

Did Bush Sabotage Clinton's Middle East Peace Efforts?

by Dean Andromidas

The failure of President Bill Clinton to conclude a Middle East peace settlement in his last days in office, begs the question whether he was a victim of sabotage by the incoming Bush Administration. It is well known that Clinton felt compelled to "coordinate" his policy with Bush's transition team. The Bush Administration will be unable to deal with the unfolding systemic financial crisis about to blow up in their faces. As with the elder Bush, when confronted with a crisis, George W. will look for a war in an attempt to maintain control. Such a war, as insane and dangerous as it would be, would serve the only policy outlook the Bush crowd knows: "crisis management," and strong-arm tactics against the opposition to these policies, both domestic and international.

On Jan. 7, speaking before the Israel Policy Forum in New York, President Clinton outlined the principles which he hoped would lay the basis for the Palestinians and Israelis to negotiate a final peace agreement (see *Documentation*). The principles were remarkable for several of the points they contained, as well as their deep failings. They no doubt reflect some of the effects of "coordinating" with the Bush transition team.

Clinton called for a sovereign Palestinian state, whose viability necessitates that its territory be contiguous and not a collection of Bantustans, especially on the West Bank. Although calling for a Palestinian right to return to Palestine, and compensation for losses from an international fund, he ruled out an unlimited right to return to Israel. While calling for a non-militarized state, he also called for an international peacekeeping force along the Jordan Valley. On Jerusalem, Clinton called for an arrangement whereby it would be the capital of two states, where access to the religious sites would be enjoyed by all sides. He alluded to, but did not detail certain formulas that he had presented to the two parties on the issue of the religious sites.

The most glaring omission, which is the fundamental reason why his proposal, as it stands, could never be accepted, is the concept, "The name for peace is development." In the Middle East context, this means the development of water resources.

On Jan. 3, during his international webcast, Lyndon LaRouche underscored precisely this point. He said that there

will never be "peace in the Middle East, unless there is a massive program of desalination to ensure that there is the water and the energy needed, so that the children of the present inhabitants of the region have a peaceful future for their grandchildren. That should be the policy of the United States."

Sources close to the peace process underscored that the Clinton proposal, as flawed as these sources admit it was, nonetheless brought Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak closer to concluding an agreement than ever before in the seven years since the Oslo Accords came into effect. These sources believe that with the inclusion of programs for water and economic development, both sides would have been prepared to make the compromises required to strike an agreement. Barak, faced with a tough reelection campaign, and Arafat, faced with Palestinian rage in the street, are not the main problems to concluding an agreement, according to these sources. But, they assert, the Bush Administration will definitely not have the motivation to make peace in the Middle East. Furthermore, they say, there are a lot of illusions among the leaders in the region about the true intentions of the Bush Administration.

Bush Intervenes in Israeli Elections

In "Temple Mount Fanatics Foment a New Thirty Years War" (*EIR*, Nov. 3, 2000), *EIR* warned that Likud Chairman Ariel Sharon's provocative march onto the Al Haram Al Sharif/Temple Mount, the spark that ignited the current Al Aqsa *Intifada*, would lead to religious war that will spread far beyond the confines of the Middle East. Furthermore, Lyndon LaRouche has warned, that if the religious sites of Jerusalem continue to be the focus of political struggle, a religious war on a far greater scale than that which ravaged Central Europe for 30 years in the 17th Century, is assured. The events of the past week leave little doubt that religious war is on Bush's agenda.

On Jan. 8, some 200,000 Israelis demonstrated in Jerusalem against their government's efforts to reach a political compromise with the Palestinians on Jerusalem and the Al Haram Al Sharif/Temple Mount. The so-called "non-political" demonstration, under the slogan "Jerusalem I Pledge To You," was a show of support for Sharon, who is expected to defeat Barak in the Feb. 6 elections for Prime Minister. Although Sharon was not a speaker, it was organized by the right-wing Israeli politician Natan Sharansky, leader of the ethnic Russian Yisrael Ba'aliya party, along with Jerusalem Mayor Ehud Olmert, a leading member of Sharon's Likud party.

Among the featured speakers was the American, Ron Lauder, heir to the Estée Lauder cosmetic empire and chairman of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations. Lauder, a leading funder of Bush's Presidential campaign, bankrolled the election campaign of former Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin "Bibi" Netanyahu. Sharon

has also been the object of Lauder's monetary largess.

Lauder's appearance provoked outrage, both in Israel as well in the Jewish community in the United States, because it was a direct intervention by a leader of a mass-based American Jewish organization into internal Israeli politics. Although he claimed to have attended as an "individual" and spoke only for "tens of millions of Jews throughout the world," no fewer than 15 member-organizations of the Conference of Presidents of Major Jewish Organizations, and other American Jewish leaders, are calling for Lauder's censure, if not dismissal as chairman of the organization.

On the same podium was Rabbi Yisraeli Ariel, founder of the Temple Mount Institute, one of the most dangerous of the messianic Temple Mount fanatical organizations. These organizations are committed to the destruction of the mosques on the Al Haram Al Sharif/Temple Mount, in order to build the "Third Temple," crucial to their goal of forming a "theocratic state." Ariel was co-founder of Rabbi Meir Kahane's fascist Kach party, which is now considered a terrorist organization by both the Israeli and U.S. governments.

The massive demonstration was financed by the One Jerusalem organization, which represents the same Israeli-American, right-wing Zionist-Christian fundamentalist axis, which played one of the most important roles in putting George W. Bush into the White House. Formed right after last July's failed Camp David summit, the founders of the organization include American and Israeli leaders with close connections to the Bush Administration.

Among its American founders is David P. Steinmann, chairman of the Washington, D.C.-based Jewish Institute for National Security Affairs, one of the most important right-wing American Zionist policy organizations in the United States. Another is Doug Feith, a former Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense in the Reagan Administration and a leading figure among right-wing Washington think-tanks, including the Heritage Foundation and the American Enterprise Institute, which have been the spawning grounds for Bush Administration officials. Feith's good friend is the notorious Richard Perle, one of Bush's security policy advisers.

Among the Israelis is Tom Rose, publisher and chief executive officer of the *Jerusalem Post*, which is the Israeli mouthpiece for the Hollinger Corp., and David Bar-Illan and Ambassador Dore Gold, both leading members of the Likud who held leading positions in the former Netanyahu government.

The demonstration was also funded by several "Christian Zionist" and Christian fundamentalist organizations with deep roots in the United States. Foremost, was the International Christian Embassy in Jerusalem, which recently held its international conference in Jerusalem, with Sharon as its featured speaker. Others included Bridges for Peace, Christian Friends of Israel, and the Galilee Experience. All these organizations support Israel's control of Jerusalem, the Old City, and the "Land of Israel," as if the Palestinian, Arab, and Muslim populations did not exist.

Warning on the Temple Mount

On Jan. 3, five days before the Jerusalem demonstration, the Keshev Center for the protection of Democracy in Israel (see accompanying article) released its report on the threats by fanatical Jewish groups to destroy the mosques on the Al Haram Al Sharif/Temple Mount. It should be noted that the Keshev center was formed following the assassination of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, who was killed by Amir Yigal, a right-wing fanatic from the religious circles of the Temple Mount.

In a letter addressed to Prime Minister Barak endorsing the report, the former head of the Shin Bet, Israel's internal security service, Carmi Gilon, and former Israeli Police Commissioner Assaf Hefetz, warned of the dangers posed by radical rabbis calling for attacks on the Temple Mount—especially following the recent killing of Binyamin Kahane, the son of slain extremist Meir Kahane. This letter, which is being circulated throughout Israel as a petition, warns, "An attack on the Islamic holy sites would likely lead to all out war and unleash destructive forces that would imperil Israel's existence."

The Keshev report details more than 12 major groups that have tens of thousands of supporters, all committed to building King Solomon's "Third Temple," a move that would trigger a major international religious war. Rabbi Ariel, who spoke alongside Lauder, plays a feature role in the report.

Hillel Weiss, chairman of the "Temple Mount Lovers," the umbrella group comprising almost all the Temple Mount organizations, in a guarded discussion with *EIR*, confirmed that the Temple Mount will become the major focus of provocations by his followers. Weiss revealed that a group of leading ultra-Orthodox rabbis are expected to lift a religious ban on observant Jews from entering the Temple Mount. Although, according to Weiss, this will not affect the ban by Israel's Chief Rabbinical Council, which is the most important, it will nonetheless allow up to 100,000 observant Jews to enter the Temple Mount.

It is not hard to imagine this leading to large groups of "Temple Mount Lovers" entering the Al Haram Al Sharif/Temple Mount and confronting Muslim worshippers with a major provocation. Although the Israeli government has ordered the holy site closed to Jewish Israelis since the beginning of the current *Intifada*, the closure is expected to be lifted after the elections. This will definitely happen if Sharon is elected.

Sharon: A Wolf in Sheep's Clothing

While opinion polls give Sharon a 30-point lead over Barak, the same polls show that the majority of the Israeli population want an agreement with the Palestinians that would ensure peace and security. Thus, the Israeli electorate is being presented with a new Sharon, under the slogan, "Only Sharon Can Bring Peace." Because Sharon makes an improbable peacenik, his spin-doctors are keeping him on a tight

leash “for fear that in a moment of poor concentration he will blurt out his real, extremist, right-wing views,” as it was put by Barak campaign spokesman Tom Wagner.

One of these moments of “poor concentration” occurred during an interview Sharon gave to *Khar Habad*, the mouthpiece of the right-wing ultra-Orthodox Jewish Lubavitcher group, which is one of his main funders. Sharon declared, “The Oslo agreement exists no more — period.” As for making his promised “painful concessions” for peace, he said that he has already made them, by promising not to militarily retake the West Bank cities of Nablus and Jericho and “all those places that are the birthplace of the Jewish people.”

Sharon rejected out of hand Clinton’s peace proposal, saying that he would never divide Jerusalem; he would keep all the Jewish settlements and territories Israel requires for its security. As for a Palestinian state, it could be formed only after an interim agreement which would have no time-table, and would result in a state that would constitute a group of unconnected bantustans that would cover no more than the 40% of the West Bank which the Palestinians already control.

In the Jan. 9 *Jerusalem Post*, Gen. Shlomo Gavit (ret.), former head of Israeli military intelligence, wrote that a Sharon prime ministership would lead to the end of negotiations with the Palestinians, and an increase of high-intensity violence, under a new Arab slogan, “Israel Understands Only Force.” The inevitable Israeli countermeasures, he warned, would bring upon Israel international criticism. Furthermore, the Arab public, in each and every Arab country, would not only support the Palestinian cause, but would pressure their governments to support or even join the Palestinian struggle, not just morally, but possibly militarily.

Documentation

Clinton: There Must Be A Viable Palestinian State

The following are excerpts from President Clinton’s speech before the Israel Policy Forum, on Jan. 7.

First, I think there can be no genuine resolution to the conflict without a sovereign, viable, Palestinian state that accommodates Israel’s security requirements and the demographic realities. That suggests Palestinian sovereignty over Gaza, the vast majority of the West Bank, the incorporation into Israel of settlement blocks, with the goal of maximizing the number of settlers in Israel while minimizing the land annexed. . . . For Palestine to be viable [it] must be a geographically contiguous state.

Now, the land annexed into Israel, into settlement blocks, should include as few Palestinians as possible, consistent with the logic of two separate homelands. And to make the agreement durable, I think there will have to be some territorial swaps and other arrangements.

Second, a solution will have to be found for the Palestinian refugees who have suffered a great deal. . . . A solution that allows them to return to a Palestinian state that will provide all Palestinians with a place they can safely and proudly call home. All Palestinian refugees who wish to live in this homeland should have the right to do so. All others who want to find new homes, whether in their current locations or in third countries, should be able to do so, consistent with those countries’ sovereign decisions. And that includes Israel.

All refugees should receive compensation from the international community for their losses, and assistance in building new lives.

Now, you all know what the rub is. That was a lot of artful language for saying that you cannot expect Israel to acknowledge an unlimited right of return to present-day Israel, and at the same time, to give up Gaza and the West Bank and have the settlement blocks as compact as possible, because of where a lot of these refugees came from. We cannot expect Israel to make a decision that would threaten the very foundations of the state of Israel, and would undermine the whole logic of peace. And it shouldn’t be done. . . .

Third, there will be no peace, and no peace agreement, unless the Israeli people have lasting security guarantees. These need not and should not come at the expense of Palestinian sovereignty, or interfere with Palestinian territorial integrity.

So my parameters rely on an international presence in Palestine to provide border security along the Jordan Valley and to monitor implementation of the final agreement. They rely on a non-militarized Palestine, a phased Israeli withdrawal, to address Israeli security needs in the Jordan Valley, and other essential arrangements to ensure Israel’s ability to defend itself.

Fourth, I come to the issue of Jerusalem, perhaps the most emotional and sensitive of all. It is a historic, cultural, and political center for both Israelis and Palestinians, a unique city sacred to all three monotheistic religions. And I believe the parameters I have established flow from four fair and logical propositions.

First, Jerusalem should be an open and undivided city, with assured freedom of access and worship for all. It should encompass the internationally recognized capitals of two states, Israel and Palestine. Second, what is Arab should be Palestinian, for why would Israel want to govern in perpetuity the lives of hundreds of thousands of Palestinians? Third, what is Jewish should be Israeli. That would give rise to a Jewish Jerusalem, larger and more vibrant than any in history.

Fourth, what is holy to both requires a special care to meet the needs of all. . . .

I have offered formulations on the Haram Ash-Shareef, and the area holy to the Jewish people, an area which for 2,000 years, as I said at Camp David, has been the focus of Jewish yearning, that I believed fairly addressed the concerns of both sides.

Fifth, and finally, any agreement will have to mark the decision to end the conflict, for neither side can afford to make these painful compromises, only to be subjected to further demands.

Temple Mount Nuts Threaten Israeli State

by Michele Steinberg

A report released on Jan. 3 by Keshev, the Center for the Protection of Democracy in Israel, warns that messianic Jewish sects “are extremely likely to take violent action against the Temple Mount,” where the holiest of Palestine’s Islamic religious sites are located. Jerusalem’s Temple Mount was seized by the Israeli Army in the 1967 Arab-Israeli war, and today, that seizure has taken on almost mystical significance. In recent years it has been used to build up Ariel Sharon, an officer in that war, as the “savior” of Biblical Israel. With heavy support from the Temple Mount crazies, and from the overlapping paramilitary movement of Israeli settlers on Palestinian land, Sharon, the Likud candidate for Prime Minister, is being projected to win the Israeli election.

The 20-page Keshev memorandum, entitled “Objective Temple Mount: A Current Look at Threats to the Temple Mount by Extremist and Messianic Groups,” warns that “the Temple Mount is analogous to a smoldering volcano that is bubbling and threatening to erupt—a threat that is liable to endanger Israel’s existence.” Not only does the report warn of an imminent threat to the Islamic holy sites, but demands that Prime Minister Ehud Barak, and other Israeli leaders, take immediate action to protect the sites of the Temple Mount, take pre-emptive action to stop a possible Jewish “suicide” terrorist from carrying out the attacks, and act to protect the Temple Mount with an international UN, or multilateral force. The report also profiles more than a dozen organizations that are part of the “Temple Lovers” (Shocharey HaMiddash) plot.

With this call for immediate action, the Keshev report goes further than any other public Israeli document in identifying this internal Jewish threat, which not only kills Muslims, but also pro-peace leaders, including former Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin. It is the first institution inside Israel to publicly address the truth raised in the new *EIR* Special Report, “Who Is Sparking Religious War in the Middle East?” which expo-

ses the Temple Mount fanatics inside Israel and their international supporters among British-based Freemasonic lodges and U.S. Protestant Armageddon cults.

The Keshev report identifies that the “Temple Lovers” are in full mobilization to prepare for the rebuilding of the “Third Temple of Jerusalem,” and with the Dec. 31 assassination of one of their leaders, Binyamin Zeev Kahane, son of slain terrorist Meir Kahane, there is a high likelihood that these groups will take revenge. In the belief-structure of the Temple Lovers, says the report, what is necessary to rebuild the Third Temple, is that all the Islamic mosques be blown-up, levelled, and eliminated, because they are located where the old Second Temple of the Jews had stood. (The Old Testament Book of Lamentations says that God destroyed the Second Temple because of a breach of faith.)

International Force Called For

According to a letter to Prime Minister Barak from Dr. Yuval Karniel, Chairman of the Executive Committee of Keshev, and Yizhar Be’er, the group’s Executive Director, “The threats against the Temple Mount have reached a critical stage. More than ten *boides* of Temple lovers, comprising tens of thousands of people, are acting to reinstitute Temple practices and rituals [including animal sacrifice]. There has been dramatic growth in the number of activists and supporters and increasing ideological and public support for the idea of destroying the mosques.

“In the event of harm to the holy sites, all the blame will be placed on Israel [and] destructive forces of apocalyptic power will likely be unleashed. Therefore, regardless of the nature of the political settlement regarding the Temple Mount, it is in Israel’s vital interest to have international figures and bodies share responsibility over the holy sites . . . even if it is impossible to sign a peace agreement at this time. Thus, we believe that the government of Israel should take immediate steps to invite international bodies (the UN or a multilateral force) to share responsibility for security of the holy sites on the Temple Mount.”

Of particular concern to Keshev is the Shuvu Banim yeshiva, located in the Old City’s Muslim Quarter in Jerusalem, just *ten meters* away from the Temple Mount. The Shuvu Banim is described as a “dangerous extremist group composed of [members] with criminal backgrounds, and . . . army veterans with military operational capabilities. Most of the students come from depressed communities with high unemployment, and have anarchistic mentalities and no fear of law or government.” In addition, the “extremist and charismatic personality” of the yeshiva’s head, Rabbi Eliezer Berland, “mark this group likely to take violent action regarding the Temple Mount.”

By identifying some 20 groups and their leaders by name, the Keshev report may be one of the most important contributions to peace that the international community has seen, and may serve to avert another tragedy, like the murder of Rabin by one of the Temple Mount fanatics in 1995.