, Syria or Sudan.

Despite Israel's success, the Iranians continue to attempt to send weapons – perhaps because they have in fact sent several successful weapons shipments under the radar. So despite such foiled attempts, Hezbollah, Hamas and Islamic Jihad's respective weapons stockpiles are substantial, and an integral part of each of them came from Iran.

It is in Iran's best interest to provide its allies with weapons, especially terrorist groups. Using terror groups to fight its enemies is one of the most important components in Iran's security outlook because it has proved to be an effective method of deterrence. That is why, since 1984, the U.S. government has defined Iran as one of the world's leading state sponsors of terror. Providing assistance to terrorist groups has benefitted Iran by allowing Tehran to wield influence in the Middle East – in Lebanon, Iraq and the Palestinian territories. Assisting terrorist groups fighting Israel has helped Iran in its goal to wear Israel down through armed struggle, putting terrorist groups – especially Hezbollah, which has an umbilical relationship

with Iran – at the forefront of its efforts. Using terrorism is cost-effective from Iran's perspective. Tehran never really has to pay a price for supporting terror; its agents do.

The illicit shipment on the Klos C blends well with Iran's approach. The vessel was meant to bring weapons to the Gaza Strip via Sudan. Sudan is an opportune transit station on the way to Egypt, the Sinai Peninsula and, ultimately, the Gaza Strip. Iran-Sudan relations have been close for years; Iran provides Sudan with military and economic aid.

It is still unclear who exactly the weapons were meant for: Hamas is one option, but its relations with Iran were challenged in 2012 both when the group cozied up to the Muslim Brotherhood, which ruled Egypt at the time, and when Iranian involvement in Syria started to raise eyebrows among Hamas' leadership; another possibility is Islamic Jihad, which boasts the closest relations to Tehran among Palestinian groups. Perhaps the weapons were meant for both.

In any case, transferring weapons to Gaza has become both more difficult and problematic. The Egyptian government has been investing a lot of effort of late to regain control of the Sinai and to destroy the smuggling tunnels between Sinai and the Gaza Strip. The Egyptian government also sees an antagonistic threat in Hamas, so how the Iranians planned to smuggle the unwieldy missiles shipment into the Gaza Strip remains unclear.

The weapons discovery marked an embarrassment for Iran, which has been endeavoring both to improve its international standing and to paint a positive, moderate picture of itself to reach agreements with Western governments over its nuclear program, a development that could alleviate painful economic sanctions. The U.N. Security Council also explicitly banned Iran from exporting weapons in 2007, which is why Iran hurriedly denied any involvement with this shipment.

Still, it is likely that the damage to Iran's image will be slight. Its involvement in terrorism has been well-known for years. Capturing this vessel, therefore, is not going to change that very much. And since it is also a high Western priority to reach a final deal over the nuclear issue, it is unlikely that this affair is going to put the brakes on the nuclear talks. International attention has also been focused on the Russia-Ukraine confrontation, overshadowing the arms shipment.

Seizing this ship is a blow to Iran, which certainly poured effort and resources into organizing the attempted stealth mission. Iran's beef with Israel is getting bigger – previous strikes against attempted arms shipments, the deaths of several Iranian scientists, Iranians computer systems infected with viruses, the assassination of Hezbollah military commander Imad Mughniyeh. We should probably bear in mind then that Iran is planning to settle the score – perhaps through Hezbollah.

6. The Iran deal: Keeping Israel on board

The recent launching by the P5+1 of negotiations of a comprehensive deal with Iran regarding its nuclear program poses serious dilemmas for both the U.S. and Israel given the enormous stakes involved. For the U.S., the formal goal is to be verifiably assured that Iran's nuclear program is peaceful. In reality, America's goal is to prevent Iran's nuclear program from reaching a point where the U.S. would have no choice but to decide between "bombing and the bomb" – that is, between attacking Iran's nuclear installations or "living with an Iranian bomb." In turn, this decision point can only be avoided by restoring a significant "breakout time" for Iran's nuclear effort. Yet, restoring such "breakout time" does not exclude

the possibility that Iran would be permitted to have a 'small, discreet and limited" uranium-enrichment program.

For Israel, the stakes in these negotiations are even higher – it sees itself as the primary target of a future Iranian nuclear force and regards such a capability as an existential threat. Israel stresses that an agreement with Tehran must therefore “dismantle the Iranian ability to either produce or launch a nuclear weapon”. Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu argued that this can only be achieved if Iran would have “zero enrichment, zero centrifuges, zero plutonium and [...] an end to ICB development.”

These very high but different stakes and divergent goals present Washington and Jerusalem with a first-order alliance-management problem. The Obama administration is fully cognizant of Israel's concerns and greater stakes in the nuclear talks. It is also aware that influential circles in Washington may have even greater sensitivity and sympathy for Israel's worries. Especially important is the U.S. Congress, whose approval of any agreement reached with Iran will be crucial. This is because almost all that Iran seeks to achieve in any agreement reached – namely, significant sanctions relief – cannot be implemented without the Congress's consent. For the Obama administration, therefore, the Israeli-alliance-management challenge has an important U.S. domestic dimension as well.

Given that for Israel the stakes involved in a comprehensive deal with Iran would be far greater than those associated with the interim agreement negotiated last fall, the Israeli government can be expected to mobilize its friends and wage a far more effective campaign against a comprehensive deal that it would judge as endangering the security and survival of the Jewish state. So what in this context is America's Israeli dilemma? It is: how to alleviate Israel's concerns about the recently launched talks by making it a “silent” partner to the talks without providing it a veto power over the outcome of these negotiations.

Clearly, the U.S. worries that if Israel would be fully briefed on every development in the talks, it would have multiple opportunities to derail them should it conclude that the result would allow Iran's nuclear program to survive. Conversely, if Israel was excluded from important negotiation venues – as was apparently the case when Deputy Secretary of State William Burns conducted secret nuclear talks with Iran in Oman last fall – it would be very difficult to win acceptance of the talks' results from Israel and its friends in the U.S.

No less challenging is the dilemma that the negotiations for a comprehensive deal with Iran pose for Israel. On the one hand, Israel sees itself as the guardian of the “ideal deal” in which Iran truly loses its capacity to break out to a nuclear weapon. On the other hand, given that an agreement that leaves Iran with “zero enrichment, zero centrifuges, zero plutonium and [...] an end to ICB development” is viewed by Washington as unrealistic, Israel would need to convey its ideas, considerations and trade-offs to the negotiations process, where difficult decisions may have to be taken if a mutually acceptable agreement that restores a significant “breakout time” is to be achieved.

What turns this into a unique dilemma is Israel's unusual role in these negotiations: while it is a major stakeholder in the outcome of the process, it is not a formal member of the negotiations team. Thus Israel's influence on the actual agreement can only be indirect, requiring it to consider carefully how every move it might make will affect the negotiation table.

Under such circumstances, what are Israel's options? The first is for Israel to hold on to its current line, insisting on the “ideal deal” as the only solution to the Iranian nuclear issue. The merits of this approach are two-fold: first, and obvious, is that it reflects accurately what Israel sees as the ‘correct’ solution to Iran's nuclear program. Second, and more important, it

would send a clear and unambiguous signal to the P5+1 leaders and negotiators that this is the yardstick against which any comprehensive agreement with Iran will be measured. In this scenario, Israel would hope that its position would serve as a 'lighthouse' to this six-captained ship navigating in troubled waters.

Yet continuing to insist on the 'ideal solution' as the only acceptable approach also has some downsides: First, Israel may be seen not as a 'lighthouse' but rather as an 'anchor' – a deadweight preventing the ship from making any progress. Should the talks fail, this may result in Israel being blamed for the failure. Second, adopting this stance would limit Israel's ability to influence the details of the negotiated agreement. Israel would still be able to raise its concerns with the members of the P5+1 but it would be limited in the extent to which it would be able to bring ideas to the table without undercutting its formal position.

A second option available to Israel is to adopt a more flexible stance, for example by accepting that the talks would result in a limited Iranian enrichment program. On the positive side, this option will portray Israel in a more reasonable light, and more importantly, it will allow it to assume a more substantial – though still indirect – role in affecting the "devilish" details of the negotiated agreement.

Opponents of this option will argue that it will result in a slippery slope, with Israel's new red line quickly becoming the new baseline for the talks. Given that all negotiations are associated with considerable pressures to reach a deal – and, therefore, with pressures to compromise so that a deal can be reached – the new baseline may well result in an outcome worse than that anticipated in the event that Israel would stubbornly insist on nothing short of the "ideal deal."

Given these conflicting considerations, can the U.S. and Israel maintain their informal alliance while maximizing the odds that the talks recently launched would produce an optimal comprehensive nuclear deal with Iran? The key here seems to be the ability and willingness of Washington and Jerusalem to pre-negotiate a "code of conduct" possibly consisting of four elements: First, a U.S.-Israel agreed timeframe for testing Iran's willingness to reach a deal limiting its nuclear program. Second, an understanding that during the agreed timeframe for the talks, Israel, while adhering to its public stance favouring the "ideal deal" would refrain from undermining the negotiations by waging a public campaign against the talks. Third, that during the same timeframe the Israeli national-security community will be fully briefed regarding the details of the talks, and more importantly, will be provided multiple opportunities to share its possible concerns and to offer its ideas about the ways in which difficult issues in the talks can be best addressed. Fourth, and in parallel, the U.S. and Israel will create one or more Track-II channels for conversations among both sides' non-official experts and former government officials. In these totally deniable frameworks, the two sides will be able to explore ideas and possible compromises that may be deemed too sensitive even for secret-yet-official talks.

The stakes involved for the U.S. and Israel in the recently launched efforts to reach a comprehensive deal with Iran regarding its nuclear program are enormous. Yet their stakes and priorities in these talks are not identical, presenting Washington and Jerusalem with a serious alliance management problem. The four-element "code of conduct" proposed here would allow the U.S. and Israel to maintain their close ties while the P-5+1 led by the U.S. productively negotiate with Iran.

7. Money, Politics and Israel's Defence

Early last week, the IDF intercepted a shipment of Syrian-made M-302 rockets with a range of up to 200 kilometres (125 miles). The missiles, which apparently went through Iraqi airspace to Iran and then by ship to the Red Sea, were likely headed to Sudan. From there, they would have gone by truck through the (mostly unguarded) Sinai to Gaza, from which they would have been capable of reaching nearly all of Israel.

That makes this a very bad day for the annual “Obama slashes Israeli missile defence programs” and Congress “puts the money back” dance. For years, the Obama Administration has sent a budget to Capitol Hill that included steep reductions in prior year spending for cooperative U.S.-Israel missile defence programs. Congress complains loudly then puts in the money it believes the programs merit. With the release of the budget figures two years ago, *Defence News* noted:

“The Obama administration’s recently released budget request details a cut in funding to the “Israeli Cooperative,” as the jointly developed Arrow and David’s Sling programs are known, from \$106.1 million in fiscal 2012 to \$99.9 million in fiscal 2013. And since Congress more than doubled the administration’s request last year to \$235.7 million, President Obama’s budget would more than halve the cooperative’s funding. Moreover, this marks **the third consecutive year** (*emphasis added*) that the administration has requested less funding and it will not be the last, according to its own budget projections.”

And, indeed, the 2013 request (for 2014 spending) was \$96 million, to which Congress added \$174 million. The 2014 request (for 2015 spending) is \$96.8 million for the “Israeli Cooperative.”

Although the bipartisan effort in Congress keeps the money at a relatively even level, this is a terrible way for the Obama Administration to do business:

- Israel has made excellent use of the money and accounts for it in a well-established manner – unlike, say, much larger appropriations for Pakistan or Afghanistan.
- The American defence establishment wants, needs and appreciates Israeli missile defence capabilities and innovation. Money spent in cooperation with Israel on missile defence greatly expands the reach of American R&D dollars.

And perhaps most important:

- When the President is leaning hard on Israel to be forthcoming and flexible on issues of its own short and long-term security, the signal that missile defences are expendable as cost-cutting manoeuvre sends the wrong signal to both friends and adversaries.

The President told reporter Jeffrey Goldberg in a widely disseminated interview:

“The legitimate question for Israel would be making sure that their core security needs are still met as a framework for negotiations led to an actual peace deal. [American interlocutors] have come up with a plan for how you would deal with the Jordan Valley, how you would deal with potential threats to Israel that are unprecedented in detail, unprecedented in scope.”

It might seem ungracious to point out that the highest echelon of Israel’s defence and political establishment reject the fundamental American premise: that a multinational force, rather than the IDF, in the Jordan Valley will protect Israel. Furthermore, the plan is time-defined. With the disintegration of state boundaries around Israel and the rise of ungoverned or under-governed spaces that spawn jihadist groups of varying allegiance, size, and

lethality, what happens when the end point is reached but the threats remain either within the West Bank or beyond?

The President was not unmindful of the larger problems:

"You have the chaos that's been swirling around the Middle East ... Syria ... Lebanon ...Gaza. And understandably, a lot of people (in Israel) ask themselves, 'Can we afford to have that potential chaos on our borders, so close to our cities? ...There would still be huge questions about what happens in Gaza, but I actually think Hamas would be greatly damaged by the prospect of real peace."

Does the president really believe that Hamas, the Palestinian franchise of the Muslim Brotherhood – supported, oddly, by Iran – would throw in the revolutionary towel if Israel makes a deal with Mahmoud Abbas for the West Bank? "Oh, okay," Ismail Haniyah, Hamas's boss in Gaza might say, "Abbas got a rump state for which he had to pay with a fixed Israeli border, no right of return and recognition of Israel as a Jewish State (Kerry parameters). I guess there's nothing for us to do but give up our Charter, our arms, and plans for the elimination of the Zionist entity, not to mention Fatah, and do the same. Never mind the Brotherhood, and never mind Iran."

Not likely.

What worries Hamas in Gaza is the elimination of its sources of weapons supply; the possibility that Egypt will enforce the closure of the smuggling tunnels from Sinai; Israel's ability to intercept weapons shipments (not all, not all the time, but a lot of them); and the fact that Israel's entire defence calculus shifted the moment Iron Dome proved its worth. Israel no longer has to respond to every hostile act by Hamas. It takes the hair-trigger off the situation when the Israeli government can tell the public, "We can defend you from rockets; we ARE defending you; and we will determine how best to do that."

What is true for Gaza is true for Syria, Lebanon, and even for Iran. It should be a high priority for the Administration to ensure that Israel does not feel the need to engage in hostilities with the neighbours based on the agitation of an anxious populace. Missile defence buys time through reassurance for sound strategic reasoning, and the Administration should appreciate – and fund – that.

Even The Washington Post has come to understand that the President's management of foreign policy is "based more on how he thinks the world should operate than on reality. It was a world in which "the tide of war is receding" and the United States could, without much risk, radically reduce the size of its armed forces. Other leaders, in this vision, would behave rationally and in the interest of their people and the world. Invasions, brute force, great-power games and shifting alliances – these were things of the past. ... [Some leaders] will not be deterred by the disapproval of their peers, the weight of world opinion or even disinvestment by Silicon Valley companies. They are concerned primarily with maintaining their holds on power."

As long as that is true in Iran, Syria, Russia, Gaza, the West Bank, and Lebanon, Israel will have to rely on its military and intelligence capabilities to defend its people.

President Obama has a well-known bias against missile defences – our own and everyone else's. So perhaps the President is just having and eating his cake: while he knows Congress will change it, HIS budget doesn't support missile defence. While it is a poor choice on the part of the Administration to game that money, the so-far stalwart support of a

Congress that understands that both Israel's security and our own require missiles defence is welcome.

8. BICOM Briefing: The Iranian Threat to Israel

How has Iran threatened Israel?

- The Iranian regime is ideologically opposed to Israel's existence and its leaders routinely call for its destruction. President Rouhani has described Israel as a cancer.

How does Iran pose a direct threat to Israeli security?

- Iran actively opposes Israel, Palestinian moderates, and the Middle East peace process. It positions itself as the regional leader of radical anti-Western and anti-Israel forces, supporting the Assad regime, Hezbollah in Lebanon, and armed Palestinian groups in the Gaza Strip.
- Iran arms, trains and supports armed groups that operate against Israel and Jewish targets.

Palestinian armed groups

- o In March 2014 Israel captured the Klos-C ship carrying advanced missiles with a range of 100-200km from Iran to Gaza. These heavy missiles would have put most of Israel's population in range.
- o In March 2011 the Israeli Navy captured the Victoria, and in January 2002 the Karine-A, both carrying tonnes of weaponry from Iran to the Gaza Strip.
- o Iran has long backed Hamas, Palestinian Islamic Jihad and other Palestinian armed groups. Hundreds of rockets fired at Israel from the Gaza Strip were supplied by Iran. Iran-Hamas relations were strained when Hamas refused to support Assad in Syria, but the ties remain.

Hezbollah

- o Established in Lebanon by Iran in the 1980s, Hezbollah is committed to Iran's agenda.
- o Iran supplies Hezbollah's massive arsenal of short and medium range rockets, estimated at over 60,000 rockets, as well as more advanced weapons. Hezbollah fired 4000 rockets at Israel during the 2006 Second Lebanon War, killing 44 civilians and injuring more than 1400.
- o Hezbollah plays a major role in Lebanon's coalition government. It uses its independent armed forces to intimidate internal opposition.
- Iran and its allies attack Israeli and Jewish targets around the world. In February 2012, Iranian agents were believed responsible for attacks on Israeli diplomats in Georgia, Thailand and India. Iranian client Hezbollah was responsible for a bombing in Bulgaria in July 2012, killing five Israeli tourists and their driver. Iran is believed responsible for the 1992 attack on the Israeli Embassy in Argentina and on the Argentine Jewish communal building in 1994. The bombings killed 116.

How would nuclear weapons increase the threat Iran poses to Israel?

- Iran already has missiles capable of carrying nuclear warheads that can reach Israel.
- If Iran acquired nuclear weapons, Israel would be in the shadow of a power which openly called for its destruction, and would have the theoretical capacity to carry it out. Analysts debate whether Iran would use a nuclear weapon against Israel, but any such possibility constitutes an unbearable threat. Much of Israel's population and industry are concentrated in its coastal plane, and would be affected by a single strike.
- There is the chance of nuclear crises born out of miscalculation. This risk is exacerbated by the hostility between Iran and Israel, the Israeli perception of an existential threat, and the lack of any direct communication channels.
- An Iranian nuclear weapon would be likely to further embolden them in their violent actions against Israel and their support for armed extremists on Israel's borders.
- Iran could in the future provide nuclear weapons to proxies. This would be a way for Iran to deploy a nuclear device whilst denying involvement.

9. Israel: A failed state

I grew up in South Africa and left for Israel in the 1970's. So I consider myself somewhat knowledgeable on South African apartheid. In view of the criticisms of Israel as an apartheid state, I felt it my duty that my understanding and knowledge of apartheid should be put to good cause by exposing the evil manifestations of apartheid in Israel.

I started in my neighbourhood. I went to the municipal park. In South Africa, only whites would have been allowed to enter. I could not believe my eyes. Arabs and Jews were mixing peacefully, Arab and Jewish children socialising and shouting at each other in their home languages. This cannot be, where is the separation? So I went to the shops and restaurants of the adjoining mall. What a major let down! Arabs and Jews shopping together as customers, Arabs and Jews employed together in the shops as assistants and cashiers, Arabs and Jews sitting in restaurants, an Arab dentist with his sign for all the world to see and the only missing ingredients were the "blankes alleen – whites only" signs. Clearly, in matters of commerce and common use of public and transport facilities, open to all, Israel is a failure in implementing apartheid: there is clearly no South African style apartheid to be found in public areas.

I had a brainwave. There are four places where there simply has to be South African apartheid – beaches, hospitals, universities and the army. I rushed to the beach and another failure. Jews, Arabs and tourists mixing, unaware that according to the world they should have been separated; even worse, I learnt that one million Arabs from the Palestinian Authority's West Bank had visited Israel's Mediterranean beaches during summer, mixing with Israelis as if it was the most natural thing to do. These failures to comply with the most elementary requirements of apartheid were making me sick and I rushed to hospital requiring medical attention. I was treated by Arab nurses before being ignominiously delivered to Arab doctors for further treatment. I heard that twenty percent of the medical staff are Arab and that the Israeli hospitals, medical staff, administrative staff and patients, are open to all, even the Syrian enemy or the Palestinian terrorist injured while setting off his bombs to kill and injure Israelis. In a children's ward could be found in adjoining beds, Jewish, Israeli Arab, Palestinian Arab and Syrian children. Last year, 220,000 West Bank Palestinians, including 20,000 Palestinian children, took off time from shouting to the world about their ill-treatment and oppression at the hands of Israelis in order to visit Israeli hospitals for medical treatment. What a lousy advert for apartheid.

I was going crazy. Apartheid – where are you? I drove like a madman to an Israeli university to search for this elusive apartheid thing. Again, about twenty percent of the students at Israeli universities, no less than 30% at Haifa university, are Arabs. There are Arab professors and lecturers mixing with their Israeli colleagues. The Palestinian, Bargouti, leader of the world-wide anti-Israel boycott (BDS) movement, which bases itself on alleged Israeli apartheid, is a student at Tel Aviv University. Kafka, where are you when you are so desperately needed? This is becoming a mad, mad, mad world. When it comes to imposing apartheid, Israel does not appear to have a clue as to what is required.

I knew I could rely on the army to provide me with a first success that apartheid exists in Israel. After all, why would any but Jews want to serve in the Israeli army? I charged to army headquarters and suffered possibly my biggest defeat. In the Jewish/Israeli army serve, as commanders, officers and soldiers, Ethiopians, Beduin Arabs, Christian Arabs, Moslem Arabs, Druse and Circassians (Moslems originally from the Northern Caucuses). Worse, the world famous Golan Brigade is commandeered by a..... Druse Brigadier General! What sort of fictitious apartheid permits Arabs to serve and even command in the Jewish army? Israel, you failure you, don't you know anything about implementing apartheid?

I decided to catch this Israeli apartheid thing slyly through the back door. South African apartheid was anchored by legislation. I went to a lawyer to obtain details of legislated apartheid in Israel. I came out with my tail between my legs. Not only is there no legislative apartheid but Israel's Declaration of Independence and subsequent Basic Laws specifically provide for full democratic and human rights for all. Arabs serve as judges and in fact an Arab judge recently sentenced an ex-president of Israel to jail for being naughty with the ladies. Arabs vote as equals with Jews and sit as members of the Knesset (Parliament) as members of all parties. What an abject failure for Israel; even the judiciary up to and including the Supreme Court and the Knesset (Parliament) are devoid of "apartheid".

The bottom line is that, when it comes to implementing apartheid, Israel is a failed state. Israel fails every test evidencing the existence of South African style apartheid.

But all was not yet lost. My lawyer pointed out that the Palestinian had learnt much about apartheid from their good South African friends. Could I snatch victory from the jaws of defeat by changing direction? Apparently, yes. The Palestinians have legislation forbidding the sale of property to Jews; the sentence for transgressions: death. Good. Apartheid at last. There are no Jews or Israelis living in Areas A & B under Palestinian Authority control. Better. More apartheid. The Palestinians have announced that no Jews or Israelis will be entitled to live in their state after it is founded. Eureka! Success at last! If you want to find South African apartheid in the Middle East, all you need to do is visit the Palestinian Authority's areas, or for that matter, most Arab countries such as Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Iraq, Libya etc (where Jews and Israelis have no rights or are even allowed). By now it must be clear to all why the Palestinians, their supporters and the Arab world are always shouting "apartheid". These folk are the real success stories when it comes to implementing apartheid.

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