

Two states for two peoples on Two sides of the Jordan



התק/וה
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Introduction



Every one of you readers has suffered a sore throat at least once, went to the doctor, who diagnosed it as strep throat, and prescribed a conventional antibiotic to cure you of the condition.

Sometimes, a patient will return to the doctor and will voice the same complaints, and perhaps even more serious than in the original visit.

The doctor responds by explaining that he will have to prescribe a different type of antibiotic treatment, based on the assumption that the bacteria in the patient's throat were likely immune to the first antibiotic. And the same thing is likely to happen if the patient returns a third time.

But any doctor who has treated a patient "by the book" and has not seen the expected and hoped for cure, must stop and think that perhaps he has diagnosed the illness incorrectly.

If the diagnosis of the disease is wrong – if a patient does not suffer from strep throat – the chances of curing it with antibiotics is remote at best.

Most countries in the world that have demonstrated an interest in the Israeli-Arab conflict have assumed that the issue is essentially territorial: two peoples fighting over one land.

This premise leads to one logical solution: dividing the land between the two peoples. This solution has been tested repeatedly in the twentieth century - and has always failed.



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The world's frustration regarding the ongoing conflict is growing. Repeated failures to solve the Jewish-Arab conflict by diagnosing it as a territorial conflict must lead us to pose the following: Perhaps we have been mistaken in our understanding of the roots of the conflict. If the conflict is not territorial, but rather religious at its core – then the concept of dividing the land is destined for failure because it relies on a misunderstanding of the conflict. And the ultimate proof is Israel's battles with Hezbollah and Iran. There is no territorial dispute between Israel and Iran, but nobody assumes Iran will cease trying to acquire nuclear weapons to destroy Israel if a Palestinian state is created in Judea, Samaria and Gaza.

The Palestinian problem is not what drives Iran, rather Israel's existence as a Jewish state in the land of Israel. It is not settlements like Ofra and Beit El that bother Nasrallah; Because to him, Haifa and Tel Aviv are also "settlements." However, the recognition that this conflict is not territorial, but rather a religious war against the very right of Jews to a Jewish state in the land of Israel – this recognition has not yet permeated the international consciousness.

In the second half of 2002, a plan began to take shape in Europe and the United States. This plan, sponsored by President George W. Bush, was called "The Roadmap." Subsequently, President Obama added that ending the Arab-Israeli conflict based on "two states for two peoples" is of American interest. Israeli prime ministers, from Ehud Barak's meeting with Arafat at Camp David, through Ariel Sharon, Ehud Olmert and now Benjamin Netanyahu, have all adopted in principle this plan.

What was twenty years ago a plan put forward only by Israel's extreme left, has now become the plan of Israeli prime ministers.

Dividing the land of Israel west of the Jordan into two states – Israel and a Palestinian state – has become the only political plan accepted for international and domestic (Israeli) discourse. This, despite dozens of failures in trying to implement it during the past ninety years.

Every failed attempt has been accompanied by bloody conflict and/or war. And despite the terrible death toll – Approximately twenty thousand Jews and many Arabs have died in murderous terrorist attacks in all these years – no significant attempt have been made to offer an alternative to this plan.

Here is a quick summary of the current plan being discussed: The main components of the "two states for two peoples" plan call for the establishment of a Palestinian state in Judea, Samaria and Gaza, based on the pre-'67 borders. Israeli officials have demanded in various discussions that East Jerusalem and the major settlement blocs be included inside Israel, and some have agreed to "compensate" the Arabs with other territories within the Green Line. But the Jewish settlements outside the settlement blocs, the question of Jerusalem, the Arab refugee problem, as well as security consideration, the relationship between Judea, Samaria and the Gaza Strip, recognition by the Arabs of Israel as a Jewish state - all these remain unanswered questions.

Until the Camp David Accords between Barak and Arafat, all of Israel's leaders were united in their philosophy that a Palestinian state west of the Jordan would endanger the very existence of the State of Israel. Even Yitzchak Rabin A"H believed that the PLO leaders said the Palestinian state can come about only upon the ruins of the State of Israel. Former prime minister Golda Meir A"H was sure "there is no such thing as a Palestinian." The overwhelming national consensus today denies any "right of return" into Israel for Palestinian refugees. All Israeli leaders since the Six Day War were opposed the Israeli withdrawal to the pre-'67 borders. In fact, the most dovish foreign minister in the history of the State of Israel - Abba Eban A"H – described those borders as "Auschwitz borders."

Today, some 320,000 Jews live in Yehuda and Shomron, and another 200,000 more Jews live in Jerusalem neighborhoods that were established in areas annexed to the city after the Six Day War. The "Roadmap" leading to "two states for two peoples" calls for the transfer of hundreds of thousands of Jews from their homes in Israel. This program puts the very existence of Israel in danger.

The far-reaching concessions that have proven Israel's readiness have not led to peace but instead, have always led to disastrous consequences, such as following the failure of Camp David talks, to the outbreak of the second Intifada, with more than a thousand Jews killed by Arabs who were convinced that Israel was crumbling, and would require only a few more blows to destroy it completely.

Ariel Sharon did not believe in the feasibility of implementation for this plan ("There is no Palestinian partner"), yet in 2005 led to a unilateral disengagement and evacuation of the Gaza Strip and northern Samaria. Twenty-five flourishing settlements were wiped off the face of the earth in ten days. Thousands of Jews were expelled from their homes by force, and these people remain to this day in temporary trailer-home communities.

But withdrawal from the Gaza Strip, and the following takeover of Gaza by Hamas, has left the central government of the Palestinian Authority in Ramallah, and has actually resulted in an increase of rocket attacks on Israel from the south. The Second Lebanon War broke out almost at the moment of Israel's withdrawal from Gaza and northern Samaria, because Israel had sent a clear message to Hassan Nasrallah – through the withdrawal – that it is merely a "State of cobwebs."

Benjamin Netanyahu, who opposed (he quit the government, but remained in the Knesset) disengagement, while he was head of the opposition objected to the establishment of a Palestinian state. But he has since declared his support for the principle of "two states" a few months after forming the current government. Under American pressure this Prime Minister also agreed to freeze construction in Judea and Samaria (and in fact, if not publicly, established a freeze in Jerusalem as well) for ten months, a building freeze of unprecedented scope and severity, to create a political climate that would allow the Palestinian Authority to return to the negotiating table.

Entering into negotiations on a plan to build a Palestinian state west of the Jordan would have to ultimately end with Israel agreeing to most of the principles of the plan. Only a complete rejection on the part of Israel will render the plan irrelevant, and bury it under the pile of other political plans whose goal for 62 years has been to bring about the destruction of Israel.

Therefore, in parallel, Israel should begin to introduce another approach. Even if such an alternative program may be considered as "delusional," because most of the world accepts the principle of dividing the land and the establishment of a Palestinian state west of the Jordan – such a program can be "floated" and raised during the crisis that would certainly occur following the next failure to divide the country, which in turn would result in the shedding of blood once again, and an overall catastrophe.

This alternative plan should be based on the fact that the Palestinians have their own state already in Jordan, a kingdom – in which the Palestinians are at least 75% of the residents – created after the British Mandatory land of Israel was divided into two. The plan should focus on resolving the regional solution by settling the Arab refugees in Jordan and other Arab countries that absorbed Palestinian refugees after the War of Independence in 1948.

Setting up Jordan as a Hashemite-Palestinian country will enable all the Arabs living in Judea and Samaria – who are not refugees themselves – to become citizens of Jordan, turn Amman's parliament into a parliament that represents the Palestinian people, and ultimately enable them to develop their national identity.

Any Arabs who do not take advantage of the opportunity to move to Jordan within the framework of refugee resettlement can be residents (as opposed to citizens) of the State of Israel. They would be able to manage civilian affairs in their urban and rural areas, without land contiguity. Such authority could include managing their economy, health, education, transportation, religion, agriculture and municipal areas.

Israel would exercise sovereignty over all territory west of the Jordan, receive exclusive authority over security issues in all areas of sovereignty, since Israel could never accept the existence of an army from another country west of the Jordan, with airspace sovereignty and full control of external borders.

It is a dangerous illusion to believe that it is possible to establish a "demilitarized" Palestinian state, as suggested by Netanyahu. From the moment it is established, there is no way to impose "demilitarization" upon an independent state, if it decides to do otherwise. And once that takes place, the only way to recapture the territory would be by force. But the international community would not allow Israel to occupy a sovereign state when even Israel has officially recognized the right of independent state to exist. The State of Israel can not agree to pave the way to a contiguous Palestinian (the West Bank and Gaza) that would slice the State of Israel in two. However, if declared, a Palestinian state of Jordan can grant full political rights to its citizens. Such a state (Jordan) is a state with territorial continuity and the ability to sustain an independent economy. The Plan "Jordan is Palestine" is the only approach that can handle conflict without endangering the very existence of the State of Israel.

Historical and Political Background

The Nation of Israel was created and began to take shape in the Land of Israel about three-thousand-eight-hundred years ago. In their travels, our forefathers migrated to the land of Canaan, mainly in the Negev and on the mountainside west of the Jordan.

With the conquest of Canaan in the days of Joshua, the tribes also settled in areas east of the Jordan. The borders of the Kingdom of Israel during the days of Kings David and Solomon, as well as during the period of King Yanai, reached almost to the borders that were promised in the book of Genesis. With the destruction of the Second Temple and the Bar Kochba uprising, approximately 1900 years ago, most of the Jewish people were exiled from the land of Israel. The country had seen many conquerors and has passed from hand to hand: Romans, Byzantines, Muslims, Mamalukes, Crusaders, Turks and the British were just some of the empires that took over the land of Israel to turn it into their province.

During this period the country was always part of a large kingdom and was never an independent state or the territory of a nation that had its own national identity. Even the Arab inhabitants did not see themselves as a "nation" until recent decades, and they were not recognized as such by any international entity.

The Jewish Settlement in Palestine never cease completely at any stage, even if it was weak at times. In the late 19th century, the return to Zion began, and the waves of Jewish immigration rose significantly. Overall settlement in the Land at that time was sparse, and only included several tens of thousands of Jews, Muslims and Christians. The Land of Israel at the beginning of the return to Zion was considered by all to be in a remote corner of the Ottoman Empire. The Jewish Aliyah (immigration) and the subsequent development of the country attracted waves of immigration of Arabs from neighboring countries.

Conflict between Jews and Arabs has been the main characteristic of existence in the Land of Israel during the last century. At the end of World War I, the Balfour Declaration called for a "national home" for Jews in the Land of Israel. After the war, the League of Nations granted Great Britain a mandate over the Land of Israel to the west and east to Jordan to carry out the plan in this area of establishing a national home for Jews.

The violent Arab opposition, along with international political pressure from commitments the British made to noble Bedouin families in the First World War, led the British to publish the White Paper of Winston Churchill (1922), which tore away all of the land east of the Jordan from being part of the Jewish national home. Thus was established the Kingdom of Transjordan (known as Jordan today).

But even this division of the Land did not satisfy the requirements of the Arabs, and they brought in waves of bloody riots - in 1929 and from 1936-39. Each such wave of killings came on the heels of a plan to divide the western Land of Israel, and a new proposal to deliver more territory to the Arabs. (The Peel Commission, the Woodhead Commission, the Anglo-American Committee, the Morrison-Grady Commission, etc.).

On November 29, 1947 the UN decided, at the suggestion of "the UN Special Committee on Palestinian" (UNSCOP), to partition the Land of Israel into two states, Jewish and Arab states. It is important to mention that in "the Jewish state," with approximately 550,000 Jews, there were supposed to live about 450,000 Arabs, that UNSCOP suggested would be residents of the Jewish state, but would be citizens of the Arab state that was to be created according to the UN resolution. Israel's War of Independence broke out the day after the UN resolution, because the Israeli Arabs rejected the resolution unanimously and immediately after the declaration of Independence on May 5, 1948, Arab armies invaded Israel with the goal of conquering it. During the War of Independence, approximately 600,000 Arabs left their homes, while at the same time, the State of Israel was absorbing hundreds of thousands of Jews who were expelled or fled from various Arab countries. At the end of the war, the Egyptians controlled the Gaza Strip and the refugee camps there, the Kingdom of Transjordan, which had invaded west of the Jordan River, took control of Judea and Samaria ("West Bank") and the refugee camps in those areas. Additional refugee camps were put in place in Lebanon and Syria.

Many of the refugees who could do so emigrated to other Arab countries and even overseas ("the Palestinian diaspora"). Those who remained in refugee camps were funded through the support of the UN Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) and refused to settle in the region. In addition, when alternative housing solutions and settlements were proposed by various international bodies,

this population became the only refugee group in the world that would experience rejecting any attempt for permanent settlement.

It is in refugee camps throughout the Middle East that all the terrorist organizations were born. And they have been fighting with Israel for sixty years. The Palestinian educational system in the refugee camps has been inculcating the students with the dream of return, and the destruction of Israel and its Jewish residents for three generations.

The Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) was established in 1964, three years before the liberation of the Yehuda and Shomron territories by Israel. Its constitution calls for the destruction of Israel as a Jewish state, and the organization's official maps show only one country: "Palestine," that stretches from the desert to the Mediterranean.

Anyone who claims that the goal of the Arabs is the "End the 1967 occupation" is simply ignoring the facts and reality.

There are many who have incorrectly diagnosed the root of the conflict, and who do not know (or prefer to ignore) the fact that, for Muslims, the entire Land of Israel is "Waqf" – holy ground – that Muslims may not allow to be under the rule of infidels.

And so, at the end of the day, the war against Israel in all its forms is primarily a religious war that cannot be solved by dividing the country and by drafting boundary-lines between the Jewish state and an Arab state. The remedy of "dividing the Land" – the recommended solution to the conflict relies on a mistaken diagnosis, and thus is not likely to bring an end to the conflict, not a lasting peace.

It is clear that anyone who offers a "solution" to the Jewish - Arab Middle East conflict without solving the refugee problem – is only offering a partial or temporary solution, and is ignoring the fundamental reservoir of energy that allows the Arabs to continue the war against us and win international support.

Regarding the Political and Legal Status of Yehuda and Shomron Areas:

As far as the boundaries of the "green line," there currently does not exist a internationally recognized border. These boundaries came to be based on the ceasefire lines and the Rhodes Armistice Agreements of 1949. But they run counter to internationally recognized boundaries based on two conditions:

- A. Countries bordering both sides of the line were recognized under international law as having a right to the land within those boundaries; and
- B. There was an agreement by both sides to work together to determine the border.

The legal status of Judea and Samaria ("West Bank" by the Jordanian version) could only be defined as "occupied territory by the Kingdom of Jordan." Similarly, the Gaza Strip was "occupied" by Egypt. Both states claim no ownership of the land. Peace agreements with Egypt stated that Egypt would be given the right to receive "every grain of sand" on Egyptian soil but did not raise any claim of ownership of the Gaza Strip.

The Kingdom of Jordan, although it found great interest in the West Bank and for a time saw itself as representing the Palestinian people, renounced its ties to these areas when King Hussein declared a full disengagement from the "West Bank" in 1988. Peace agreements between Israel and the Kingdom of Jordan signed in 1994 do not mention in any claim of ownership of the territory by the Kingdom of Jordan. Israel was the only authority in this area until the Oslo Accords delegated this authority to the Palestinian Authority in Areas A and B. Until the liberation of this land by Israel during the Six-Day War there were no Palestinian claims to a state independent from Jordan or Egypt, nor was there any political or military struggle for the liberation of land "occupied" by these countries.

In the world as we know it - from the dawn of history until the present - political boundaries are determined by agreement between the countries. In most historical cases, such limits have been determined as a result of wars or as a consequence of them. The UN Resolution in November of 1947 tries to draw the Land of Israel's borders on the western side, but this proposal was rejected by the Arabs, who almost immediately invaded Israel and declared a genocidal war on the state that was just born.

According to the law, any decision by the UN General Assembly can only be valid if both sides accept it. In the absence of such agreement – such a decision is not binding whatsoever in terms of international law. The cease-fire lines of the War of Independence were also not binding on the Arab countries or Israel, and it was made clear that final borders would be determined explicitly only in the (future) peace agreements between the parties.

The Six-Day War was a direct result of the Egyptian army entering the Sinai Desert and massing along the Strait of Tiran, the shelling of West Jerusalem and shelling from the Golan Heights that was destroying communities in the Hula Valley, as an expression of Egypt, Syria and Jordan's collective desire to conquer the land of Israel, and eliminate the State of Israel within the Green Line that was never accepted by them. Therefore, as far as international law is concerned, the line set at the end of the most recent war becomes binding as long as no other international border was set by a specific agreement between the countries (as borders have been set with Egypt and Jordan in Israel's peace agreements with them). Any concession by Israel of these territories was not binding under "international law," and Israel would not be violating any law if it decides to keep all of these areas under its control.

The Rights to the Land and Israel's Willingness to Compromise

The Land of Israel belongs to the Nation of Israel according to all justice and historical merit; according to the God of Israel's promise to the Nation of Israel that appears over and over again in the Bible and according to historical rights, recognized by the countries of the world by the League of Nations' decision after World War I.

The Land of Israel also belongs to the Nation of Israel because of what the Nation of Israel – and only the Nation of Israel – created in its country and has given to the entire world. The Land of Israel belongs to the Nation of Israel based on international law and also based on what matters most concerning borders of the world: the results of wars.

The Land of Israel of the British Mandate period referred to in the Balfour Declaration and in the white paper of Winston Churchill was declared to be cut in two, with the overwhelmingly large "half" on the eastern side of the Jordan being given to Saudi Arabian Bedouins, the same kingdom of residents who today see the Hashemite royal family as outsiders. That British colonialism created the "Kingdom of Jordan." We refer to it as almost sacrosanct, but it was fanaticism that was behind an imported royal family put in control of the Palestinians. And on the other hand, all the attempts by Israel to live with the Arabs in the Land as a national home without an actual state, accepting the "Partition Plan" of November 29, accepting a country with a divided capital city, being a democratic state that grants equal civil rights and full rights without equal obligations to its Arab citizens. Any proposal or method did not prevent the repeated attempts of the Arabs to destroy the Jewish state of Israel.

The State of Israel - despite its military power – is treated like it has no right to the Land by the Arab political entity, like a tiny country that can be taken care of once and for all with a quick military action, or is looked at as the tired "Zionist entity" that has lost the will to exist and the willingness to struggle for that existence. We have also witnessed the only national suicide attempt in the last decade of the last century, entitled the "Oslo Accords" – which didn't appease the Israeli Arabs. Nor did subsequent proposals conceding the Yehuda and Shomron, and half of Jerusalem, not even the actual withdrawal from the Gaza Strip – none of these things satisfied the national aspirations of Palestinians. All attempts to divide the western part of Land of Israel between ourselves and the Arabs has ended in war and disaster. The bloodshed has continued for a hundred years. There is no geopolitical logical division of the western part of the Land of Israel into two states. There is no demographic logic. There is no economic logic or planning.

There cannot be two independent states, truly independent and sovereign, west of the Jordan River; countries with the ability to defend themselves, with the ability to prosper and develop, and also possess territorial contiguity. Even if we were talking about two friendly European countries, it would be impossible to place them both in this space (the Land of Israel west of the Jordan River) and create two sovereign independent states.

There is no way such a plan will succeed, especially following decades of educating their youth to hate and kill in Yehuda and Shomron under the leadership of the PLO, just like in Gaza under Hamas' rule, raising generations of terrorists, murderers and suicide bombers, teaching them in geography classes about "the map of Palestine," on which the State of Israel is nowhere to be found. There is no possibility of having two states, side by side, mixed together, with huge gaps in the respective standards of living. Not even "this animal" that is called "a demilitarized state" (as promised in a statement by Netanyahu about the Palestinian state to be established, after he signed it with them.) and the ability to guarantee Israel's security if there is a foreign army west of the Jordan. It is time for a different solution.

The Solution: Two States for Two Peoples on Two Sides of the Jordan River

"The Kingdom of Jordan," which was born of the British colonial sin of tearing the eastern side of the Jordan from the Jewish national home, has become, over the last 70 years a de facto Palestinian state. At least seventy-five percent of its residents are Palestinian. Some of them are still sitting in refugee camps. Others took advantage of the fact that Jordan was the only country that gave the Palestinians full citizenship - and settled all over the wide open lands of the kingdom.

These people established themselves and solved their own "refugee problem," just as tens of millions of other refugees around the world have done, and just as hundreds of thousands of Jewish refugees who fled from Arab countries have done. Jordan is the Palestinian nation-state based on its demographic composition, and the concept of "Jordan is a part of Palestine," according to the perception of the Palestinians who wanted to take it by force, has failed, and they have postponed their next attempt until another Palestinian state is created west of the Jordan.

Jordan is Palestine, and it is the only real way to solve the Arab refugee problem – by resettling them in the eastern portion of the Land of Israel. Jordan still is not "Palestine" even in theory – because the current Jordanian rulers do not want that. The "democratic" elections are held in only for show, and the elected Parliament has no practical authority. The government authority in Jordan rests with the King, and he holds all powers. This truth, this solution was also held by Yigal Allon and Ariel Sharon.

Alon stopped preaching this solution because of strong opposition of King Hussein, due to "historical alliance" with him, and for fear that making Jordan a Palestinian state opposite Israel stabilized the eastern front, which also included Iraq. Political circumstances and personalities have changed since then, and if it is apparent that the "Jordan is Palestine" plan is the only real solution that can give the Palestinians a state, and ensure the existence of Israel as a Jewish, Zionist and secure state, it will be possible to overcome the resistance barrier of the ruling Hashemite monarchy in Jordan.

You must keep in mind that the current situation in Judea and Samaria is not a threat to the Hashemite royal family. On the other hand, the biggest threat to the continued rule of the monarchy in Jordan is the establishment of a Palestinian state west of the Jordan, a country that Hamas could take over by force or through democratic elections, and could overturn sooner or later control over the eastern side of the Jordan River.

There are four major elements of the plan:

A. Recognition of Jordan as a Palestinian country

B. The closure of UNRWA and the creation of a broad plan for the settlement of Arab refugees in Jordan, under the auspices of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), which has a track record of successfully resettling tens of millions of refugees around the world.

C. Israeli and international guarantees of a continued Hashemite rule in Jordan.

The fourth element, which is significant for Israel, is the application of Israeli law in Judea and Samaria. Such an annexation, which can take place in stages (It would begin with the Jewish settlements.), would be recognized by the international community if it is done in the context of resolving the regional conflict. Arab residents of Judea would be (similar to the UN Committee adopted the proposed decision of November 29, 1947) able to gain the status of Israeli residents, while their nationality would be as citizens of Jordan, i.e., Palestine. They pay taxes and benefit from the national insurance program of Israel, and would vote in parliamentary elections in Amman. A similar arrangement could exist even with the Gaza Strip, in light of the growing rift between Gaza and Judea/Samaria, especially if a security structure is put into place to handle this specific population.


Is the plan – to settle Palestinian refugees in Jordan and to transform Jordan into Palestinian-Hashemite state just theory, or is it also a practical plan? Can it be done economically? Is there enough water in Jordan for all existing and future residents? Is it possible to mobilize international support for this program? How can we overcome the refusal to allow the refugees to leave the refugee camps and give up the dream of returning to Jaffa, to Jerusalem, to Haifa and to Safed?

And what about the "Demographic demon," threatening that soon enough there will be an Arab majority in the area between the Jordan and the Mediterranean Sea. And what about the answer that states that Israel "between Jordan and the Sea" cannot be both democratic and a Jewish state, and if we elect to annex - the state would cease to be Jewish or not be able to be democratic and become, as they say, the "Apartheid state?"

**Regarding the Demographic Demon
Imprisoned in a Geopolitical Bottle**

Jordan's territory (90,000 square kilometers) is 13 times greater than all the Yehuda-Shomron areas, and 4.3 times the area of Israel within the Green Line. The Arab population has a remarkably high (although according to studies conducted by Ettinger Zimmerman, diminishing) birth rate. This is not a "natural phenomenon," nor a Muslim cultural pattern. The natural growth rate of Arab countries like Egypt have been controlled, and the natural growth of Iran - an extremely devout Muslim country – was forcefully halted by the Muslim authorities.

This demonstrates that governmental, religious and social involvement can stop such natural growth in Muslim countries. Natural growth rates of the Arabs of Israel have fallen in recent decades from nine children per woman in the sixties to 4.4 children per woman in 2000, and 3.6 children per woman in 2006. In 2025, it is expected that natural growth rates of Jews and Arabs will be comparable. Even if we ignore the possibility of waves of Aliyah (Jewish immigration to Israel) from Europe or America to inside the Green Line, the expectation is that in 2025, that area will be 80% Jewish. And including Yehuda and Shomron areas, from the Jordan River to the Mediterranean Sea will be 67% Jewish (60% if the Gaza Strip was taken into account) in 2025.



The natural growth rate in Yehuda and Shomron among the Palestinian population is continuing to decrease, though not by way of the approach being taken in both Egypt and Iran.

The natural growth rate is still relatively large, for ideological reasons ("We will fight the Zionist enemy with the Palestinian woman's womb," said Yasser Arafat.), economic considerations (support from UNRWA) or the absence of governmental restraint factors (such as Egypt and Iran). But anyone who attempts suggest that Israel should immediately withdraw from Judea and Samaria (as we must remember that we have already "disengaged" from Gaza) under the sword of the demographic threat, is distorting the reality in order to provoke Israel into withdrawing in a state of panic.

However, the other facts are plain to see, such as the expectation stated above that there will be a solid Jewish majority between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea even in 2025. On the other hand, those who have offered to settle in Judea and Samaria those people who are now refugees in Syria, Lebanon and possibly even in Jordan, are a major component of a huge demographic time bomb that would explode in the face of Israel, and would ultimately create a situation where there would be an Arab majority west of the Jordan River.

Such an independent Palestinian entity will bring to reality Irredentism: With ambitions spread east and west, with ambitions to unite with the Arabs of Israel and to go to great lengths to increase Arab immigration into Israel and take it over from within. This is the true "demographic demon" that proponents of dividing the Land west of the Jordan River seek to bring it to us, rather than "annexing" Judea and Samaria into Israel.

Refugees

About 600,000 Arabs left Israel during the 1948 War of Independence and registered as refugees. Today, more than four million people are recognized as Palestinian refugees by UNRWA. They are concentrated in main refugee camps in Gaza, Judea and Samaria, Jerusalem, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria. A large number of the refugees have also emigrated to European countries, North and South America, and other countries.

Economic programs

The current economic situation of Palestinian refugees in the camps is very bad. Their average per capita income is among the lowest in the world. If there is an interest in improving this situation, it would require an investment numbering in the tens of billions of dollars from outside sources. Such investment, if routed to create sources of employment and housing, would make Jordan the destination for refugee immigration from Judea and Samaria, Gaza, Lebanon and Syria.

Those who live on an average of 400 dollars a year would have to seriously consider another part of the "homeland" (In the eyes of the Palestinians as well, "Jordan is Palestine."), if such people were ensured of appropriate housing and a workplace where they would earn ten times their current income. If such investments would be routed to Jordan it can transform it into a welfare state that can sustain the current population as well as the population of Arab refugees that would want to settle there. Such investments can also be an impetus for the larger international community to support the program, since over the long term such investments have a chance to bear fruit, in terms of the waves of Muslim immigration to Europe that the Europeans are trying to stop. On the other hand - any investment in continuing to support refugees in the refugee camps is like a high-risk capital investment, which would crash again following a loss in the next war. Similar investments can be routed to Syria, Lebanon and/or Egypt if they agree to dismantle the refugee camps, allow the refugees to settle in their country/ies, give them citizenship and rehabilitate them.

Water

Jordan is an arid country. Today it needs additional water from Israel to provide for its residents and its agricultural crops in the Jordan Valley. Any program designed to resettle two million Palestinian refugees in Jordan will have to solve the water problem in the region. Such a solution could be achieved through desalination plants powered by nuclear or conventional energy based on natural gas reserves recently discovered on the Mediterranean coast. A desalination facility can be put in place in the Jordan Valley itself, with hydroelectric power that will run based on height differences between the Mediterranean and the Dead Sea, or between the Red Sea to the Dead Sea (Sea Canal), that will also be something of a "health-boost," given that the Dead Sea continues to dry out more and more each year.

The cost of building these plants is high, but relatively low considering that the international community has invested much more significant resources over the last 60-plus years to perpetuate the Palestinian refugee situation. Therefore the problem of core infrastructure that one might think could prevent a vast settlement of Palestinian refugees in Jordan is solvable

Resistance to the Program

Two main objections to the plan are expected, first from Jordan (this concept has been vehemently opposed until today), and from the Palestinians themselves. Is it possible to overcome these objections? Jordan will transform into Palestine sooner or later. The "sooner" option can happen through peaceful means, while also protecting the status of the kingdom, if we manage the change. The "later" option would result from "completing" the Land of Israel with a Palestinian state west of the Jordan River, whereupon the extreme elements within Islam will take over the new state (through brute force, democratic elections, or any combination thereof, as happened in Gaza). The next stage of the "later" option would be the Palestinians taking over the Kingdom of Jordan on the way to the creation of a "Great Palestine," another step on the way to the destruction of Israel and creating a mega-state in the entirety of the Mandate-period Land of Israel.

The Hashemite throne is well aware of this intention and has a strong fear of the Palestinians: They demonstrated their true desire in the summer of 1970. Only the determination of King Hussein in his war with the Palestinians, and Israel's intervention in his favor by blocking the Syrians, saved at that time the Hashemite royal family and prevented the establishment back then of a Palestinian state in Jordan.

This "help" was one of the most serious historical mistakes Israel has made in all of its history as a state. Jordan was the state of the Palestinians forty years ago, and the argument at the time of their international status being that of "a people with no country" was very weak, and it was quite easy at that time for the international community to accept the solution of "two states for two peoples on two sides of the Jordan."

The Hashemite royal family also knows full well that it is ruling on borrowed time, and if the Palestinian state is created west of the Jordan, it will soon become a major base in an attempt to rally the Palestinian majority in Jordan to forcefully take over the country.

The only chance for the survival of the Hashemite monarchy in Jordan is to accept this revolutionary plan of creating a Hashemite-Palestinian kingdom with international support, large development budgets and water desalination, housing, job creation and advanced industrialization. The only guarantee for Jordanian regime stability is Israel preventing the establishment of an independent Palestinian state west of the Jordan River, for it would become a country that would continually threaten Jordan. Only such a guarantee by Israel, with such partnership interests to reduce the power of our common enemy - only that will ensure the continuing of the Hashemite regime over the long term. If Israel can give such a guarantee, Israel will get the support of Jordan during this process. Is it possible to gain the support of the Palestinians? In the 1970s, Yasser Arafat believed the "Jordan is Palestine" concept, and only changed his tune and his arguments after significant pressure was applied to him by the Arab League. Today, the Palestinians are convinced that they shouldn't make any moves toward taking over Jordan, because they first must win an independent state - west of the Jordan River - at the expense of Israel.

As long as they have a ray of hope for eliminating the State of Israel and winning - based on the theory of stages offered by Arafat - an independent state in the western part of Israel, as long as there are discussions about a plan dividing the country - no Palestinian will accept a voluntary waiver and surrender it to Israel. Only a complete shutting off of this possibility may re-direct the pressure to the concept of an independent state in Jordan, as was the case in the late 1960s. But let there be no doubt.

International Support

Even during The era of Obama—the most hostile-to-Israel United States President in decades, the majority of U.S. senators and congressmen on Capitol Hill consider a moderate Palestinian state west of the Jordan River only if such as agreement is filled with extreme conditions and serious limitations that render the plan impractical.

Europeans are, traditionally, ardent supporters of the Arab position for a mixture of economic (dependence on Arab oil and Arab markets) and international political (the desire for a situation to stand independent and apart from the United States to change the global power structure) reasons. In recent years, another category has been added to this equation: the influence that Muslim minorities are waging in an increasing manner in certain European countries. It is also impossible to ignore the strong state of anti-Semitism that operates in the subconscious or is consciously well-hidden underneath the fine diplomatic guise coupled with the best of European manners.

European countries almost always prefer the Arab position, because this position is paid for them and dovetails nicely with the traditional hatred of Israel in Europe. Such a position change can take place if the rules will change within the world oil economy or if the main program now in question, the "road map" - reaches a dead end again; then, perhaps, Europe might not be considered a legitimate contributor to the promotion of Arab aspirations.

The Iranian threat is also troubling the Europeans, who are aware of Iran's influence in Lebanon and Gaza, and will not want Iran to actually take over the Palestinian state they (the Europeans) so badly wish to establish.

However - and in light of the massive Muslim immigration to Europe (sixty million Muslims through 2009), many Europeans are beginning to understand Israel's position differently. More and more Europeans are seeing today in Israel an outpost of Western culture against the jihadist attempt to take over the West. Dutch politician Geert Wilders, who heads the (Netherlands) Party of Freedom, is the most prominent representative of this approach in his opposition to the establishment of a Palestinian state, saying: "If Israel will fall - Europe will fall."

Current plans to establish a Palestinian state west of the Jordan River, presented to the international community and to the sides in the Middle East require political concessions from Israel. These plans leave the safety and well-being of Israel in the hands Palestinians or the international forces that would come to supervise and guarantee that Israel implements the plan and withholds from Israel the possibility of initiating a war on terror.

These current plans include certain elements that threaten the very existence of Israel in the medium- and long-term, and remove the moral basis for the existence of the state. These plans have full Arab and European support, as well as partial American support. The current U.S. opposition to the plan has problems with essential parts of it, such as the creation of a Palestinian state (characteristic of tens of millions of evangelicals in the U.S.); but even this opposition will not last long if Israel itself will accept the program.

Do not expect anyone in the world to fight for the interests of Israel if Israel itself is not doing so.

Therefore the only chance to ignite a process that will receive broad international agreement is the sharp opposition to the current program of "two countries west of the Jordan River," and making the program in-play unfeasible. It is also crucial that the current plan not be accepted "on condition," as Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel is doing today.

If Israel accepts in principle the establishment of a Palestinian state west of the Jordan - there will be no element in the world that will fight for another solution. The solution based on Israeli concessions, with conditions that guarantee its existence, seem to Europe and the UN countries to be the easiest solution available. Political pressure will always be applied to those in a weaker opposition. Israel is perceived today as a country that can be pushed to surrender to the pressure. In light of the rising tide of de-legitimization of Israel - even the thought that such a plan could lead to the destruction of Israel will not deter, may also encourage, some European statesman.

An apartheid state?

A central argument that returns over and over again by opponents of applying Israeli law to Judea and Samaria, is that such a move would turn Israel into an apartheid state. They say that the location of some two million people west of the Jordan, as residents of Israel but citizens of another state will create a status of "second-class citizens." This is immoral in their eyes and, at its core, not acceptable in the international arena. They argue that this will begin to isolate Israel, which, in turn, would result in sanctions imposed upon it.

All these people forget that this model has been proposed by the UN, that in the United States about 30 million people have a "green card", which means they have the status of residents without the ability to vote. Each of them is a foreign national, and is eligible to participate in national elections in his or her country. And millions live in Europe as residents who are not citizens. This argument is used today mainly in the discourse of the extreme left – those who are anti-Israeli. But if the international community will reach the conclusion that the current plan of two countries west of the Jordan River has reached an impasse, it will only increase support for alternative programs.

Therefore: The key is making impossible a plan to build a Palestinian state west of the Jordan River, as well as the formulation of alternatives. This is entirely in the hands of Israel.

If we erect an iron wall to alert the entire world: Israel does not intend to commit national suicide and therefore will not agree to the establishment of a Palestinian state west of the Jordan River, it will signal to the international community that such a plan is simply not feasible.

And What About Peace?

Is the "Two states for Two Peoples on Two sides of the Jordan River" plan capable of bringing about peace?

Probably not. Certainly not in this generation.

If we remember that the main driving force of the Arabs in this conflict is Islam, the Jordan River border will not solve the conflict. But this plan will create a national state for Palestinians, who will be able to fulfill at least some national desires, and it will be a state whose very existence does not endanger Israel. The Jordan border will establish a clearly defensible border.

This program will solve or greatly ease the refugee problem and dismantle their valuable propaganda weapon, thinning the group of terrorist recruits "who have nothing to lose." A Palestinian nation-state in Jordan greatly reduces the explosive friction between the populations.

I'm not kidding myself and I do not try to fool you: Even after the new residents (descendants of refugees) are resettled in Jordan, they will still carry the keys of their homes in Jaffa and Safed and Ramla. Only after they are rehabilitated, and are no longer able to send their children to schools where they preach every day – with international funding – the theory of the destruction of Israel – is there a likelihood that their dream of return to the western portion of the Land of Israel will be much smaller. And after several generations like this, it will be possible that peace can prevail in the Land.



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