

Israel is the heart of our civilization, not the appendix

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Nidra Poller

The airwaves are thick with the sound of raucous voices and clashing swords. O Jerusalem--well, ok, East Jerusalem-- and the thundering hooves will brook no opposition! Get Israel!

At the slightest twinge of international pain they cry out, "Cut it off! Get rid of it, and the worldwide body politic will finally live in peace." Ahmadinejad has promised hundreds of times to wipe Israel off the map without provoking much of a reaction. His proxies stock arms, poke and prod, without raising international eyebrows. Then Israel approves housing construction in Jerusalem and the sleeping warriors awake. Grrrrrr!

The Obama administration bares its fangs and the troops go into action. General Petraeus warns-- then denies he warned-- that the unresolved Israel-Palestine conflict is disturbing Muslim nations, stimulating extremism, and putting our boys in danger. Walt & Mearsheimer point the finger at homegrown Zionists who are twisting the arm of this vast nation, bringing it to its knees, and forcing filthy Israel down our throats. Israel is a pain. Dr. Quack has the solution. Cut out that festering appendix and the ummah will welcome us with open arms.

The "two-state solution that everyone knows will resolve the conflict" is brandished like a scimitar: Israeli withdrawal to the '67 ('49 armistice) lines, dismantlement of settlements, a mini territorial tradeoff, a "solution" to the refugee problem, and the creation of a Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital... The "solution" is a lethal narrative, a knife to the heart of Jerusalem that cripples Jewish sovereignty in the homeland.

What makes Jerusalem so precious? The Jews. Mecca was sanctified by Islam, even though the black stone pre-existed the founding gesture, and Jerusalem was sanctified by Judaism. Subsequent religious claims to the city are accretions to the original consecration. Jerusalem is the Christian holy land because Jesus was a Jew. And Islam's claim is based on a scriptural injunction to supersede Judaism and Christianity.

If Muslim claims to Jerusalem are not religious they are inexplicable. Ramallah would be a more suitable capital of a Palestinian state that truly intended to live peacefully side by side with Israel. Why should the world be dragged into a fierce tug of war when there is enough for everyone... if, in fact, it is a question of legitimate aspirations.

The Muslim claim to Jerusalem is staked on the golden dome of the Al Aqsa mosque that dominates the Temple Mount (the French call it "l'esplanade des mosquées"). And if it is granted, the heart of our civilization will be broken. The precedent established in Jerusalem will be extended to Paris, New York, London, the Hague, Detroit, Washington D.C... wherever a mosque is built, Islam will extend its political sovereignty. It will be the end of separation of church and state, the end of religious and political freedom. Al Aqsa is built on the ruins of the Jewish Temple. Europeans--so eager to impose the division of Jerusalem-- finally nixed plans for mega- mosques in Rome and London. But their long-delayed awakening is trumped by the anti-Zionism of the American president.

Two weeks ago mosque-goers threw rocks down from the Temple Mount at Jews worshipping at the kotel (Western Wall). Local Islamists regularly stir up the masses with false claims that Israel is violating the sanctity of al Aqsa. Then President Obama worked up a fury against the Israeli government with false claims that housing construction in "East" Jerusalem (as if it were another state, like South Dakota!) jeopardizes the peace process. Ramat Shlomo is in north Jerusalem but ideology doesn't have a compass. The restoration of the Har Hova synagogue, "right next to Islam's holiest sites," was a further affront to Islam dutifully relayed by the world's pundits, bereft of the slightest notions of logic and chronology. Barack Hussein Obama dragged

Benyamin Netanyahu into the coal shed and bound him hand and foot with ultimatums. Add it all up: in the space of two short weeks the free world has bowed to the will of Temple Mount Islamists!

The faulty religious justification for the division of Israel's capital is shored up with a secular narrative that starts from a falsified baseline where all of Israel was Palestinian land stolen by Jewish colonizers who created an illegal state which was subsequently extended by military conquests to include "East Jerusalem." Out of the goodness of their hearts the Palestinians will reluctantly accept the fait accompli for a rump state within the 1949 armistice line. But that's all! Everything else is illegal and all means of reconquest are justified.

Jerusalem was divided by the sword. The neighborhoods claimed today as exclusively reserved for Arab-Muslims were emptied of their rightful Jewish residents by atrocious massacres. The survivors fled for their lives. When Europe--followed now by the United States--validates that sort of zoning regulation, the rules will apply to their own cities. No need for tanks rumbling down the Champs Elysées or bombs raining down on Coventry. Just increase the pressure on the pesky State of Israel, cut off its blood supply, and discover--too late--that you've given yourself a massive heart attack.

Hillary Clinton's "tough love" AIPAC speech concluded with a Passover homily. Moses led the children of Israel out of Egypt, preached the Secretary of State, and at every step of liberation and up to the threshold of the Promised Land, there were always hangers-back who said it was "too dangerous, too hard, too risky." Today, she would have us believe, the Promised Land is a Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital. Israelis, like their hero Moses, should just do the right thing!

Was there a rabbi in the house?

The lesson of pesach (Passover) is that the children of Israel were liberated from slavery in Egypt by the alliance between their own determination and the "outstretched hand." The Jewish people have remained faithful to this Alliance, which is inseparable from the integrity of Jerusalem. The pesach seder is not the commemoration of a dead past, it is expressly the here and now of liberation. "I was a slave in Egypt..." We do not bow our heads to pharaohs, to presidents, or to international opinion.

The emissaries sent to Canaan to get the lay of the land came back and warned that it would be too hard to redeem the divine promise. "It's no Paradise. And besides there's all kinds of tough guys there," they said, shivering in their boots. Deemed unworthy of the promised homeland, the liberated slaves spent forty years in the wilderness, learning to be free. They gave birth to a new generation that had the courage to build a sovereign Jewish nation with Jerusalem as its capital. The values they forged are at the heart of our civilization.

Letter to the Editors / Washington Times / March 22, 2010

Steven R. Hurst's Friday article. "Obama now hamstrung on Israeli settlements" (<http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2010/mar/12/obama-now-hamstrung-on-israeli-settlements/>) shows a complete lack of understanding of Israel and the Mid-East "Peace process"

Almost all Israeli Jews and many American Jews have no trust in President Obama. It started with the knowledge of his associations with Rev. Wright, Rashid Khalidi, Billy Ayers and the like. His membership in the United Church of Christ and its leadership in the Divest From Israel campaign also made many of us question his friendship towards Israel.

Mr. Hurst tells us of "unstinting American Support" for Israel. Vice President Joseph R. Biden also tells us how America will not allow Iran to go nuclear. Well, American inaction and delays on dealing with Iran guarantee the success of Iran's nuclear program and completely contradicts "unstinting support" for Israel..

The Israeli announcement of 1600 new homes in East Jerusalem is a bold message to the Obama administration that Israel can say one thing and do another just as the Obama administration can.

Perhaps Mr. Hurst might consider how damaging to the "Peace-Process" are the Palestinian demands that all Palestinians and all their descendents be allowed to return to Israel proper. He also should read the charters of Hamas, Hezbollah and Fatah which call for the destruction of the state of Israel.

Mr. Hurst is allowed to have his biases but his readers should know what he is not revealing to them.

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Message from Rivka Fishman

Dear Friends and Family:

Hanging on our living room wall is a poster-size, black and white photograph of the arch of the Hurva Synagogue in the Jewish Quarter of the Old City of Jerusalem. Joel took the picture in the 1980s. The subtle tones of the photo which highlight the strength of the arch do not reveal the history of the site. The Hurva Synagogue, rebuilt in 1864, hosted Theodore Herzl, Ze'ev Jabotinsky, Viscount Herbert Samuel, and Chief Rabbi Kook, among others. It was the center of Jewish life in the Old City until its destruction by the Jordanian forces in 1948 when the Jews were expelled from the Jewish Quarter. Its destroyers vowed it would never be rebuilt and Jews would never return to the Quarter. What remained was rubble, and the arch, which was reconstructed, became the landmark of the past glory of the Hurva.

On March 15, 2010 (Rosh Hodesh Nisan 5770), the rebuilt Hurva Synagogue, modeled after its destroyed predecessor, was dedicated. The arch of the Hurva has been integrated into the new building. The photograph on our wall now belongs to history. "Rejoice ye with Jerusalem, and be glad with her, all ye that love her." (Isaiah 66:10)

With Passover greetings,

Rivkah

Dispatch from Tom Gross

<http://www.tomgrossmedia.com/mideastdispatches/archives/001098.html>

Two articles by Jackson Diehl

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/03/21/AR2010032101708.html>

http://voices.washingtonpost.com/postpartisan/2010/03/obama_and_netanyahu_pointless.html?hpid=opinionsbox1