



Canadian Institute for Jewish Research
Prof. Frederick Krantz, Director

ISRANET DAILY BRIEFING

Yom Hamishi 7 Tevet 5773 Volume XI, No. 2,966 Thursday December 20, 2012

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WHITHER THE “WEST BANK”/GAZA: TWO STATE, THREE STATE, EIGHT STATE (EMIRATE) SOLUTIONS?

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THOUGHTS ON ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN CONFLICT: PART II

Barry Shaw

[*Jerusalem Post*, Dec. 13, 2012](#)

Palestine was a desolate, barely inhabited, backwater of the Ottoman Empire until the Mandate, the British and the Zionist movement that led to the creation of the State of Israel, brought it back to life. The anthropology of the Arab inhabitants in the disputed territories consisted of pastoral and static tribes or roaming Bedouin tribesmen. They were joined by a flow of Arab immigration from places such as Syria, Egypt, Iraq and Lebanon, attracted by the employment opportunities created by the

Zionist enterprise....This is today's mix in what is called the Palestinian Arab population in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, but the basic original ingredient was the various tribes that still exist today.

Those who migrated to this region left behind artificial states that are, today, in conflict and disarray. We see the disintegration of states such as Iraq, Libya and Syria because they have been artificially concocted from rival tribes and ethnicities that are forced to live together, but with a generations-old hatred of one another, in one state under a rulership they do not accept. The Palestinians haven't even got to that unhappy state yet. Would it, therefore, be wise to create such a mess now?

This short series of articles presents the concept and the architecture of the idea of a Palestinian Emirates. The concept leaves the engineering and maintenance to others, such as diplomats, leaders and think tanks, to construct the project. According to Dr. Mordechai Kedar of Bar-Ilan University, and formerly of IDF Military Intelligence, the creation of a series of city states based on traditional and legitimate tribal leadership, rather than an artificial, weak and dysfunctional nation state, is the only solution to the Israeli-Palestinian problem. The basis of successful local leaderships is inherent in its own population.

These states can decide their own form of government, make their own laws, educate their own people, and print their own currency if they wish, have their own media, develop their own industry and commerce, or have their people find employment within Israel. The structure gives control and responsibility to the local residents to decide their own future. In time, when a number of independent city states emerge, they can unite in a Palestinian Emirates body, similar in form to the Persian Gulf states. They can work together for their mutual benefit, including in commerce, tourism, security, regulations and other interconnecting interests.

Kedar visualizes eight such city states that will contain the majority of the Palestinian Arab population, with freedom of movement between them. They will be interconnected into a federation of Palestinian Emirates, if they wish. It's in Israel's interest to foster close cooperation with such city states. The leaders will be dependent on a cooperative neighbor for trade, employment, influence, contact with the outside world and security.

For Israel, these city states can be a source of local industry, trade and commerce, as well as be security buffer zones. Instead of the existing West Bank and Gaza blocs of enmity, it will be possible to develop mutually positive relations with these smaller independent entities. Once both sides feel confident and comfortable with the success of the working model, the city states can have their own security and police forces which could be trained and equipped by Israel. Until then they should be guaranteed the protection of Israel to keep them safe from external forces wishing to destroy their quest for independence.

Dr. Kedar walked me through the list of local tribes. Tulkarm residents belong to the Karmi tribe. Al-Masri is the leading family in Shechem (Nablus). Barghouti is the Ramallah tribe. Erekat is the ruling family in Jericho. The Jabarais are the prominent tribe in Hebron, although Hebron also has the Abusnena, Qawasme and Natche tribes.

Kadar points to Hebron as the perfect place to create the pilot model of a future Palestinian Emirates. Although there are several tribes there, they have coexisted due to the traditional tribal court in which they settle all their differences without the need for a police or security force. The fiercely independent Sheikh Farid al-Jabari has been critical of the Palestinian Authority. He has spoken and written strongly to Mahmoud Abbas, whom he refers to as "the foreigner" due to the fact that Abbas is not from the territories, but from Safed, and has no tribal roots in the area. This traditional environment gives Kedar the key to opening the box to a different future for Arabs living in the territories, and hope for Israel and the world for a better, peaceful world....

Each of the emirates could apply to the Israeli government for permits to expand its territory for industrial, commercial, residential or recreational development, just as the Israeli towns and villages apply for building extensions in their areas. Israel would supervise the development of the road and rail systems, water and electricity supplies, to supply the emirates just as they would to the nearby Israeli communities. A patchwork quilt of Palestinian city states and Israeli towns and villages would emerge in the territories, each giving allegiance to their own governing body. There would be coordination and cooperation between the federation of emirates and the Israeli government in a stronger form than the existing coordination between the PA and Israel.

Israel would use its influence within the European Union and America to bring foreign aid, development and commerce to each of the cooperating emirates. There would be less waste of funds and easier accountability in the city states than has been the case with the PA. Israel would approve the flow of emirate goods and products to Israeli ports for shipment abroad. Israeli entrepreneurs would be encouraged to partner with Palestinian Emirates businessman in joint ventures. The Israeli government would allow residents from each of the city states to find employment in Israel in preference to the many thousands of foreign laborers who work in our agriculture and on our building sites today.

The plan is fraught with dangers. Any chieftain or tribe willing to become an independent entity will be accused of treason by peace killers stubbornly determined to use the Palestinians as cannon fodder in their attempts to eradicate the Jewish State of Israel. It will take courage to declare an intention to attempt a brave new experiment in statehood. That is why the support of the United Arab Emirates may be an essential ingredient in implementing the project.

Surely it is to the benefit and credit of the UAE to promote and assist in the replication of their political system for the sake of their Palestinian Arab brethren? It would certainly strengthen their political model in the eyes of the world at a time of turmoil throughout the Middle East. One thing the Palestinian Emirates concept has going for it is time. Maybe the time isn't yet ripe, but Middle East conflicts aren't going away any time soon. More time will be wasted before a death certificate is issued for the body of a dead two-state project, and other ideas will be considered.

During that time the seed of the Palestinian Emirates idea can be planted, cultivated and allowed to flower into a sensible solution that has a successful model elsewhere in the region. Just imagine the UAE duplicating its example by adopting the city states project. Just as Western countries adopt twin city projects, perhaps Dubai will twin with the Emirate of Hebron, or Abu Dhabi will adopt Tulkarm, and guide them into a confederation of Palestinian Emirates? Israel need have no fear of such a commitment. On the contrary, this could act to Israel's benefit.

The idea of a Palestinian Emirates must be allowed out into the open to give it breathing space, thinking space, talking space, to allow it to germinate and spread, to be adopted by think tanks and policy-makers so they can assemble the nuts and bolts that will go into the construction of this project...The idea must be advanced cautiously, with discretion, and with courage. It can only succeed when men of influence and vision put their reputation on the line for its success.

None is better placed to do so than the rulers of the emirates of the Persian Gulf. They should step forward to raise their unfortunate Palestinian Arab brethren to a brighter future modeled on the framework of their own existence. By offering their best efforts in solving this seemingly impenetrable problem, crafted in their own image, they would elevate their prestige on the world stage. This may sound like wishful thinking, but so is a two-state solution that is going nowhere.

The notion of a Palestinian Emirates in no way negates the affirmation of a Palestine as a non-member of the United Nations. This resolution did not refer to a governmental construct of a future Palestine.

Neither did it recognize any authority to govern over such an entity, neither for the PA nor for Hamas. The mention of a Palestinian entity within the pre-1967 borders does not negate the concept of a Palestinian Emirates within such boundaries.

Respect and honor are part of the Arab DNA. The Palestinian Emirates project should appeal to the local inhabitants because it goes to the heart of who they are, and not to some false narrative concocted by politicians and outsiders they do not respect. It honors their ancient tribal traditions. It gives respect and dignity to the head of each tribe. It respects the political and social system they have known for generations. Once proven, it will give them a better life, a better future for them, for Israel, for the region, and a peaceful resolution to the conflict bringing with it respect and cooperation with its neighbors, including Israel....

Barry Shaw is the author of Israel Reclaiming the Narrative. He is also the special consultant on delegitimization issues to The Strategic Dialogue Center at the Netanya Academic College.

WHAT'S REALLY GOING ON IN GAZA?

Dr. Mordechai Kedar

[Jewish Press](#), March 16, 2012

A week of missiles was supposed to change the focus of interest in the Middle East from Homs to Gaza, from Syria to Israel, from Assad to Netanyahu. This was the plan of Iran and its few followers in Gaza. But it didn't succeed, and for the usual reason – the sociological factors of the Middle East.

I have emphasized again and again the dominance of tribalism within Middle Eastern culture, and the important role played by traditional frameworks of relationship – such as ethnic, tribal, religious, sectarian – in private as well as in communal life. I downplay the influence of foreign ideologies that have been imported from Europe, from communism to democracy, and from nationalism to liberalism, which have all failed in the effort to formulate a culture of public domain in the Middle East. Dictatorship is the practical expression of the failure of these ideologies.

What remains is only the person, together with his family, extended family, clan, and tribe. This is the only thing which is real, alive and kicking, that functions as it always has, and the only framework that is capable of bestowing on an individual identity, a sense of belonging, a livelihood, and physical defense and security.

One of the foundation stones of tribal culture is the antagonism between the tribe and the modern state, a state which was imposed upon the tribe by foreign colonialism and its local derivatives. States have always tried to impose themselves upon the individual and upon the tribe; including their symbols, values, laws and leaders, and have tried to substitute these in the hearts of the people instead of those of the tribe, and its symbols, values, leaders, and laws. In Arab societies that have undergone dissolution and turned into more individualistic societies – Egypt and Tunisia for example – the state has succeeded in settling in the hearts of the people, and uprooting the loyalty to the tribe. In the tribal societies of most of the other Arab states, the state is forced to yield part of its sovereignty and to accept the existence and limited authority of the tribe. In order not to confront the tribe, the state compromises and comes to an understanding with the tribe, in an effort to placate its members.

The Gaza Strip is no different from the rest of the Arab world, so tribal culture is alive and kicking in the Gaza Strip too. Ever since the Hamas movement took control of Gaza trip in 2007, it has transformed itself from a gang of jihadists into a ruling organization which has a state, government, advisory council, legal system, police, military and economic bodies. Thus, Hamas has turned into a standard Arab state, which is attempting to impose its agenda upon the tribes and the clans that live in

the Strip. The State of Hamas serves the interests of the group that leads it, and therefore it is in constant conflict with the tribes and the clans and must reach agreements with them.

The minor movements – Islamic Jihad, the PRC (Popular Resistance Committees), the Salah-a-Din Division, the Army of the Nation, the Army of Islam and others – function like tribes, challenging the authority of the state, which is in the hands of Hamas. Today, these groups are doing to Hamas what Hamas did to the PLO twenty years ago when the PLO was in power. The widespread corruption among the top echelons of Hamas strengthen the influence of the small organizations that oppose Hamas. What encourages these organizations is the fact that Hamas has “hung up the gloves” and is trying to reach a calm with Israel. Hamas has not become a Zionist organization, and has not changed its covenant or its sole goal: to eliminate Israel and bring an end to the “occupation” of Jaffa and Acre, not only Hebron and Nablus. However, in the present historic phase it is suspending its battle against Israel in order to establish a state which, when the time comes, will be the basis from which the war of the destruction of Israel will be waged. The small organizations do not accept this suspension of jihad and call Hamas derogatory names such as “The Israeli Border Guard” and the “South Lebanese Army”.

From a practical point of view, Hamas is capable of eliminating the organizations, just as it dealt with the Army of Islam, of the Dughmush clan in August of 2008, and as it eliminated Sheikh Abd Al-Latif Moussa’s Islamic Emirate of Jerusalem in cold blood in August of 2009 in a mosque in Rafah, murdering him, his wives and children and 24 followers. As of today, in the year 2012, Hamas refrains from imposing itself on the small organizations by force of arms so that it will not become the “Israeli Border Guard” in the eyes of Gazans, and prefers to come to an agreement with them; to compromise with them and to calm them down....

Iran, which would like Gaza to be a constant battlefield, no longer supports Hamas, and has transferred its support to organizations that undermine the hegemony of Hamas in Gaza. Right now, when the world is focused on the slaughter of citizens in Homs, Syria...Iran is encouraging its underling organizations to stoke the fire in Gaza....

Israel need not tamper with the Gazan social structure or try to re-engineer the tribal map and its interests. The State of Hamas – with all its problems of terrorism and jihadism – serves the interests of Israel, because it breaks the Palestinian dream into pieces, and also proves to Israelis who are captivated by the dream of peace, that what’s happening now in Gaza may happen again, but in a larger, more dangerous version, in Judea and Samaria, if Israel transfers control of that area to Middle Eastern culture. Many of the Israeli cities of the center are within range of the mortars, the kassams and the missiles that might be launched from the hills of Judea and Samaria. Therefore, Israel must find a solution that will free us from the majority of the Arab population in Judea and Samaria but allow us to remain in the rural areas. The [eight-state solution](#), which is based on the tribes living in the Arab cities in Judea and Samaria is the only solution that is based on the extant social framework of the Middle East, and will provide Israel with security. Not absolute peace, because there is no such thing in the Middle East, but relative peace, that will need some maintenance from time to time. In the Middle East, only the invincible can have peace because only if a group is strong, will the other groups leave it be.

Dr. Mordechai Kedar (Ph.D. Bar-Ilan U.) Served for 25 years in IDF Military Intelligence specializing in Arab political discourse, Arab mass media, Islamic groups and the Syrian domestic arena. A lecturer in Arabic at Bar-Ilan U., he is also an expert on Israeli Arabs.

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WHO WANTS A PALESTINIAN STATE?

Moshe Dann

[Jerusalem Post](#), Nov. 26, 2012

The Palestinian Authority's moves at the United Nations for recognition of a Palestinian state have raised objections. Since many support the idea, however, including some Israeli politicians, and with little hope for successful negotiations, the PA's move seems logical. They can continue to attack Israel diplomatically and legally, continue incitement, raise their stature, and avoid recognizing Israel.

However, Egypt and Jordan signed peace treaties with Israel, why can't the Palestinians? Simply put, because Israel's existence contradicts theirs. Pushing a "peace process" that requires Palestinian Arabs to give up their opposition to a Jewish state, the international community can't figure out why it doesn't work. The answer is that the dispute is not over territory; it's about ideology.

Palestinianism, the basis of the Arab/Muslim war against Zionism, the State of Israel as the national historic homeland of the Jewish People, is part of a broad Islamist revolution throughout the world against non-Muslim infidels. Understanding the mission of Islamism explains why efforts to impose a Palestinian state, the "two-state" proposal and the "peace process" are doomed to fail. Palestinians don't want a state alongside Israel, but one that replaces Israel. The primary goal of Palestinian nationalism is to wipe out the State of Israel, not to permit its existence.

Any form of Palestinian statehood, therefore, that accepts Israeli sovereignty in what Muslims believe is their land stolen by Jews, is, by their definition, heretical. That is clear in both the PLO and Hamas Charters and the position of Arab leaders (in Arabic). Palestinianism is not a national identity, but a political construct developed as part of a terrorist agenda when the PLO was formed in 1964. Palestinian identity means the struggle to "liberate Palestine from the Zionists," not to accept them. An international cause, it bound Arabs and Muslims together, as part of jihad throughout the world.

"Two-state" proposals, therefore, with Palestinian statehood alongside Israel as a territorial goal, means the end of Palestinianism and an end to the struggle to eradicate Israel. This explains why no Palestinian leader will agree to surrender to Western and Israeli interests, and why making compromises is anathema. Statehood in only part of Palestine means a denial of the "Nakba" (catastrophe), the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948. It means admitting that everything for which they fought and sacrificed was in vain.

Statehood means abandoning millions of Arabs who live in 58 UNRWA-sponsored "refugee camps" in Judea, Samaria, Gaza, Lebanon, Syria and Jordan, and those living throughout the world; they will no longer be considered "refugees." UNRWA will be out of business. Statehood means "the armed struggle," the crux of Palestinian identity, is over. It means that the concept of Palestinianism created by the PLO, accepted by much of the international community and the media, the struggle to "liberate Palestine," is finished, and that their suffering was for naught.

Statehood involves taking responsibility – ending incitement and violence, corruption and lawlessness, and building just and transparent institutions, the establishment of a truly democratic government. Accepting Israel means ending the Palestinian revolution, a national betrayal and an Islamic heresy. In this context, for Palestinians and their supporters, the "peace process" is a metaphor for defeat.

The PA's move at the UN is a way to achieve recognition and legitimacy without compromising their opposition to Israel.

The author is a PhD historian, writer and journalist living in Jerusalem.

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ON TOPIC

Original Thinking: Palestinian Emirates (Part 1): [Barry Shaw, Jerusalem Post, Dec. 6, 2012](#) —Mahmoud Abbas may have had the support of a mass of UN members to ram through a “non-member” status for “Palestine,” whatever “non-member status” means. Surely you’re either a member, or not? Non-member status is like being almost pregnant.

Moderate Proposals To Stop A Palestinian State: [Daniel Tauber, Jerusalem Post, Dec. 11, 2012](#)—The UN recognition of a Palestinian state is a wake-up call to those who think we can continue to pass the buck down the years. At some point, Israel must put the brakes on the train to Palestinian statehood, and the sooner the better, as the more time passes the greater the sense of inevitability and the weaker our negotiating position.

'Incitement against Israel in PA is getting worse': [Herb Keinon, Jerusalem Post, Dec. 2, 2012](#)—Incitement and inflammatory language against Israel in the Palestinian Authority is at the worst level since Jerusalem began systematically measuring it in 2009, Strategic Affairs Ministry director-general Yossi Kuperwasser told the cabinet Sunday.

Israel Should Let the PA Collapse: [Elad Benari, Israel National News, Dec. 2, 2012](#)—Israel should let the Palestinian Authority collapse, particularly in the wake of its unilateral statehood bid at the United Nations, says Professor Efraim Inbar. Inbar, director of the Begin-Sadat Center for Strategic Studies (BESA) at Bar-Ilan University.

The New Palestinians: Angry Youth Are Proposing A Radical New Paradigm: [Prof Menachem Klein, Jerusalem Report, Nov. 19, 2012](#)—It’s not the economy, stupid, that’s shaking the foundations of the Palestinian Authority. On the contrary: For the new, angry, disillusioned young generation of Palestinians, the economy is a tool Israel uses to perpetuate PA President Mahmoud Abbas’s tottering regime.

The Liberman Proposal: [Dan Gordon, Jerusalem Post Dec 17, 2012](#)—Israel’s diplomatic standing opposite the international community is at the lowest it has been in recent memory. At best, Israel is viewed as a neo-colonialist occupying power of a downtrodden and homeless people. At worst, it is seen as a racist apartheid state oppressing the Palestinian ethnic minority and guilty of numerous war crimes against them.

Corridor Of Controversy: [Nadav Shragai, Jerusalem Post Dec. 13, 2012](#)—The site called E1 (East 1) is an area immediately adjacent to Jerusalem to the east, which covers an area of 1,200 hectares of largely uninhabited and mostly state-owned land. It is within the municipal boundary of Ma’aleh Adumim.

The Eight State Solution: [Mordechai Kedar, Canadian Institute for Jewish Research, Aug. 2, 2012](#)—Palestinian territorial contiguity is dangerous for Israeli national security. For security and demographic reason, Israel must retain as much land as possible in the West Bank. Evacuation of these areas will create a dangerous situation for Israeli security and eventually will necessitate reconquering extensive parts of the West Bank.

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