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Believe it or Not

Democrats and the Politics of Projection

Caroline B. Glick

The set-up at the Presidential debate Tuesday night was so predictable that it hurt to watch. Moderator Chris Wallace made no effort to hide where he was going. He noted that President Donald Trump had repeatedly demanded that his opponent, Democratic nominee and former vice president Joe Biden condemn Antifa, the violent leftist group behind much of the ongoing destruction of America's cities. Wallace failed to note that Biden refused to condemn Antifa and instead claimed, crazily that the organization is "an idea" not a group.

Wallace then asked Trump "to condemn white supremacists and militia groups, and to say that they need to stand down and not add to the violence in a number of these cities."

"Sure, I'm willing to do that," Trump replied. He then added, "Almost everything I see is from the left wing, not the right wing."

Trump was right, of course. The rioting, looting, arson; the attacks on police, on business owners and on citizens sitting in their homes from Los Angeles to Kenosha to Washington, DC is the provenance of Antifa, BlackLivesMatter and related left-wing groups.

Then, going back to Wallace's question, Trump added, "I'm willing to do anything. I want to see peace." That didn't satisfy Wallace, (or Biden, who were tag-teaming the issue). The two demanded that Trump condemn.

Trump asked who specifically they wanted him to condemn. Wallace said, "White supremacists and militias."

Biden -- who wouldn't condemn the leftist terrorists laying waste to America's urban centers -- said, "Proud Boys." So Trump, trying to resonate Wallace's request that he tell them to "stand down," said, "Proud Boys, stand back and stand by."

And the progressive media and Jewish progressive activists clapped their hands in glee. Here was the definitive proof that Trump is a white supremacist.

The Washington Post, the New York Times, television commentators all said his misstatement -- "standby" instead of "stand down" -- was proof positive that Trump was signaling to his Nazi guard that he wants them to take to the streets. The Jewish Democratic Council of America, which had just launched a commercial comparing Trump to Hitler pounced on his "standby" gaffe as proof they were right and Trump is the gravest danger to American Jews.

No one mentioned that Trump had condemned white supremacists twice in the same exchange or that Biden wouldn't condemn the leftist rioters who -- in addition to burning stores -- have vandalized several synagogues since May, and reject the Jewish state's right to exist.

Jewish progressives and Democrats have been playing this trick since the 2016 elections. In 2016, Trump was asked to disavow the endorsement he received from David Duke, the former Ku Klux Klan grandmaster and he did, repeatedly.

But in one satellite interview with CNN's Jake Tapper, where Trump was having trouble hearing the questions, Trump gave a diffident response to the question. And Presto -- Tapper, leftist Jewish activists and the Democrat party have used his cagey response as proof positive that Trump is a secret member of the KKK. The fact that he denounced Duke the day before the interview to a CNN reporter, denounced him again after his interview with Tapper and multiple times in the days and weeks and months and years that followed, was of no matter.

The same thing happened after the Charlottesville riots in August 2017 which pitted goons from Antifa against neo-Nazis. Trump held three press conferences where he condemned the neo-Nazis. In the third, he tried to differentiate between the rioters

from Antifa and the neo-Nazis from demonstrators on both the left and the right who had come to Charlottesville to support and protest a decision by the Charlottesville city council to remove a statue of Confederate General Robert E. Lee from a public park. While condemning the neo-Nazis and their anarchist counterparts, Trump noted that there were "also very fine people on both sides." And for that remark, which was nothing more than a statement of fact, Jewish progressives, Democrats, the media and Joe Biden continue to libel him as an anti-Semite and a racist.

The left's denunciations of Trump as an anti-Semite have come at the same time that the Democrat Party's hostility towards Israel and its supporters in America has become more pronounced with each passing day. Leftist anti-Semites have captured the party's base and control the progressive grassroots. They have intimidated pro-Israel Democrats into near silence on Israel and have made hating Israel an electoral advantage in primary races.

The left's rejection of Israel is now so overwhelming that last weekend, Rep. Alexandria Ocasio Cortez cancelled her participation in a Peace Now memorial marking the 25th anniversary of former prime minister Yitzhak Rabin's assassination. Her move demonstrated that even Jewish progressives and an Israeli Nobel Peace Prize laureate who was killed for his efforts to appease the PLO are beyond the Pale for progressives today. Only Jews who reject Israel's right to exist are acceptable among the smart set in the party.

The left's embrace of anti-Semitism demonstrates that its hysterical claims that Trump loves Nazis is nothing more than projection. And this isn't surprising. Since 2016, the Democrats have repeatedly projected all of their prejudices, malicious actions and plans onto Trump and the Republicans.

Consider the issue of collusion with Russia. During the debate, Biden accused Trump of being "Putin's poodle." But just hours before, Director of National Intelligence John Ratcliffe sent a letter to the Senate Judiciary Committee revealing that in July 2016, American intelligence agencies "obtained insight" into an analysis by Russian intelligence officers that claimed then Democrat presidential nominee Hillary Clinton "had approved a plan to stir up a scandal" against Trump which involved "tying [Trump] to Putin."

Clinton's campaign paid for the infamous Steele dossier alleging corrupt ties between Trump and the Kremlin. The dirt file was compiled by former British spy Christopher Steele. Last week it came to light that Steele's primary source for his file was investigated by the FBI as a Russian spy.

In other words, the collusion that Clinton and later the FBI, CIA, the Democrat Party, the media and a special prosecutor accused Trump of carrying out with the Kremlin was actually conducted by Clinton and her campaign with active assistance from the CIA, FBI, the media and the Democrat Party against Trump. In accusing Trump, they were describing their own actions.

The projection of Democratic plans onto the Republicans continues still today. Indeed, their campaign is organized around a new one.

In early August, senior Democrat operatives held a series of election simulations. In all of the scenarios tested, the only electoral outcome that the Democrats were willing to accept was a clear victory for Biden. All other outcomes, including a repeat of the 2016 election results where the Democrat candidate received more overall votes but Trump won in the electoral college were rejected by Democrat activists and political leaders alike. The "Biden" in the simulation refused to concede the race. Democrat governors pledged to reject their voters' verdict and to send pro-Biden electors to the electoral college. Three Democrat-run states announced they were seceding from the United States. Democrat activists began rioting countrywide. In one scenario, the Pentagon sent troops to the White House to forcibly

remove Trump from the premises.

The notable aspect of the scenarios was their familiarity. Aside from the fact that Clinton did concede the election four years ago and no one seceded from the union, all the other things happened. Democrats rioted and protested. Democrat lawmakers impeached Trump over nothing. For the past four years, Democrats at all levels have referred to themselves as "the resistance" rather than the opposition because they reject the legitimacy of Trump's presidency.

Shortly after the simulation was held, Clinton advised Biden not to concede the race. A group of Democrat former generals sent a warning letter to the Joint Chiefs of Staff noting that they are duty bound to uphold the Constitution which means ensuring that the election results are fulfilled.

All of these actions point to a basic fact. As was the case in 2016 and ever since, if Trump wins the election, the Democrats will refuse to accept the results. Their activists will riot and their leadership will plot to overturn the election results. They expect the army to physically remove Trump from office.

Then there is the issue of mail-in voting. In April, former president Barack Obama published a series of tweets promoting voting by mail. In large part due to Obama's intervention, mail-in voting has become the signature cause for Democrats in this electoral cycle. Nearly 40 percent of votes are expected to be mailed in -- an all-time record.

There are many problems with this. As Thomas Edsall reported in the New York Times, over the past two years, on average 6.4 percent of mail-in ballots have been deemed invalid everywhere they were used.

Earlier this week, 100,000 ballots sent to voters in New York City were invalidated.

Shoddy ballots are only one problem. There is also vote fraud. Mail-in ballots invite voter fraud, ballot harvesting and illegal disposal. Over the past two weeks, as the number of ballots being mailed in has steeply risen, reports have surfaced of postal workers dumping ballots. Investigative reporting organization Project Veritas this week exposed a massive ballot harvesting scheme carried out in Minnesota's Somali community by allies of Rep. Ilhan Omar.

And this brings us to Democrat projection. Since the impeachment hearings last January, Democrat lawmakers and aligned media have been pushing the claim that Trump will refuse to accept the election results if he loses. Just as Trump is repeatedly asked whether he condemns white supremacists, he and his campaign advisors have been asked repeatedly by reporters whether he intends to concede if the results of the election are not in his favor. At Tuesday's debate, Wallace continued the practice. He asked the candidates to pledge to accept the election results.

Biden quickly agreed. Trump refused to play the sucker's game.

The President noted that the Democrats still haven't accepted the results of the 2016 elections and tried to oust him from power through false allegations of collusion with Russia that Clinton invented while working with Russia. He also pointed out the ease with which mail-in votes can be, and allegedly already are being falsified by Democrats.

It is impossible to know how the election will pan out or when, if ever, the true results will be known. What is clear however is that if you want to understand who the Democrats are and what they are doing, all you need to do is look at what they are accusing Trump and his colleagues of being and of doing.

Tell-Tale Toponyms at the New York Times

Hugh Fitzgerald

Elder of Ziyon has a piece on the New York Times's slightly self-conscious use of the word "Judean" in a story about an ancient species of date -- that grew in Judea 2000 years ago -- that has been brought back to edible life by Israeli scientists. The story is here.

The New York Times has an interesting article

about Israelis managing to harvest dates from the famous Judean date palm, planted with seeds that are over 2000 years old:

The plump, golden-brown dates hanging in a bunch just above the sandy soil were finally ready to pick....

These were the much-extolled but long-lost Judean dates, and the harvest this month was hailed as a modern miracle of science.

Where was the seed found again?

Hannah's seed, which came from an ancient burial cave in Wadi el-Makkukh near Jericho, now in the West Bank, was carbon dated to between the first and fourth centuries B.C.E., becoming one of the oldest known seeds to have ever been germinated.

"The phrase "now in the West Bank" is awkward – did the cave somehow move from Judea to the "West Bank"? But for the Times to more accurately say "now called the West Bank" would be problematic for a paper that chose to embrace that term only in the 1970s....

A challenge should be thrown out to the media: Please find a single example of the toponym "West Bank" being applied before 1950 to an area that, for thousands of years, was known all over the Western world – and by Jesus – as "Judea and Samaria." Is there, for example, any use of the term "West Bank" in any of the U.N.'s discussions about Israel and the Arabs between 1947 and 1950? Answer: No. Did any Arab diplomat ever use the term "West Bank" before 1950? No. In the meetings of the Arab League before 1950, was the term "West Bank" ever used? No. During the 1948-1949 Arab-Israeli war, did any of the Arab military communiques refer to the "West Bank"? Again, No.

We all know what happened after that Jordanian decision in 1950. By dint of incessant repetition, by the Arabs, the term "West Bank" spread and became part of common usage. And we know why the Jordanians came up with that term. They wanted to efface the Jewish connection to the land, a connection that was immediately evoked by the place names "Judea" and "Samaria." The bland "West Bank" would do just fine.

There is historical precedent for this. The Romans, hoping to efface the place name "Judea" – which reminded everyone that Jews had long possessed that land – renamed the area as "Syria Palaestina" or "Palestine" for short. The Romans also renamed Jerusalem as "Aelia Capitolina." The first stuck, for many in the Western world; the second did not, undoubtedly because of the constant Biblical references to Jesus in Jerusalem.

The Arabs have not always been so successful in imposing their toponyms. They have tried to convince the world to use the place name "the Arabian Gulf" or "the Gulf," instead of "the Persian Gulf," but the Persian Gulf has not been knocked from its perch, despite the best efforts of the Gulf Arab states.

Another lexical contretemps recently involved Israel's plans in Judea and Samaria. Was Israel planning to "annex" parts of Judea and Samaria, or was it "extending its sovereignty"? The first implied that these territories did not belong to Israel, but to another country. Much of the international community, the NGO world and the media, at first referred only to Israel's "annexation." But in essence, annexation means one state imposing legal authority over the territory of another state acquired by force or aggression, normally during war. Israel won Judea and Samaria in the Six-Day War, a war of self-defense. And the territory it won, in Judea and Samaria, never belonged to another state but was, rather, an unallocated part of the Mandate for Palestine, to which Israel has a preexisting claim superior to all others, based on the Mandate for Palestine, a claim which, because of its 1967 victory, Israel could now act upon by "extending its sovereignty" to that land.

It took an effort, but so many writers were careful to keep using the phrase "extending its sovereignty" – consciously avoiding the terms "annex" and "annexation" – that that formulation prevailed, and even the liberal mainstream press has been referring to Israel's "extension of sovereignty" rather than to "annexation."

Is there a way to undermine the use of "West Bank"? Can we reverse the Arab lexical victory? Yes. It will take deliberation, and patience, and low cunning. We can start slowly, in order to acclimate ourselves, and others, to the use of "Judea and

Samaria." I suggest that we now refer to "Judea and Samaria (a/k/a the "West Bank" since 1950)," signalling that there is something illegitimate about the place name "West Bank." Or, in the alternative, the shorter version: "Judea and Samaria (a/k/a the West Bank)." We can demand, for example, that The New York Times and the Washington Post do the same – "Judea and Samaria (a/k/a the "West Bank" since 1950), by pointing out to their editors that the phrase "West Bank" only dates from 1950, that it was deliberately imposed then by the Jordanians for obvious propagandistic purposes, that the place names "Judea and Samaria," on the other hand, have been in continuous use for several thousand years and should not be erased from usage because the Arabs since 1950 have found it politically useful to do so. Keep hammering this point. Flood the networks – CNN, BBC, NPR, CBS, NBC, ABC, all of them – with the history lesson they need to learn, about the recent and highly suspect origin of the place name "West Bank," and politely request that this be acknowledged in their own usage. Little by little, as those who have blithely been referring to "the West Bank" are made repeatedly aware of its propagandistic provenance, and become more self-conscious, too. In using it, a few at first, and thence to more, should begin to supplant "West Bank" with the toponyms "Judea and Samaria" that were good enough for Jesus, and for the entire Western world for thousands of years, until just the day before yesterday.

There is one more lexical battle that was lost and now needs to be fought again, and this time won. It's the use of the word "Palestinian" to indicate a separate ethnic group. Many are familiar with what Zuheir Mohsen, himself a Palestinian Arab, and leader of the As Saïqa terrorist group, said about the soi-disant "Palestinian people": "The Palestinian people do not exist. The creation of a Palestinian state is only a means for continuing our struggle against the state of Israel for our Arab unity. In reality today there is no difference between Jordanians, Palestinians, Syrians and Lebanese. Only for political and tactical reasons do we speak today about the existence of a Palestinian people, since Arab national interests demand that we posit the existence of a distinct 'Palestinian people' to oppose Zionism. Yes, the existence of a separate Palestinian identity exists only for tactical reasons."

From this fabricated Palestinian people another useful fiction was born. No longer would the world see – if it ever did – the Arab-Israeli conflict as one between twenty-two Arab states, with a total population of hundreds of millions, and a tiny Jewish state, scarcely discernible on a world map, with a population of a few million. Now the conflict could be – and was – re-formulated, more acceptably, as one between "two tiny peoples, each struggling for its homeland."

Is this battle over the "Palestinian people" lost for good? I don't think so. There is one simple thing that needs to be done: demoting that pseudo-ethnic noun to a geographic adjective. It will be hard at first, but increasingly easy through repeated use: instead of writing or talking about the "Palestinians," simply add the word "Arabs." To wit: "The Palestinian Arabs have heaped scorn on the U.A.E." "The Palestinian Arabs continue to insist that Israel must be squeezed back within the 1949 armistice lines." "The Palestinian Arabs refuse even to discuss the \$50 billion aid package promised them in the Trump Peace Plan." I have myself too often ignored my own advice and used the word "Palestinian" as a noun, by itself – out of laziness, inattention, or because I think it's the wrong time and place to call them, self-consciously, "Palestinian Arabs." I have used the word "Palestinians" in the titles of many of my Jihad Watch pieces when I ought instead to have written "Palestinian Arabs." Mea maxima culpa. But when I am paying attention, I find it is easy enough to write or speak about the "Palestinian Arabs." And each time that phrase is used, there is a little chipping away at the "peoplehood" of the "Palestinian Arabs." Now, if only we could convince the Israelis, who not only write and speak about the "Palestinians," but also – worse still – often refer to "the Palestinian people" or to "our two peoples, Israelis and Palestinians." No: it should always be, reminding the world of the gross inequality in population and in lands possessed, "our two peoples – Jews and Arabs."

jihadwatch.org

Why Biden Said 'Inshallah'

Robert Spencer

One of the most revealing moments of last night's debate was one that most people probably missed. BuzzFeed's Hamed Aleaziz was overjoyed, tweeting that it was "a historic moment in America." Over at Slate, Aymann Ismail added that "as terrible as this debate night was, at least a few of us had this moment."

This glorious occasion came when Donald Trump stated that he would eventually release his tax returns: "I've paid millions of dollars, and you'll get to see it." Joe Biden responded: "When? Inshallah," using Arabic for "God willing," a phrase that is often used in the context of procrastination.

Some Muslims were excited about Biden's colloquial use of the phrase, so as to mean "This is not likely to happen." "Interfaith and anti-racism educator" Hind Makki tweeted: "Whenever someone who's not Muslim drops an inshallah in conversation, I assume they have Muslim colleagues. When they know to use it colloquially [sarcastically], I know they have close Muslim friends."

These were just the sort of reactions Biden was doubtless hoping for. Arabic-speaking Christians as well as Muslims say "Inshallah," but in saying this, Biden was not pandering to Arabic-speaking Christians; he was pandering to the part of his base (Muslim and non-Muslim) that believes that counterterror efforts are largely just an exercise in "Islamophobia" and supports the likes of Ilhan Omar and Rashida Tlaib. With the world watching, Biden was demonstrating his support for the Left's favored religion, Islam. He wouldn't have said the phrase in English, "God willing," because his point was not primarily to emphasize that Trump was going to procrastinate in releasing his tax returns; it was to show in a concise, albeit indirect fashion that he was a worthy candidate of the anti-American hard left, a reliable foe of the alleged "Muslim ban," and a fervent proponent of mass migration.

For Biden has to earn the love of the increasingly dominant hard-left wing of his party. Trump several times last night maneuvered Biden into repudiating pet causes of the far left, notably the Green New Deal, for which Biden affirms support on his own website. This is likely to cause him some difficulty with the most radical of his supporters, for they have already made clear that they've got the Democratic nominee on a short leash.

The notorious anti-Semite and former Women's March leader Linda Sarsour made that clear in July when she declared "I choose Biden" and then immediately began making clear that her support was decidedly conditional: "But I choose him as my opponent in the White House. I want him to defeat Trump so we can mobilize our movements to hold him accountable and push him to do and be better. We can't do that with Trump." Sarsour explained that she and her supporters had supported Bernie Sanders "because he earned our votes & we need Biden to continue to do the same." She elaborated: "When Joe Biden does the right thing, you better believe Linda Sarsour's going to say, 'You know what? Thank you so much President Joe Biden for doing the right thing.' And when President Joe Biden doesn't do the right thing our community needs to come together and hold him accountable."

Biden may have been trying to relieve some of this pressure and win more of the confidence of the far-left by making use of this expression that is common among the adherents of the religion that leftists love most, but it didn't work with everyone. Journalist Tamer El-Ghobashy huffed: "Biden's use of inshallah was kinda colonial and derogatory if you ask me." El-Ghobashy added: "The sarcasm of it reminded me of every mid-level state department dweeb I ever met in Iraq."

Poor old Joe. What does he have to do or say to allay suspicions that he will not be a faithful servant of the socialist, internationalist, pro-migration, anti-counterterror agenda? His repudiation of the Green New Deal and more last night will not help him with the adherents of that agenda, but they likely understand that Joe was simply saying what he had to say to get out of the corner Trump had backed him into. They understand, after all, the helpful principle enunciated by that master politician, Muhammad, the prophet of Islam: "War is deceit." Joe Biden very clearly has grasped that principle as well.

PJMedia.com

Funding a Terror Organization

Yosef Kuperwasser

The arrests in December 2019 of 50 suspected members of the sizable terrorist infrastructure of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) in Ramallah, which was responsible for the terror attack in which teenager Rina Shnerb was murdered and her father and brother were injured last summer (Aug. 23, 2019), exposed the significant magnitude of PFLP terror networks and their capacity to strike within Israel. Perhaps more ominously, it also exposed the self-deception under which many left activists operate in Europe and the United States.

PFLP funders see or pretend to see the delegitimization activity performed by PFLP-affiliated organizations as peaceful/nonviolent actions that are unrelated to the terrorist operations of the PFLP. This hypocrisy reached a new peak in a letter sent recently by the European Union's representative to the Palestinian Authority, who guaranteed the Palestinian NGOs, many of which are affiliated with the PFLP, that the EU will keep funding them in spite of their affiliation with organizations that have been formally designated by the EU as terror organizations—a promise that came after the NGOs refused to commit to avoid such affiliations.

The PFLP is designated as a terrorist organization by the United States, EU, Australia, Canada, and Japan. Back when its terror unit was still called “The Red Eagles,” PFLP won world attention because of its involvement in plane hijackings (Leila Khaled, who took part in two such attacks, is a member of the PFLP politburo and of the Palestinian National Council), and the massacre it carried out in Israel's Lod airport in 1972.

The PFLP's current terror arm, the “Abu Ali Mustafa Brigades,” operates from a headquarters in Damascus, where it maintains operational cooperation with Iran and Hezbollah. The PFLP has active cells in many governorates of the Palestinian Authority with dozens of active members in Judea and Samaria. Through these terror arms, the PFLP perpetrated some of the most despicable terror attacks, including the murder of Israeli minister Rehavam Ze'evi (October 2001); six suicide bombing attacks during the Second Intifada that left 13 people dead including the Nov. 1, 2004, suicide bombing attack in the crowded Carmel Market in Tel Aviv that left three dead; and the attempt to murder Israel's former Chief Rabbi Ovadya Yosef in 2005 (Salah Hamouri, who played a key role in planning the attack is a prominent activist in the PFLP-affiliated, so-called “human rights” NGO Addameer).

In November 2014, the PFLP carried out the vicious murder with axes and guns of five Jewish worshippers while they were praying at the Har-Nof synagogue in Jerusalem, as well as a policeman who tried to stop the attack. The attack was carried out by two brothers who were related to a former PFLP terrorist and the PFLP took responsibility for and praised the attack, though some sources dispute this. The PFLP performed numerous rocket attacks from Gaza during Operation Protective Edge in 2014 and participates in the operation room that led the terror attacks from Gaza in the many rounds of conflict that have taken place since.

For many left-wing organizations in the West, cooperation with the PFLP comes naturally. It is a reminder of the “glorious” era when the Soviet Union was a superpower competing for global dominance against “the corrupt capitalist West” (this vocabulary is still often used by PFLP). When the Soviet bloc collapsed, these groups had to find a new cause célèbre around which to unite. The PFLP was among the first groups to understand the potential of recruiting softer anti-Israel elements into its networks and to leverage those elements in order to gain financial support from naïve international donors.

Functionally, the PFLP is an entirely hybrid organization. On the one hand, some of its members (who altogether number in the low thousands) tirelessly promote terror attacks. On the other hand, the PFLP occupies the leading position among Palestinian NGOs conducting the international campaign to slander Israel and deny its legitimacy to exist as the nation-state of the Jewish people (PFLP supports a one-state solution that would abolish Israel).

Khalida Jarrar, 57, a leading political activist of the

PFLP and one of the three PFLP members of the Palestinian parliament (the last elections for which were held in 2006), is a good example of the functional integration of the PFLP's “military” and “political” activities. Jarrar has been repeatedly arrested for her involvement in terror-related activity, and currently stands accused of filling a high-ranking role in the recently exposed PFLP terrorist infrastructure. At the same time, Jarrar has also played an integral part in the PFLP's delegitimization campaign in the West. She and several of her terrorist infrastructure colleagues held key positions in the BDS organization Addameer, which tries to improve the conditions of Palestinian terrorists incarcerated in Israeli prisons. In the NGO universe, Jarrar and Addameer present themselves as human rights activists; in the Palestinian-Israeli sphere, they diligently promote vicious physical attacks on human life.

The PFLP was established in 1967 by Dr. George Habash, and sticks to the communist ideology and structure upon which it was built. It has a national conference that is convened every several years (the last meeting—its seventh—was held in 2013), which appointed Secretary General Ahmad Sa'adat, who is 67 years old and is currently imprisoned in Israel due to his role in the murder of minister Ze'evi.

The PFLP Central Committee has 76 members. 34 are from the West Bank and Jerusalem, 22 from the Gaza Strip, 15 are Palestinians who live abroad, and five are imprisoned by Israel. The Central Committee appoints the deputy secretary general; the current occupant of that position is 80-year-old Abu Ahmad Fouad, who was born in Silwan and is among the founding fathers of PFLP. He currently resides in Damascus. It also appoints a Politburo (made of 18 members—seven from the West Bank, six from Gaza and five from abroad) that is in charge of running the PFLP's daily affairs on the policy level. The head of the Politburo foreign relations committee is Maher al-Taher, a veteran activist who also lives in Damascus. The PFLP leader in Gaza is Jamal Mazhar. Other key members of the Politburo are Khalida Jarrar, Omar Shahada, Husein Mansour, Maryam Abu Daqqa, Kaïd al-Ghoul, Ghazi Sourani, celebrity terrorist Leila Khaled, Marwan Abd El-Al and Abu Sami Marwan al-Fahoum (Rabah Mihna, a dominant figure in the Politburo, passed away in 2019.)

The PFLP is a member of the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO), through which it used to receive much of its budget from the Palestinian Authority, though it presents an opposition to the ruling Fatah organization. Part of its terror budget is covered by Iran. The PFLP maintains close relations with Fatah's arch rival Hamas and refrains from participating in the leading executive bodies of the PLO and the PA. Since 2017, the rivalry between the Fatah and the PFLP has led PLO Chairman Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen) to stop delivering money to the PFLP, which has reacted with fierce attacks against Abu Mazen.

The PFLP is able to maintain its terror infrastructure in spite of its disagreements with the PA mainly because in the eyes of Fatah leadership, all kinds of terror and violence against Zionism are legitimate, even if at certain times they are not recommended. This is why the PA never takes action against PFLP terror activists and pays handsome salaries to PFLP terrorists incarcerated in Israeli jails, and to the families of those who died in the context of the struggle against Zionism. As a founding organization of the post-1968 PLO, the PFLP gets a lot of respect from the PA and Fatah, even when relations between the two organizations are tense.

It should also be noted that the PA minister of foreign affairs, Riad al-Maliki, who was one of the leaders of the PA's process of joining the International Criminal Court (ICC) as a state, used to hold a leading position in the PFLP. The ICC's prosecutor, Fatou Bensouda, met with two PFLP-affiliated organizations disguised as human rights organizations (Al Haq and the Palestinian Center for Human Rights) during the deliberations that led to her decision to move forward with the PA's complaint against Israel. These organizations were also a key source of information for the investigation committees of the anti-Israel U.N. Human Rights Council against Israel. In other words, the members of the PFLP did not abandon their terrorist activities for civic struggle but rather added another layer to make their activity more efficient.

The PFLP also maintains close ties and affiliation to

former communist and radical parties around the globe and especially in Arab and Palestinian communities in exile; the party operates dedicated cells of supporters both in Palestinian universities and in universities abroad. At the same time, it also maintains close political and operational relationships with Hezbollah and Iran. These overlapping alliances have positioned the PFLP as a very useful axis for the “red-green” alliance against Israel in the West.

The grotesque terror-NGO hybrid that the PFLP has perfected is especially notable for its success in gaining funding from the EU and from individual European countries such as the Netherlands, Switzerland, Norway, and Sweden (see table). These entities are entirely aware of these organizations' affiliation with the PFLP and the roles that terror activists play in the PFLP's network of “human rights” NGOs. Shawan Jabarin, who leads Al Haq, is a former terror activist; Moustafa Awad of Samidoun was trained by Hezbollah in Lebanon and recently spent a year in an Israeli jail for personally transferring funds for terror activities.

Nevertheless, European organizations and governments invite those activists and others such as Leila Khaled and Khaled Barakat (a member of the Central Committee of the PFLP who is involved in the activities of Samidoun, where his wife, Charlotte Kates, serves as international director) to speak and hold meetings in Europe, including in the European Parliament. Eventually, under Israeli protest, Leila Khaled was refused entry to Italy in 2017 and Barakat was refused entry to Germany in February 2020. Yet European assistance to these organizations helps the PFLP, which occasionally struggles with shortages in its budget, to pay its activists, who are helpfully registered as employees of European-funded NGOs. And while European states deny entry to PFLP activists, San Francisco State University (SFSU) is determined to host Leila Khaled for a Zoom lecture this coming Sept. 23, in spite of the fact that she is an active member of a terrorist organization and that she personally carried out terror attacks and has shown no remorse. Justifying this with the need and right to listen to a variety of opinions is of course outrageous.

Leftist activists in Europe and the United States who are mobilized for the Palestinian cause and organizations which present themselves as committed to human rights (such as Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, and even U.N. agencies) see no problem with the PFLP's hybrid terror-NGO identity. For example, a delegation of the American organization IFPB (Interfaith Peace Builders, now known as “Eyewitness Palestine”) was hosted in 2017 in the refugee camp Dheisheh near Bethlehem in the house of a PFLP terrorist who was also involved with an NGO. The IFPB knew that the terrorist was wanted by Israel. Members of the IFPB, who posted photos from the meeting on social media, were excited to tell that the same activist they met with was later killed in a confrontation with the IDF.

“Dream Defenders,” a relatively small Florida-based radical organization that operates within the Black Lives Matter coalition and has on its board well-known figures like Angela Davis and Linda Sarsour, cooperates with the PFLP directly. For them, no fig leaves are needed; the PFLP itself is a symbol of struggle, apparently including its commitment to stabbing, shooting, and blowing up innocent people. Dream Defenders conducts annual trips to areas controlled by the PA, especially to the Dheisheh refugee camp, where the participants meet with PFLP activists in this stronghold of the terror organization. Earlier this year, Dream Defenders co-founder Umi Selah, also known as Phillip Agnew, was hired by the Bernie Sanders campaign.

Israeli leftist NGOs also occasionally cooperate with Palestinian NGOs affiliated with the PFLP (such as Al Haq, Samidoun, the Palestinian Center for Human Rights, the Union of Agricultural Work Committees, Defense of Children International—Palestine, and Addameer) as well as with organizations in which the PFLP is a key player, such as the Palestinian BDS National Committee (BNC) and its Palestinian Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel (PACBI).

It should be emphasized in this context that the PFLP is a major partner in the Palestinian National and Islamic Forces (PNIF)—the umbrella organization of all Palestinian terror groups that is used to coordinate the Palestinian struggle against

Israel. The PNIF was the tool with which the terror campaign known as the Second Intifada was coordinated and it played an important role in the escalation in Gaza that took place under the "March of Return" in the last two years, and is also the leading member of the Palestinian BDS National Committee. The PNIF serves as a meeting point where the PFLP may coordinate and cooperate with Hamas in spite of their ideological gaps to pursue their common interest of hurting Israel and promoting the delegitimization campaign.

Those who wish to convince themselves that cooperation with civic PFLP-affiliated organizations is a part of a peaceful fight against Israeli occupation in Judea and Samaria are similar to those who claim that a distinction should be made between the terrorist and political components of Hezbollah. The exposure of the PFLP's terrorist infrastructure should be considered a wake-up call to Europeans and to both the American and Israeli left to disengage from the PFLP and its affiliates; otherwise, they will continue to be directly responsible for the loss of innocent human lives.

Tablet Magazine

Making History

Nasser Died Fifty Years Ago:

He Lives On in Egypt

Daniel Pipes

Gamal Abdel Nasser, the charismatic ruler of Egypt, died 50 years ago today. During his eighteen years in power, 1952-70, he dominated the Middle East and, even now, he remains an intense topic of interest.

According to Google's Ngram, the word "Nasserist" has steadily appeared more often in English-language books since 1970. A Lebanese newspaper article announced last week that "Nasser is the future," called him the "immortal leader," and proclaimed that he remains "a necessity to face current challenges even as his ideas and choices provide a solid bridge to deal with the future."

Reporting on Nasser's death, headlines in the New York Times succinctly conveyed both the benign, positive coverage he enjoyed among Westerners and their belief in his universal popularity among Arabs: "Blow to peace efforts seen," "U.S. officials see period of instability in Mideast," "The Arab world is grief-stricken." The real story, however, was quite different, with Nasser's rule bringing disaster to Egypt in the form of political, economic, and cultural decline.

A 34-year-old colonel when he took over through a coup d'état in 1952, Nasser was the first indigenous Egyptian to rule the country since the pharaohs. His ambitions were as immense as his ideas were delusional. He overthrew a king and installed an oppressive military rule that still endures 68 years later. He dispossessed grand landlords and small merchants alike, then chased out Levantine entrepreneurs – mainly Italians, Greeks, and Lebanese – who fueled the economy. He persecuted the small but thriving Jewish community of 75,000 to the point that it now consists of 10 (at last count) elderly women.

He aligned with the Soviet Union, industrialized Egypt along Soviet lines, and ruled with post-Stalin-like brutality. Bewitched by the mirage of bringing all Arabic-speaking countries under his control, Nasser unified with some of them and made war with others. More than anyone else, he installed anti-Zionism as the mainstay of Middle Eastern political life and transformed the Palestinian refugee issue into Palestinian irredentism. Along the way, he initiated the Six-Day War of 1967 and dispatched his armed forces to the most lopsided military defeat in recorded history.

Nasser proved to be a master artist of deceit. He pretended to become a civilian while extending the military's monopoly of power over economic, security, legislative, and judicial affairs. He imposed a socialism that administered city buses with two classes of service while enriching his cronies. His mock unity with Syria concealed a crude drive to dominate. His ostensible enmity with Islamists masked a sordid struggle for booty.

I arrived in Egypt a few months after Nasser's demise, in June 1971. It was an exciting time of witness as his successor, Anwar al-Sadat, opened up the country by cutting back on socialism, the Soviet connection, and the foreign adventures. Each day felt

brighter than the one before.

And yet, Egypt has never escaped Nasser's legacy. The regime persists in a casual brutality toward dissidents and a dogged hostility to Israel that outlasts the peace treaty signed forty-one years ago. It lags economically, with retired military officers more important than ever and the country unable to feed itself or produce goods the world wants. A population of 100 million stuffs itself almost entirely into the 4 percent of Egypt that comprise the Nile Valley and Nile Delta. Constant expansion onto agricultural land and the prospect of diminished Nile River water portend future crises. Even the famed Egyptian cotton is no more.

Thus did Egypt slide from its old status as the foremost of twenty Arabic-speaking countries to an afterthought.

Those New York Times headlines symbolized the West's cluelessness about the deeply malign nature of Nasser's rule. Blow to peace efforts? Hardly: only post-Nasser could Sadat yank Egypt away from its debilitating confrontation with Israel. Period of instability? No, Nasser's death removed the region's most disruptive element. Arabs grief-stricken? Some, yes; but many others felt relief.

Egypt's modern history reconfirms that when a country falls into the hands of a despot, the return to normality can take a very long time. Russia, China, and Iraq provide other past examples; Venezuela, North Korea, and Iran provide more current ones.

Given Egypt's lugubrious immobility under Gamal Abdel Nasser's half-century-long shadow, I pessimistically predict that another fifty years hence, the Egypt of 2070 will yet suffer under his influence. Rulers will come, rulers will go, unable to break the boundaries he set so long ago.

Daniel Pipes is president of the Middle East Forum.

The Washington Times

In Other News

The 'Nevertheless' Club and the World

Amir Taheri

For the past few years, hosting the Islamic Republic's Foreign Minister, Mohammed Javad Zarif, has developed into an annual ritual of the New York-based Council on Foreign Relations (CFR). This year, however, CFR's invitation to Zarif raised a storm of protest beyond the bubble in which American foreign policy junkies play games, indulge in fantasies, and address their principal task, which is fund-raising.

What triggered the storm was the alleged murder in a Tehran prison of Navid Afkari, a popular wrestling champion and a pro-democracy protester. The killing sent shock waves throughout Iran, including even among some elements of the Khomeinist establishment.

CFR received many emails and calls demanding that, as a show of sympathy with Iranians, Zarif be disinvited. The CFR, however, refused to do so. Its director Richard Haas, a former State Department official, tweeted: "Like many others I condemn the execution of Navid Afkari. I also hold the view that human rights constitute an important dimension of US foreign policy. Nevertheless, I believe that CFR is correct to meet with Iran's foreign minister."

The tweet contains interesting indicators to how Haas tries to dodge the issue. He presents Afkari's killing as a judicial "execution", enabling Zarif to say "well, you have executions in some states of the US as well." Yet, Tehran authorities themselves speak of "qissas" (retribution) while Afkari's lawyers insist that neither he nor they were informed that there would be an execution. Next, Haas tries to soften Zarif's image by presenting him as Foreign Minister of "Iran" rather than of the Islamic Republic.

But the most interesting part of Haas's tweet is "nevertheless" because it puts Afkari's tragic end and CFR's supposed regard for human rights on the same level as the importance of offering a platform to a Khomeinist propagandist. The excuse is "nevertheless, we have to hear the other side".

To be sure, the CFR didn't invent the "nevertheless" club whose members are morally incapable, in Aristotle's term "akates", of understanding that it is wrong to assume equivalence between an ethically sound position and its sophistic negation.

Haas's "nevertheless" reminds one of other "neverthelesses" in literature and history.

There is Achilles saying to Priam at the end of the Trojan War: "Nevertheless, old man! You, too, were once happy."

In November 1938, a few days after Kristallnacht, the French ambassador to Berlin Robert Coulondre reported the event to Paris, describing the savagery in the heart of Europe, concluding that "nevertheless [néanmoins in French] one should understand German grievances against the Jews."

Western intellectuals who visited the Soviet Union under Stalin tacitly admitted that thousands were killed by the regime and millions starved to death but, using the "nevertheless" talisman, they also concluded that all was for the best in that best of all worlds.

British parliamentarian Konni Zilliacus used "nevertheless" first to justify his adulation for Stalin and then, after Nikita Khrushchev denounced the tyrant's cult of personality, against him. Edgar Snow was not myopic enough not to notice the savagery of the gangs unleashed by his idol Mao Zedong. But, again using "nevertheless", he justified playing the role of propagandist for Chinese Communism in the United States.

French journalist Jean Lacouture used "nevertheless" to justify his support of the Khmer Rouge in Cambodia. Yes, the Khmer Rouge were killing millions. Nevertheless, we could not condemn them because they were fighting American imperialism, always a noble cause.

Years ago, we asked the then German Foreign Minister, Hans-Dietrich Genscher, why he pretended that the Islamic Republic in Tehran was just like any other regime, albeit a bit more naughty. He claimed that, although there was a mountain of evidence, there was, nevertheless, not enough information to make a judgement.

Some members of the "nevertheless" club use the quest for "more information" as an excuse for a "critical dialogue" with the Khomeinist regime and other weird actors on the international scene. They remind one of Jacob Bernhardt's mocking of those seeking "unwanted facts and useless information" (Quisquillienforschung in German).

Haas, too, talks of how listening to Zarif would help us better understand the power structure in the Khomeinist regime. And that reminds one of Montaigne's quip: "They are wonderfully acquainted with Galen but know nothing of the disease of the sick man."

Members of the "nevertheless" club also talk of the need for nuances to lubricate diplomacy, always a rough machinery. But, nuances may make sense only if a melody has been established. In this case one needs an overarching view of the Khomeinist regime to guide a long-term policy. Since the "nevertheless" club cannot develop such a policy its talk of nuances is an excuse for serving as an echo chamber for the Tehran mullahs.

Anyway, in his expose at the CFR meeting, Zarif repeated the same claims, not to say lies, that he has been dishing out to the illustrious audience for years. And it seems that they gobbled it up with the same appetite as before. To hoodwink his audience, Zarif never used the term "Islamic Republic" and pretended that "Supreme Guide" Ali Khamenei doesn't exist. Nor did he talk of Islam and Tehran's strategy to "export the Islamic Revolution" to the whole world, including New York where the CFR is located.

Portrayed by Zarif, the Khomeinist regime is a peace-and-love enterprise where the judiciary is independent, all freedoms are respected, and the strategic aim is to establish peace and harmony across the globe. There are no political prisoners in Iran. Tehran's support for Hezbollah and Hamas is cultural and the Iranian presence in Syria is only advisory, at the invitation of the Syrian government. There are, of course, no American and other foreign hostages in Iran. If there is trouble in the Middle East, it is the fault of the United States. OK, not of good Americans like John Kerry and Barack Obama but of people like Donald Trump and Mike Pompeo.

In the CFR echo chamber, the airing of opinions without an ethical barometer is, at best, a trivial pursuit, and, at worst, a betrayal of scholarship.

(Full disclosure: I have been invited to address the CFR twice, both times on Iraq, never on Iran!)

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