

Guest Editorial

A Matter of Life and Death

By Rabbi Yossi Groner

The Lubavitcher Rebbe's position of not trading land for peace has been strong, unequivocal and unchanging. Many have thought that the Rebbe's position comes from wanting to retain or encourage the Biblical borders of the Holy Land. But this is not the reason. It is clearly and simply, as the Rebbe has stated scores of times, a matter of life and death.

A prominent Israeli Rabbi recently told reporters, that he now admits that when the Lubavitcher Rebbe used to speak about holding on to every inch of territory, there were many of us who thought that this stemmed from some kind of messianic redemption ideology. We failed to grasp his real message that it is "a matter of life or death" without any consideration involved.

The peace plan cannot and will not control terrorist groups like Hamas, Hizbollah, and factions of the PLO who are sworn to our destruction. We must remember that no terrorist organization (except one faction of the PLO) has agreed to any of the terms of the negotiation. In fact, all of them have sworn to oppose it.

And while some would have us believe that only the "settlers" are at risk, these terrorists thirst for the elimination of all Jewish people in Israel, not just those living in the "territories." With Israel's borders reduced, Ashkelon, Tel Aviv, Haifa—all of Israel—each Israeli home will be in range of a terrorist katushya rocket.

A katushya rocket has a range of 30 miles, far enough to strike every city in Israel from its pre-1967 border. A katushya rocket can be carried to a hilltop on the back of a donkey and fired with a metal tube and car battery. It can and will be smuggled through dozens of pathways and seaports.

Israel will be only nine miles wide at its most populated area. Each flight to and from Ben Gurion Airport will be a target. This is not an issue for settlers only. Every Israeli, every tourist and visitor will be at risk.

If the Golan, Samaria and Judea are surrendered, all of Israel is vulnerable to attack, left without protection from its enemies. The Golan provides Israel's only barrier against Syria. From its heights every hostile move can be detected. Control of its mountain roads allows us to repel enemy troop and tank movements. Without it, military experts agree, we are helpless.

Judea and Samaria create a barrier to attacking armies from the east. Its mountains are home to our early warning radar. This span of West Bank land affords precious seconds for our Air Force to repel any attack.

The U.S. Department of Defense, in a recently declassified report, stated that "without these areas for defense, Israel's vulnerability would be a temptation for Arab attack."

So strategic are these areas to Israel's security that the U.S., in its desire for Mideast stability, is offering its troops on the Golan, and perhaps in the West Bank as well.

But can we count on America to protect us when terrorists attack or, G-d forbid, the treaty fails? How many U.S. soldiers will G-d forbid, sacrifice their lives at the hands of terrorists before America sends her brave young sons home?

The war of Arab against Jew is not political. It is an Islamic religious war dedicated to the destruction of the Jewish people and the Land of Israel. This enmity will not be legislated by a political struggle to maintain power. Israel was created in strength out of a need for strength. Peace was not its purpose; protection of the Jewish people was and should still be.

This peace once again places Jews at risk for their lives. All Jews, not just the "settlers." Israel's goal should be Israel's preservation. A preservation based on strength. Based on the wisdom of history. Based on truth, not on wishful, naive thinking.

Silence is being taken for consent. But if the Jews of Israel value safety and security, if the Jews of the Diaspora value having a refuge and homeland, then all Jews must voice their protest against this travesty. All Jews, not just settlers.

From The Director's Desk

Daniel Z. Lepow



Each month I sit here and ponder, "What motivational message can I deliver? Go out and give to the Federation's Annual Campaign! Join the JCC! Become a member of a synagogue! Get involved!"

We are beginning a new Campaign and I can write volumes about the needs of the Jewish community. Anyone who sat through the allocations process and heard the presentations from our many agencies understands how important each one is to the future of our community. We are now developing a plan to enable all who wish to tour our agencies and learn of their importance. In the meantime, turn to the pages listing all the JCC programs, look at the pictures and read the stories of our children at the Charlotte Jewish Preschool, and read the "Thoughts from Adrienne," our JFS Director. These are all made possible because of your gift.

This month we bring together our drive to seek contributions to support our community agencies and Temples at the annual UJA/Federation Shabbat. The Federation's annual fund drive is part of our Jewish tradition of tzedakah. It operates in conjunction with what we learn from our Rabbis, enabling us to help those in need not only in Charlotte but around the world. This is our opportunity to reach out to save Jewish lives in the former Soviet Union. They do not have the resources to save themselves and it is our job to enable them to live as Jews in Israel.

How do we teach the meaning of tzedakah to our children? Where do our teenagers go to learn of the Jewish people outside of Shalom Park? The answer is Israel. Years ago when I began attending the Israel Experience seminars at national Jewish conventions, only a

handful of people attended. Now, it's standing room only. There are so many great programs for teens that the movement for sending teenagers to Israel is perhaps one of the most popular among Jewish rabbinic and educational leaders. On Sunday, Jan. 2, at 11 a.m. in Gorelick Hall, Federation hosted a special event for teenagers to be aware of all the opportunities.

I must admit that while I am committed to sending as many teenagers to Israel as possible, I am now missing my son Jesse who is spending the year at a kibbutz in the Galil. It is a wonderful feeling to have a call from your son who went to Jerusalem with a friend for the weekend or had been climbing in the Golan with his class. In my heart I know that we did right for our son, but a year course may not be the thing for all teens. I am convinced, however, that there is a program for each person. The variety of programs is astounding and you will be amazed at the options offered by so many Jewish organizations. If you did not attend with your teens and pre-teens and are interested in these programs, please call me. What better motivational message can I send? Invest in Jewish continuity—investigate Israel programs!



Letters to the Editor

A Nose is a Nose is a Nose

Re: Jews by Choice Column
"The Search for a Proper Answer
by Mary Hofmann,
Dec. '93 Issue, p. 18

Let me "nosedive" into my reaction to the above article which addresses "classifying people by the size of their nose." A brand new member of your community, the subject hit a sensitive area in personal past experience. As Ms. Hofmann described it, her so-called selfless volunteer acquaintance felt it was "an established fact unencumbered by connotations of prejudice"... big nose, therefore, Jewish.

Here's my submission of the New Year's gift so fervently desired by Mary, albeit a bit belated. Education? Amusing? Insulting? I

don't know that they accommodate all the areas she requested. You be the judge.

How about employing any or all of these as a retort?

Caught a glimpse of Yasir Arafat in profile lately?

Did you know Pinocchio's surname was Greenberg?

He wasn't telling lies at all. It was just his Jewishness coming out as he expressed himself so glibly.

And the anteat... definitely of Semitic origin, n'est pas?

With tongue in cheek, not up my nose ...

—Bernice Cohan

We encourage our readers' viewpoints. Letters should be submitted typewritten, double-spaced and signed. Please include address and phone number. Names withheld upon request. We reserve the right to edit.

ZOA Calls for Pressure on Arafat to Fulfill Promises

The government of Israel decided to recognize the PLO as the representative of the Palestinian people on Sept. 9, 1993, after Yasir Arafat fulfilled three conditions: 1) He declared that the PLO recognized Israel; 2) he renounced terrorism and assumed responsibility for all PLO elements and personnel to insure their compliance; and 3) he promised to revoke the provisions of its covenant that call for the destruction of the Jewish State. Now, nearly four months later, it is clear that Arafat has failed to deliver on the second and third commitments.

During this same period, Israel has unilaterally taken a number of confidence-building measures in the interest of peace, including the release of hundreds of Palestinian prisoners and the easing of travel restrictions in the territories. These gestures have not been reciprocated. On the contrary, the PLO has increased its demands and called for the intensification of the Arab boycott against Israel.

Meanwhile, PLO violence

continues. Authorities publicly confirmed that members of Arafat's Fatah faction were involved in the murder of a Jewish settler. After intense pressure from Israel and the United States, Arafat condemned this act of terror, but the incident was not isolated. Every week since the Israeli-Palestinian Declaration of Principles was signed, violent attacks have been made against Jews in Israel and the territories. While some of these may be attributed to Islamic fundamentalists who vigorously oppose the peace process, others were made by members of PLO factions based in Damascus. These groups have showed no hesitancy about claiming "credit" for the murder of Jews. According to Arafat's promise, he is responsible for all elements of the PLO, not just Fatah, and therefore must be held accountable for the violence.

Furthermore, Arafat has taken no steps toward revoking the Palestinian covenant. A two-thirds majority of the Palestine National Council is required to

amend the covenant. We are told that Arafat has not convened the PNC because he does not have the votes to win. If this is true, then it is clear he does not have the support of the members of the PLO for the declarations he has made.

ZOA agrees with the growing number of Israelis, most recently the Deputy Defense Minister, who have said the PLO's inability to stop the violence against Jews imperils the implementations of the Declaration of Principles. ZOA believes that if the PLO terrorism does not cease, the agreement cannot be implemented without severely jeopardizing the security of Israelis.

The Zionist Organization of America calls on the United States government to make clear to the PLO that continued violence is contrary to the letter and spirit of the agreement it signed with Israel and that failure to live up to its obligation to stop terror and revoke the covenant will jeopardize diplomatic relations and the prospect for economic assistance.

Deadline Dates

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Mar. 10 for April

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366-5007 Fax 365-4507

Published by:

Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte ... Daniel Z. Lepow, Director
Jewish Community Center ... Alan Feldman, Director
Lubavitch of N.C. ... Rabbi Yossi Groner, Director
Editor ... Rita Mond
Advertising Rep ... Larry Levy

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