



**THE BEGIN-SADAT CENTER
FOR STRATEGIC STUDIES**

BULLETIN

No. 33

January 2016

On Securing Jerusalem

BESA Center associates debate Israel's policy options in responding to Palestinian terrorism and reinforcing Israel's hold in its capital city.

INSIDE

-  Implications of Middle East Chaos
-  Turning Back the Tide against Israel
-  Securing Israel's Natural Gas Reserves
-  Retrospective on Gaza Disengagement
-  US-Israel Relations in the Final Obama Stretch
-  Strategic Dialogues with Germany and Australia
-  Israel-Saudi Relations: Where to?
-  Gen. Hachon and Col. Lerman Join the BESA Center
-  25 New Publications



Bar-Ilan University

BESA CENTER ASSOCIATES IN ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION

On Securing Jerusalem

BESA Center associates debate Israel’s policy options in responding to Palestinian terrorism and reinforcing Israel’s sovereignty in its capital city.

2

Can and how should Israel act to keep Jerusalem united?

Prof. Efraim Inbar: Israel should signal ferocious determination in opposing any division of the city, and not only because of religious and historic reasons. Jerusalem has strategic importance for the defense of Israel.

Greater Jerusalem is the only place along the ridge of the Judea Mountains that has a Jewish majority and where the road from the coast to the area along the Jordan River that can be travelled without Arab interference. Jerusalem is the linchpin for any defense plan from the East.



Prof. Efraim Inbar

Israel has a clear interest in the stability of the Hashemite Kingdom that signed a peace treaty with Israel, but Israel’s national security cannot be based on the assumption that this kingdom cannot be destabilized like other Arab states.

Col. (res.) Dr. Eran Lerman: The bottom line is simple: Carving up Jerusalem – a living city, “still seven times safer than (say) Seattle” – is impossible to implement, no matter how ardently some may wish for this to be done. It would constitute a disastrous retreat from basic Zionist verities and Jewish imperatives. It would tear apart Israeli society. It would reverse the remarkable achievements of nearly fifty years of Israel’s custodianship of the unified city; a custodianship not free of failures and blemishes and yet impressive in its outcome.

Jerusalem today is a city of nearly a million residents, a joy to behold, alive with active social and cultural life. And it would ultimately do nothing but harm to the lives of most of the *Maqdisiyyun* (Arab Jerusalemites) – who know already how much better they are doing in comparison with their brothers across the PA line (or else there would not have been so many who make the



Col. (res.) Dr. Eran Lerman

effort to come and live in sovereign Israeli territory).

Therefore, Israeli policy must be directed quietly and confidently at perpetuating Israeli sovereignty in Jerusalem; even if a proper delimitation of where does the city end, and some unnecessary accretions begin, may be open to discussion.

What strategies (not just tactics) should the government adopt to ensure exclusive diplomatic control of the city? Should Israel maintain a low profile or move to significantly build new neighborhoods in and around the city?

Inbar: Israel should continue to build in every part of the city. Moreover, it should encourage Jews settling in the area near and within the so-called Holy Basin. Creating facts on the ground signals determination and makes division of the city more difficult. Generally, Israel should make every effort to separate the issue of Jerusalem from the issue of settlements in the West Bank even if this requires a partial freeze in the settlement activity in Judea and Samaria. Jerusalem is much more important than isolated Jewish settlements in the West Bank.

Dr. Max Singer: Firstly, Israel should expand its programs to connect all Israelis to Jerusalem. It is important to act so that ordinary Israelis do not associate the cause of united Jerusalem with the advocates of building a Third Temple, or those who believe that Israel is not Israel if it doesn’t have sovereignty over everything west of the Jordan.

Note that “United Jerusalem” does not necessarily mean the current borders of Jerusalem. Jerusalem was smaller before June 1967. It was larger in the UN partition resolution. “United Jerusalem” means, I believe, that the parts of Jerusalem that interact with each other, that one might need to



Dr. Max Singer

travel through to get from one part of Jewish Jerusalem to another, all have a common government that is part of Israel. Outlying Arab villages added in 1967 may be necessary in some situations for security or political reasons, but there can be a united Jerusalem without them.

But Israel should not be negotiating with itself about concessions to the Palestinians in Jerusalem. The Arabs are not now willing to make peace with Israel on any terms. When they change it will be time enough to consider what concessions might be consistent with “united Jerusalem.”

Secondly, Israel’s public stance should be more positive and defiant than appeasing. This should include emphasis on how the Arab interest in Jerusalem has been almost exclusively in opposition to Jews and Christians, with little attention when in Muslim hands. Israel should also call attention to the terrible Arab record in preserving Jerusalem, in allowing access to other religions, and in keeping commitments.

Nevertheless, Israel’s fundamental claim is not that it does a better job of protecting access by all religions. Its fundamental claim is that Jerusalem has long been the capital of the Jewish state in this area and is an essential part of Israel, the Jewish homeland. We will not give it up.

Thirdly, Israel should be building in Jerusalem, especially in the E-1 corridor connecting Jerusalem to to Maale Adumim.

Prof. Joshua Teitelbaum: The best way to keep Jerusalem united is to treat all the citizens equally. Anyone who goes to the eastern part of the city can see how much it suffers from neglect. But it is not wise to build new neighborhoods for Jews neither in the



Prof. Joshua Teitelbaum

eastern part of the city nor in the parts of “Jerusalem” beyond the 1967 municipal boundaries. This does not serve any purpose beyond placating the right-wing part of Netanyahu’s coalition.

Inbar: Yes, Israel has a clear interest in providing better municipal services to the Arab neighborhoods. According to all polls, a large majority of the Arabs in the city prefer to live under Israeli sovereignty and the idea of transferring them to Palestinian rule is frightening to them. They are not stupid! In fact, any attempt to transfer them to Palestinian rule without asking their opinion is undemocratic. Every effort should be made to strengthen the Arabs’ preference to live under Israeli rule. This is also a clear answer to the absurd claim that Israel is racist. Arab-Jewish coexistence in Jerusalem is a prerequisite for peace.

Prof. Eytan Gilboa: For a long time, successive Israeli governments have failed to adopt and implement policies required to keep Jerusalem united. Existing policies have to fundamentally change: Investing much more resources in the Arab sections coupled with the establishment of law and order, full and aggressive enforcement of municipal laws and regulations and conditions of

BESA CENTER ASSOCIATES IN ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION

On Securing Jerusalem *(continued)*

basic services, severe punishment of violators, intensive supervision of the educational system, and aggressive preventive actions against cells of Hamas and other Palestinian terrorist organizations.

Beyond that, Israel should start a worldwide communications campaign in favor of United Jerusalem. We should explain the Jewish historical and religious connection to the city, the Israeli excellent record of keeping free access to the holy places vs. the Arab abysmal record of protecting them. In the meantime, Israel should maintain a low profile and only moderately expand existing neighborhoods.



Prof. Hillel Frisch

Prof. Hillel Frisch: It must act to keep Jerusalem united not only for strategic and spiritual reasons. In fact, the spiritual is strategic in the long term since without the spirit any political entity withers.

To keep Jerusalem united, Israel must act more forcibly in eastern Jerusalem and abandon the Dayan legacy of non-interference in Arab political affairs along as they are not violent. Israel has to make sure that the Israeli flag is flown in every public institution, including schools; compel the schools to drop the Palestinian curriculum for the Israeli

one; and take disciplinary measures against school principals and teachers who promote anti-Israeli and anti-Jewish activities in defiance of the law.

The same applies to mosque preachers. These people have to know that the State of Israel has the right to monitor their behavior in public institutions and that they will meet legal sanctions should they flaunt them. We're losing eastern Jerusalem because officialdom is more frightened of the PA and Hamas than it is of Israel. This has to change. The State has to regain its control; in Arabic, *haibat al-sulta*.

Israel should also limit the activities of the foreign consulates in eastern Jerusalem or at least protest some of their activities if these involve mobilizing Arab residents to causes that harm us.

Israel should clearly build new neighborhoods in the city too, not only for its own sake, but to prod the PA to return to negotiations. In effect, not building new neighborhoods means that the PA is winning, especially given the massive highly-subsidized Palestinian building along a continuous north-south axis that is cutting off Maale Adumim and its satellites from Jerusalem. Israel should be building in E-1!

To assuage international concerns, Israel should then be more lenient in allowing Palestinian building in the central areas of Arab Jerusalem, especially in neighborhoods that have not been violent.

Lerman: We live in a world which does not even recognize Israeli sovereignty in western Jerusalem, where the EU is labeling eastern Jerusalem products, and where every construction project, even in neighborhoods that any sensible person knows would always

remain in Israel, gives rise to a political firestorm.

Therefore, the diplomatic challenge is threefold: We need to reunite the Jewish people (and particularly American Jewry) around Jerusalem as a rallying cry. In 1989 this was enough to bring about a 100:0 (!) vote in the Senate acknowledging united Jerusalem as Israel's eternal capital.

At the same time, it is important to impart the verities listed above – namely, that a push for partition would be bad for peace and bad for the real needs of the Palestinian residents themselves – in a systemic and persistent manner. Among other things, Israel should find ways to better engage with the local diplomatic community, who are now almost a captive audience for incessant Palestinian propaganda.

This strategy should be attuned to the political realities which flow from the Israel's own position, and the strong – almost obsessive – international commitment to the two-state solution. It would therefore be necessary, gradually and patiently, to prove that the unity of Jerusalem is not incompatible with future Palestinian statehood. This is a difficult, but not impossible task, which may require creative solutions on the ground.

Clearly, dramatic and demonstrative actions such as major new construction plans would be highly counter-productive in terms of the firm but patient strategy suggested here. They may even endanger the first cornerstone. We already have learned that whether we like it or not, American Jewry will not necessarily stand up to an angry Democratic President, and it is not in our interest to drive them into such corners unless we have to.

Singer: Israel should act in all ways consistent with the idea that Israel is here by right (without having to rely on Biblical authority); that Israel will stay and defend itself regardless of attacks and difficulties; that united Jerusalem is an inherent and essential part of Israel; and that no one has as good claims to Jerusalem as Israel does.

It is critical to demolish the claim that Israel stole Palestinian land (including Tel Aviv). The first part of Israel's discussion of almost anything should be the statement that there has never been any Palestinian land and therefore Israel never took any Palestinian land; although the Palestinians have claims that might justify giving them some land west of the Jordan even though it was never Palestinian land beforehand. Israel is justly on its territory because of its ancient historical presence; because the decision of the world to create a Jewish homeland in this area; and because Israel defeated its enemies in defensive wars to hold the territory.



Maj. Gen. (res.) Gershon Hacohen

Maj. Gen. (res.) Gershon Hacohen: The struggle for a united and "greater" Jerusalem (from Jericho to Jaffa) is the DNA that holds the key to the future of Israel. Israel needs to know why Jerusalem should be a priority: Because it is seeking the return to Zion in all

regions of the homeland! And if Israel does not insist on this, it will steadily withdraw inward, toward the coastal plain, and edge towards decline.

At the height of the War of Independence, in 1948, Ben-Gurion explained why he set the capture of Jerusalem as a primary objective in the war. Speaking before the Zionist General Council, he said, "I don't need to tell you what value Jerusalem has had in the history of the Jewish people and the land of Israel and world. ... If a land has a soul, then Jerusalem is the soul of the land of Israel, and the battle for Jerusalem is paramount, not just in a military sense. ... We are duty bound to stand by Jerusalem, and it deserves it. The pledge we took on the rivers of Babylon is binding now as it was binding then, otherwise we would no longer be able to call ourselves the people of Israel."

What should be done about the Arab neighborhoods in the no-man's-land on the other side of the security barrier? Act aggressively to reassert Israeli control, or formally cut them out of the city?

Lerman: The trans-barrier neighborhoods – long lost to policing and the provision of basic services, let alone urban planning – present a unique challenge. The absurdities abound, including the inability under the law to provide water to illegally built Palestinian housing. Only a major program of well-planned construction, and/or retroactive recognition (where possible) of much of what has already been done, can change the situation – backed by a much larger security presence.

At the end of the day, Israel's sovereignty in Jerusalem will not be diminished – and may perhaps be enhanced – if some of these places

would ultimately remain outside the unified city. But until such decisions are taken – and they must not be taken under the shadow of Palestinian knives – it would still be necessary both to reassert Israeli sovereignty and to invest in better living conditions for the residents there. At the same time, Israel must stem the tide of illegal entrants.

Singer: There definitely are ways to give Arab east Jerusalem partial control of the areas where they live without threatening security. Negotiations should be held with local Arab Jerusalemites – probably by neighborhood – not via the Palestinian Authority. There will probably be resistance by Arabs against "normalization." This can be overcome by providing incentives, neighborhood by neighborhood.

What about the Temple Mount? Is reinforcement of the status quo the right approach to regaining calm, or should Israel be articulating an aspiration/demand for Jewish prayer and other rights on Har HaBayit?

Inbar: Obviously, Jewish prayer on the Temple Mount is a sensitive issue, but Israel should uphold the right of the Jews to pray at their holiest place. An opportune time should be found to implement this right. There will be no peace as long as Jewish presence at the Temple Mount is viewed by Arabs as a provocation.

Singer: Israel will probably have to keep the status quo until things quiet down. And efforts to improve the status quo must be kept rigidly separated from Third Temple groups. In the meantime, Israel should resist the Waqf program to turn the whole Mount into a mosque, and stop Muslim destruction of ancient sites and artifacts on the Mount. Over time, perhaps there may be some chance of using the current overlap

BESA CENTER ASSOCIATES IN ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION

On Securing Jerusalem *(continued)*

of interests between Israel and Saudi Arabia to give the Saudis a useful role on the Mount, including allowing fair Jewish presence on Mount including individual prayer.

Teitelbaum: Eventually, the time may be ripe for discussing some kind of heavenly sovereignty over the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif, but this is a very long way off. In the meantime, for the Muslims, both the Palestinians and the Jordanians, the very control of the Haram is a religious imperative. Visits by Jews and others are possible, but only at the pleasure of the Muslims. There is thus very little room for compromise. The problem is further exacerbated by outlandish and deadly Palestinian incitement.

While on the face of it the demands for Jewish prayer on the Temple Mount may seem solely an issue of religious freedom, those Jews who support prayer on the Temple Mount are mostly of a religious stream that also wishes to supplant the Dome of the Rock with a Third Temple. This adds to Palestinian wariness of any change in the status quo.

Frisch: In the struggle between any state and a violent national movement, defensiveness, i.e., maintaining the status quo, is a losing proposition in most situations. It's our job to explain the strong relationship between the connection to Judaism's most important site – the Temple Mount – and Israel's collective survival. It's unfortunate that the Arabs are united over the Temple Mount and we aren't. We have to rectify this situation.

How will the current wave of terrorism and violence in the city affect Israeli public opinion for the long-term? Might it undermine the "consensus" on maintaining Jerusalem united?

Inbar: Generally, terrorism, particularly Palestinian terrorism, has limited value in attaining political goals.

Singer: Perhaps the Palestinian violence will make Israelis more determined to keep Jerusalem! We shouldn't panic, nor escalate the situation. Patience and perseverance is required. If it turns out that most of the trouble comes from areas beyond the security barrier, there might be political support for excluding those areas from Jerusalem. As I mentioned earlier, I don't regard that as "dividing Jerusalem."



Prof. Eytan Gilboa

Gilboa: Agreed. Based on historical events and trends, Palestinian violence usually reinforces Israeli determination to defy the demands and intimidations of the Palestinians. The public will remain united in seeking to protect the city's unity. However, there could be calls for the cutting of certain areas around Jerusalem, which aren't critical for the security and integrity of the Israeli capital.

Teitelbaum: The "consensus" about a united Jerusalem is a bit of a mirage, since most Israelis are unfamiliar with the situation on the ground. While they would support Israeli sovereignty over the Old City and certain Jewish neighborhoods built after 1967, it

is unlikely that they would support efforts to install Jews in heavily Arab neighborhoods.

During the first Intifada, the Palestinians let the Israelis know is no uncertain terms that they were no longer welcome in the West Bank and Gaza. Most Israelis internalized this and stopped frequenting these places, as they had often done since 1967. Eventually, the Israeli public supported some kind of withdrawal from the territories. If the current wave of terrorism continues, and particularly if it escalates to gunfire, there is the possibility that Israelis once again might feel they have been given notice, and support some kind of division of Jerusalem.

Frisch: This recent wave of violence indeed provide ammunition to the political Left, especially since most of the perpetrators have come from Jerusalem and Hebron, the two places where there are no good fences that make for good neighbors.

Lerman: It will be long years in the making before we know if our Palestinian neighbors have settled into a pattern of co-existence which would allow for imaginative solutions offering shared sovereignty in a united city, without degrading security and governance. It is precisely because of this, that the question of Jerusalem is best left to later stages of any negotiated agreement, whereupon such mutually beneficial arrangements can be discussed against the background of accumulated experience. Right now the psychological impact of the wave of terror – albeit limited in effect and probably already waning – is very much the wrong moment for any such decisions to be taken.

NEW PUBLICATION

Perfect Storm

The Implications of Middle East Chaos

by Maj. Gen. (res.) Yaakov Amidror



Maj. Gen. (res.) Yaakov Amidror, the Anne and Greg Rosshandler Senior Fellow at the BESA Center.

In this major monograph, Maj. Gen. (res.) Yaakov Amidror, the Anne and Greg Rosshandler Senior Fellow at the BESA Center, looks at the long-term implications of Middle East chaos, which he says are civilizational shifts of historical proportions.

Amidror is the immediate past national security advisor to Prime Minister Netanyahu. He previously served as chief of the research and analysis division of military intelligence in the IDF, and advisor to the Minister of Defense.

"We are witnessing a wide and deep struggle over the character and future of the Arab nation, and perhaps of Islam as a whole," Amidror writes.

The troubles go all the way back to the fall of the Ottoman Empire and to the revolution in Iran, the consequent rise of radical Islam, the attacks of 9/11 on the U.S., the conquest of Iraq as a response to these, and to the Arab Spring. "To this we must add the weakness manifested by the international system, especially the U.S.-led Western alliance; the total worthlessness of global organizations; and the ruinous activities of local forces unique to each state."

Amidror's conclusion is that anyone from the outside trying to influence these regional upheavals in a positive

direction will find the task very difficult. "There is no silver bullet," Amidror says, that will steer things in the right direction. "The problems are too significant. This necessitates a great deal of modesty in policy planning, and security caution too."

For Israel, he writes, the best strategy is to identify the greatest threats looming in its vicinity, and concentrate its efforts narrowly in dealing with these specific threats, and on them alone. Primarily, this means focusing on the threat from Iran, and maintaining Israel's military prowess. "A nuclear Iran is the greatest threat to Israel, period."

"If Israel's power is reduced or if it loses the determination required to use that power, then it will have no place in the Middle East; it will be destroyed. We live in a brutal world in which Israel's enemies use weapons of the 21st century, but fight and kill according to the rules of conduct of the 7th century," Amidror notes. "It is supremely important for Israel's blade to be sharp, and for Israel to be prepared to use it, and not only for its own sake. This is so even if the other democratic countries are not prepared to admit this publicly."

As for local threats, Amidror writes that "any agreement with the Palestinians

must be based on the understanding that no signatory and no guarantor of the agreement is likely to have the power to prevent Islamic radicalization among the Palestinians. In order to prepare for the possible scenario of a very radical government in Ramallah, in mortar range of the Knesset in Jerusalem, the security measures specified in any Israeli-Palestinian agreement will have to be extremely tough – unlike the weak security provisions of the Oslo agreements."

"The main problem for Israel is that what weighs on the Palestinians is not the conquest of 1967 but the 'occupation' of 1948. They do not accept the existence of the State of Israel even within the borders of the 1949 cease fire. It turns out that the slogan, 'territories for peace,' was an illusion. The fact that Jaffa, Tiberius and Safed are under Israeli control is more 'oppressive' to them than IDF roadblocks at the exits of Hebron and Nablus."

Amidror emphasizes that "the Palestinian issue is not the core of Middle East troubles. It is a marginal issue. Ameliorating the Palestinian-Israeli dispute will somewhat help Israel build alliances with other Arab countries, but it won't solve any of the major problems that beset the region."

In short, Amidror's recipe for security in the crumbling Middle East is patience, vigilance and steadfastness.



CONFERENCE

Assessing the Gaza Disengagement, Ten Years Later

In July, prominent politicians, generals, rabbis, writers and an audience of well over 300 people gathered at the Begin-Sadat Center for Strategic Studies for a ten-year retrospective on Israel's 2005 unilateral disengagement from Gaza.



Rabbi Yaakov Medan and Prof. A.B. Yehoshua.



Maj. Gen. (res.) Uzi Dayan.

The conference was co-sponsored by the Security Council for Israel, whose president, Maj. Gen. (res.) Uzi Dayan, delivered opening remarks. Dayan sharply critiqued the disengagement, noting that none of the strategic and diplomatic benefits promised by proponents of the Gaza withdrawal had come to fruition, "to say the least."

At the core of the conference was a debate between two Israeli intellectual giants on the meaning of "home." Rabbi Yaakov Medan, head of the Har Etzion Hesder yeshiva, and the novelist, Prof. A.B. Yehoshua, disagreed on the meaning of Jewish identity and

homeland. Also participating in this discussion was Mrs. Anita Tucker, a Gush Katif resident for over 30 years.

Adv. Dov Weissglass, former Director of Prime Minister Sharon's Bureau, and former Cabinet Secretary Israel Maimon defended the disengagement. According to Weissglass, Sharon was mugged by "reality," realizing that Israel could not retain the territories unless "it wishes to be like Sparta or North Korea." By displaying "generosity and initiative" to decide Israel's own borders, Sharon thought, Israel would stand in higher regard in the international community. Weissglass and Maimon dismissed charges that Sharon was motivated by the many criminal charges against him; and they rejected any causal connection between the Israeli withdrawal and the Hamas takeover of Gaza in 2007.

Maj. Gen. (res.) Gershon Hacohen, the military commander in charge of the disengagement who today is a scholar at the BESA Center, described how he gave the evacuation plan a "Zionist" hue, and sought to avoid bloodshed. At the same time, he said that he personally opposed the disengagement, and believed that no such withdrawal from the West Bank should ever be attempted.



Dov Weissglass.



Maj. Gen. (res.) Yaakov Amidror, Prof. Efraim Inbar, and Brig. Gen. (res.) Yossi Kuperwasser.

Dr. Anat Roth, a researcher and author on Israeli settlements and the disengagement from Gaza, detailed how the Israeli media gave overwhelming and almost exclusively favorable coverage to the withdrawal plan, while shutting out all other voices and opinions – thus delegitimizing the plan's opponents.

A security session focused on implications of the unilateral disengagement for Israel's diplomatic future. Brig. Gen. (res.) Yossi Kuperwasser, former director general of the Israeli Ministry of Strategic Affairs, described the many ways in which the disengagement had weakened Israel. Maj. Gen. (res.) Yaakov Amidror, the Rosshandler Fellow at the BESA Center, concurred, although noted that the decision was reached legally and legitimately.

Prof. Efraim Inbar noted that the result of the disengagement – Hamas takeover of Gaza – undermines the feasibility of the two-state solution and demonstrates that "the divided Palestinian society is incapable of establishing a state."

In a public opinion poll conducted by the BESA Center in advance of the conference, most Israelis (63%)



Maj. Gen. (res.) Gershon Hacohen.



maintained that they opposed the 2005 disengagement from Gaza, and over half (51%) said that Israel should resettle the territory.

Inbar notes that these figures do not match with the polling data in 2005, which showed close to 50% support for disengagement. "Looking back, the withdrawal has turned out to be such a big mistake that Israelis are loathe to admit that they once supported it," explains Inbar.

CONFERENCE

Securing Israel's Natural Gas Reserves



Dr. Uzi Landau, former Israeli Minister of Energy and Water with Maj. Gen. (res.) Yaakov Amidror of the BESA Center.

The unifying theme that emerged from the conference was the importance of natural gas as a strategic geopolitical tool, which can help Israel improve ties to its Middle Eastern neighbors. Protecting these resources against the possibility of attack is a serious concern, as is over-regulation and inconsistency in domestic tax and royalty policies.

Dr. Uzi Landau, former Israeli Minister of Energy and Water, provided an overview of the development of Israel's natural gas reserves, and suggested changes necessary for advancing Israel as a strategic player in the regional gas situation.

Landau explained that in 2003 Israel utilized no natural gas, whereas today 40% of Israel's electricity production is fueled by natural gas. According to Landau, the sabotage of the Egyptian gas pipeline in 2011 taught Israeli society what it meant to live again without gas, and the general fear of a similar situation, including electricity outages and rising electricity prices, is what pushed forth development of Israel's natural gas reserves. Israel's success in developing the Tamar gas field, discovered in 2009 and online by April 2013, is a tremendous achievement, he said.

Landau went on to blast government over-regulation of, and confused policymaking regarding, the gas industry, which has deterred investors,

In July, prominent academics, civil servants, and corporate and military leaders gathered at the Begin-Sadat Center for Strategic Studies for a discussion of the strategic and geopolitical aspects of Israel's newly-discovered natural gas deposits.

he said. Overcoming this and establishing a stable business environment should be a national priority, he said.

Yossi Abu, CEO of Delek Drilling, reviewed recent gas findings in the Mediterranean, focusing on the Tamar and Leviathan gas fields (which his company discovered and developed). The Tamar gas field has an estimated 281 billion cubic meters (bcm) of natural gas, while the Leviathan gas field, discovered in 2010, has over twice that with an estimated 621 bcm of gas.

He too spoke of the importance of stability in Israeli regulation of the natural gas sector. "My company has invested \$7 billion in developing the Leviathan gas field," Abu stressed, "and companies want to know rules will not be changed. That should be a basic certainty."



Yossi Abu, CEO of Delek Drilling.

With the Leviathan field expected to provide 60-70% of the fuel for Jordan's energy consumption, it has the potential to contribute to stabilization of Jordan, as well as furthering Jordanian-Israeli relations, he said.

This point was expanded upon by Maj. Gen. (res.) Yaakov Amidror of the BESA Center. Amidror explained that it is not easy for the Jordanian government to rely on Israeli gas, but that the benefits of Jordanian-Israeli cooperation are overwhelming. Amidror believes that Israel must consider gas a fundamental security issue. By balancing the economic and strategic elements of the sector, it can prove a very useful geopolitical tool, he said.

Former Commander of the Israeli Navy, Rear Admiral (res.) Eliezer Marom, explained the meaning of an exclusive economic zone (EEZ), waters in which a state has exclusive use of the resources which can be declared up to 200 nautical miles from a state's shores, and the difficulty of protecting an EEZ, compared to resources within a country's territorial waters. Marom mentioned that with sanctions against Iran soon to be lifted and Iranian hegemonic ambitions emboldened, threats against Israeli maritime assets could increase.

Providing additional geopolitical perspective was Prof. Efraim Inbar of the BESA Center. He focused on the large share (90%) of Israeli foreign trade going through the Eastern Mediterranean and Israel's relations



Rear Admiral (res.) Eliezer Marom, former Commander of the Israeli Navy.

with the surrounding nations. Syrian weapons being passed to Hezbollah, increased Iranian pressure and cash flow to nearby countries, and Turkey's pushback against Western influence – all pose serious threats to both Israeli strategic and economic interests, he said. Inbar advocated for the establishment of a stronger Israeli navy.

The possibility of cooperation between the governments of Israel and Cyprus, which are both in possession of considerable Mediterranean gas resources, was the topic of a talk by Dr. Theodoros Tsakiris, a member of the Geostrategic Council of the Republic of Cyprus. Cyprus is currently dealing with Turkey's claims to Cyprus' EEZs, and the recognizing of the Republic of Cyprus by Turkey would be a prerequisite to the building of any pipelines to Turkey across a Cypriot EEZ.

Ron Adam, Special Envoy on Energy for the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs, stressed the importance of Israel's connection to the international energy organizations such as IEA and IRENA for networking purposes, and the ability to connect Israeli resources with international partners.

Dr. Efraim Chalamish, an international economic law scholar, discussed the partnership issues between local and foreign gas companies. Ms. Gina Cohen, a consultant and lecturer on natural gas law and economy at the Technion Israel Institute of Technology, discussed Israeli export options.

NEW BOOK



Prof. Efraim Karsh

In this important new book (published by Bloomsbury), BESA Center senior research associate Prof. Efraim Karsh debunks the Edward Said-ist "Orientalist" notion that the agonies of the Middle East are traceable to the rough handling of the region by Western powers – first European colonialists, then American cold warriors.

Karsh propounds a radically different interpretation. He argues that the view of Moslems and Arabs as victims – a view that underlies US President Barack Obama's outreach to Iran – is misguided. Middle Eastern history has in fact been the culmination of long existing indigenous trends, passions and patterns of behavior.

"External influences, however potent, have played a secondary role," Karsh argues, "constituting neither the primary force behind the region's political development nor the main cause of its notorious volatility." During the Cold War, however self-servingly the rival superpowers may have treated the Middle East, they found themselves "time and again ...powerless to contain undesirable developments." And today, "the region is sprinting 'Back to the Future' [i.e., Islamism, salafism] and there is absolutely nothing the Western nations can do to reverse it."

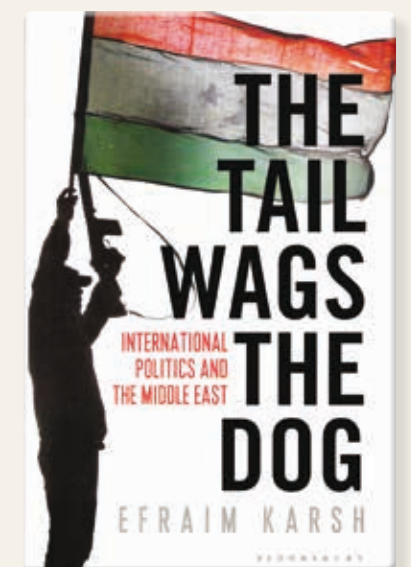
Karsh says that only when Middle Eastern people take responsibility for their own actions, and when

The Tail Wags the Dog International Politics and the Middle East

by Prof. Efraim Karsh

Western champions drop their condescending approach, that the region can at last look forward to a real "Arab Spring."

Prof. Karsh is the author of over 100 scholarly articles and fifteen books. He is also editor of the *Middle East Quarterly* and *Israel Affairs* academic journals. For 25 years, he was a professor of Middle East and Mediterranean Studies at King's College London. He has been a visiting professor at Harvard and Columbia universities, the Sorbonne, and the London School of Economics, and a research associate at the International Institute for Strategic Studies and the Wilson Center's Kennan Institute for Advanced Russian Studies. He now teaches at Bar-Ilan University.



NEW BOOK

Transforming Command

by Dr. Eitan Shamir



Dr. Eitan Shamir and his new book, with Prof. Efraim Inbar.



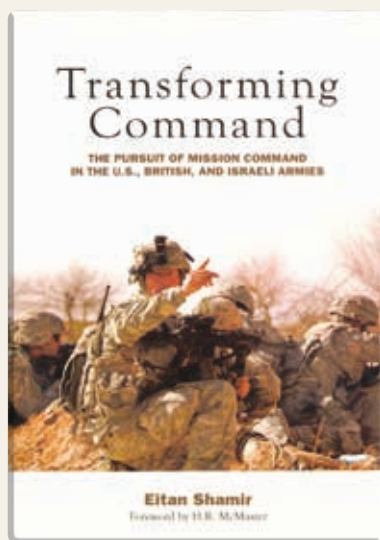
Maj. Gen. (res.) Gershon Hacohen, Brig. Gen. (res.) Moni Chorev, and Dr. Eitan Shamir.

In June, the BESA Center held a conference to mark publication of Dr. Eitan Shamir's book *Pikud Mesima* (Modan-Israel Ministry of Defense, 2015). This is an updated and revised Hebrew edition of Shamir's landmark *Transforming Command* (Stanford UP, 2011), which has been endorsed by General Martin Dempsey, Chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff.

The volume is required reading in many military academies including the US army, navy and marines, the UK military colleges, and in the IDF. Dr. Shamir has been invited to speak at the US Marines U., the Navy War College, Norway's Defense Academy, and the UK Ministry of Defense.

The book examines in depth the experiences of the armed forces of the US, Israeli, and British armies in implementing mission command. It reveals the key factors that have determined the success or failure of implementation-factors such as the Revolution in Military Affairs (RMA),

the spread of low-intensity conflicts and operations other than war, and differences in how military cultures interpret, articulate, and exercise the command function. The book offers perspectives on the development of military doctrine and the training and education of tomorrow's military leaders.



Speaking at the BESA Center conference, Shamir said that "On today's complex, fragmented and fast-moving battlefield, where combatants adapt constantly to exploit one-another's weaknesses, there is a demonstrable requirement

for military commanders to devolve a high level of autonomy of decision-making and action to leaders on the ground. An effective model for doing this has existed for some time in the form of mission command and has been utilized by the IDF and Western armies, but with mixed success."

Maj. Gen. (res.) Gershon Hacohen, a former corps commander and commander of the IDF military colleges (who recently joined the BESA Center) argued that the IDF has become too dependent on technological solutions, rather than developing traditional strategies to cope with new threats.

Hacohen: "Military doctrine is a function of culture; it is never universal but is rooted in time and place. For years the hallmark of the

IDF was the initiative and creativity of individual soldiers. Instead of the 'art of war,' today the IDF has become obsessed with the 'science of war' – statistics and numbers of targets hit – but this does not necessarily measure effectiveness.



NEW PUBLICATION

Is Hamas a Social Welfare Government or a War Machine?

Prof. Hillel Frisch says that the Hamas government in Gaza is another case study of the disastrous leadership which has plagued the Palestinian national movement since its inception



Prof. Hillel Frisch

In a study published in December (Middle East Security and Policy Studies no. 116) BESA Center senior research associate Prof. Hillel Frisch evaluates the veracity of the Hamas claim to concern for Palestinian welfare.

"Hamas prides itself on a reputation for dedication to the welfare of Palestinians," Frisch writes. "It retains this image despite its responsibility for many kidnappings, suicide bombings and missile attacks against Israel, bringing three rounds of military conflict upon the Palestinians in Gaza over the past seven years."

"But when you examine the extent to which the Hamas government has balanced the costs of war-making with the needs of the population it ostensibly serves, you reach the clear conclusion that Hamas has failed miserably at state-building and reconstruction – despite the international donor funds at its disposal. Hamas rule in Gaza is yet another case study of the disastrous leadership which has plagued the Palestinian national movement since its inception."

The detailed study opens with a review of the impact of terrorism on Gazans' access to the Israeli labor market, which was the source of the relative prosperity Gaza enjoyed between 1970 and the mid-1990s. It then proceeds to look at the structure of government created by Hamas.

A third section analyzes the degree of freedom the Hamas government allowed to key civil institutions, such as the Legislative Council (responsible for oversight of government activities) and civil society organizations, which typically demand government accountability. A fourth section focuses on government allocations to public welfare, compared to military and political allocations. The division of labor between the Hamas government and the Palestinian Authority is included within this analysis.

The paper then proceeds to assess the costs of war-making compared to the resources Hamas possessed, and examines the ways in which Hamas allocated these meager sources. This is followed by a section on how well the Hamas government coped with specific challenges facing Gaza such as electricity, fuel, potable water, and sewage management.

The study concludes by analyzing the formation of the Hamas-Fatah unity government, the failure of this body to develop into a properly functioning government, and the implications of this failure for Gaza's population.



CONFERENCE

German-Israeli Strategic Dialogue

The Aspen Institute | Germany



Ambassador Avi Primor, Prof. Joachim Krause, Brig. Gen. (ret.) Dr. Klaus Wittmann, and Dr. Michael Borchard.

In November, the Begin-Sadat Center for Strategic Studies and the Aspen Institute (Germany) convened a strategic dialogue in Israel. Discussions focused on defense and scientific cooperation, responses to terrorism, and perspectives on security challenges stemming from the Middle East.

During a public session, discussion focused on developments in Germany's defense and European policy, the Russian intervention in the Mideast, the Arab refugee crisis in Europe, the special relationship between Germany and Israel, anti-Semitism, and Israel-Palestinian matters including settlements.

Participating were Dr. Jürgen Nielsen-Sikora (U. of Siegen), Brig. Gen. (ret.) Dr. Klaus Wittmann (Aspen Institute and Potsdam U.), Col. (res.) Dr. Yair Sharan (TAM-C FIRST Group), Prof. Joachim Krause (U. of Kiel), Mr. Peter

Eitel and Dr. Hannes Adomeit (Aspen Institute), Mr. Florian Waetzel and Prof. Joachim Krause (U. of Kiel), Avi Primor (former Israeli Ambassador to Germany), Dr. Hannes Adomeit (German Institute for International Politics and Security, Berlin), Dr. Michael Borchard (Konrad Adenauer Stiftung), Dr. Sharon Pardo (Ben-Gurion U.)

BESA Center associates participating were Maj. Gen. (res.) Yaakov Amidror, Prof. Efraim Inbar, Ambassador Arye Mekel, Prof. Shmuel Sandler and Prof. Shlomo Shpiro.

The conference marked 60 years to the establishment of German-Israeli diplomatic relations; a period in which Germany became Israel's most important European partner.



Dr. Dima Adamsky, Col. (res.) Dr. Aby Har-Even, Dr. Eitan Shamir.



Dr. Shlomo Shpiro.

LECTURE

British Commander Hopes to Turn Back the Tide against Israel



Colonel Richard Kemp CBE.

Col. Richard Kemp:

Judeo-Christian principles of honesty, honor, loyalty, family values, patriotism and religious faith are being rapidly eroded, and this paves the way to an upsurge in anti-Jewish and anti-Israel perspectives.

Colonel Richard Kemp CBE was commander of the British Forces in Afghanistan. He first made global headlines in 2009 when he testified in defense of Israel before the UN Fact Finding Mission on the Gaza Conflict, and then the UN Human Rights Council.

Flatly contradicting the nasty Goldstone Report, Kemp confidently asserted that "based on my knowledge and experience as a military commander, the IDF did more during Operation Cast Lead to safeguard the rights of civilians in the combat zones than any other army in the history of warfare."

Kemp has been vilified ever since. "In social media, I have been the subject of sustained assaults by particularly virulent anti-Israel and anti-Semitic networks," he told a packed BESA Center audience in May. "In universities, I have been the subject of demonstrations that have sought to silence me. I have been accused of corruption and being in the pay of the Zionist entity. I have been deliberately denied business opportunities. I have been placed on a terrorist death list."

Kemp: "This is not because I speak out against the moral bankruptcy,

corruption, incitement to terrorism or oppression of the Palestinian Authority; or the murder, brutality and terrorist violence of Hamas, Hizballah or the Palestinian Islamic Jihad. I have spoken out at least as much against Al Qaida, the Taliban, the Iranian regime, the IRGC and many other sponsors of terror and terrorist groups without anything like this level of attempted intimidation."

"Rather it is for one reason, and that is because I fail to falsely condemn Israel in circumstances where to even be neutral on the subject is itself a crime in the eyes of so many. It is because I have gone further, and used my military experience and my objective view to explain and defend Israel's legitimate military actions."

Kemp visited Israel to receive an honorary doctorate from Bar-Ilan University and to lecture at the center. His contention is that over the past thirty years the morality and values of the West have been undermined beyond recognition; and that this inevitably leads to anti-Semitic and anti-Israel sentiments.

"This moral relativism is heightened by abhorrence for the traditional Judeo-Christian values of the West and

a desire to promote as superior the values of other cultures in a form of all-pervading post-Colonial guilt."

"The target is Western values themselves; and Israel has become a proxy for the targeted West. This is reinforced by a pervasive and increasing wave of anti-Semitism which intensifies the obsession with Israel; along with the desire to appease violent Islam."

In Kemp's view, the Western media is extraordinarily culpable in driving this deleterious shift in values. "Balanced, level-headed, impartial reporting in our media has been replaced by hypocrisy, duplicity, betrayal and sensationalism; the four cornerstones of violent radical Islam, as so often demonstrated on our TV screens by Hamas and the Islamic State."

His voice rising to a crescendo, Kemp concluded that "to fight for Israel on the international media stage is to fight for the values of democracy, freedom of speech and expression, and civilized social values everywhere. Upon Israel's survival depends the survival of Western civilization!"

CONFERENCE

Israeli-Saudi Relations: Best Kept Quiet



Prof. Joshua Teitelbaum and Dr. Jonathan Paris.

In September, BESA Center associate Prof. Joshua Teitelbaum and Dr. Jonathan Paris of the Chertoff Group in the UK led a discussion on Israel's relations with Saudi Arabia.



"Beyond facing a similar threat from nuclear threshold Iran, Israel and Saudi Arabia have been brought closer together by the Obama administration's strategic decision to draw down its involvement in the Middle East by seeking a strategic balance between Sunnis and Shiites," said Teitelbaum.

There is little respect left in the Obama administration for Saudi Arabia, he said. Obama sees the Saudis as responsible, if indirectly, for 9/11 and the rise of Islamic State. "While Iran might support the terrorist Hezbollah and Bashar Assad, Sunni extremists have profited from Saudi support. In that case, the US seems to reason, better to have the Sunnis and Shiites rein each other in by equalizing them. Riyadh and Jerusalem, however, view this as support for Iran, and at their expense."

Teitelbaum said that it is worth exploring how flexible the Saudis can be regarding the Arab Peace Initiative (API). "The API contains some aspects that Israel likes," he said, adding that Israel is trying to figure out "how much it is a take it or leave it deal."

An improvement of relations with Saudi Arabia, which controls the Islamic holy sanctuaries, said Teitelbaum, would also work to improve Israel's relations with the larger Muslim world. He noted that there have been meetings between Israeli Ambassador Dore Gold, a senior adviser to Netanyahu who was this year appointed director general of Israel's foreign ministry, and retired Saudi general Anwar Eshki, an informal effort to see where the two countries' interests coincide, especially on Iran.

For these efforts to succeed, such contacts should be kept away from the media, he said; a view that was echoed by Dr. Paris.

In his talk, Paris elaborated on the succession process in Saudi Arabia following the death of King Abdullah and the rise to power of King Salman in January 2015. Salman appears intent on advancing the interests of his immediate family at the expense of other Saudi princes. He also has taken the initiative in Yemen and engaged in an adventurous policy to defeat the Houthi rebellion, the outcome of which is far from certain, Paris said.

CONFERENCE

Australia-Israel Strategic Dialogue



Australia-Israel dialogue participants.

In October, the BESA Center held a conference and dialogue with colleagues from the political, military and academic sectors in Australia, focusing on the strategic outlook in the Indo-Pacific and Middle East, nuclear proliferation, homeland security, asymmetric threats (including terrorism and cyber warfare), defense industry cooperation, bilateral trade, and more.

The dialogue was co-sponsored by the Australian Strategic Policy Institute (ASPI), and supported by the Australia/Israel & Jewish Affairs Council, Pratt Foundation, and the Peretz and Sheindel Sherman Strategic Dialogues Program at the BESA Center. The Australian Ambassador to Israel Dave Sharma participated throughout and hosted the participants for dinner.

Among the speakers and participants were Stephen Loosley AM (chairman), Dr. Anthony Bergin (deputy director), and David Lang (editor) of ASPI, Australian members of parliament Gai Brodtmann and the Hon. Mark Dreyfus QC, Senator Linda Reynolds CSC, Zeke Solomon AM of Allens Lawyers, Allan Gyngell AO of Australian National University, Maj. Gen. (ret.) Jim Molan AO DSC and Maj. Gen. Gus McLachlan of the Australian Army,

Dr. Colin Rubenstein (executive director) and Ahron Shapiro (policy analyst) of the Australia/Israel & Jewish Affairs Council, and others.

On the Israeli side, participants included Admiral (res.) Eliezer Marom, former Israel navy commander, Amb. Jacob Rosen, Nevo Barchad and Raphael Morav of the Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Itzik Rabinovitz, vice president of Elbit Systems of Australia, and Begin-Sadat Center for Strategic Studies associates Maj. Gen. (res.) Yaakov Amidror, Brig. Gen. (res.) Moni Chorev, Prof. Hillel Frisch, Maj. Gen. (res.) Gershon Hacohen, Col. (res.) Aby Har-Even, Prof. Efraim Inbar, Col. (res.) Dr. Eran Lerman, Mr. Uzi Rubin, Dr. Jonathan Rynhold, Prof. Shmuel Sandler, Prof. Shlomo Shpiro, and Dr. Max Singer.



Maj. Gen. (ret.) Jim Molan AO DSC of the Australian Army.

The Arab-Israel Conflict towards a Post-Obama Era



Book author Dr. Jonathan Rynhold of the BESA Center.

The conference looked at the domestic foundations of the US-Israel relationship, US foreign policy in the Middle East, and US-Israel relations into the future – towards a post-Obama era. A great deal of the discussion centered on the growing partisanship in US politics and in discussion of Israel – an issue that Dr. Rynhold studies closely in his new book.

In fact, Rynhold's book provides the most extensive account of how Americans have viewed Israel and the Arab-Israeli conflict since the end of the Cold War. On the one hand, American sympathy for Israel is extremely widespread and deeply rooted. Indeed, sympathy for Israel has surged to new heights in the 21st century in stark contrast to opinion in Europe. This is primarily in response to 9/11 and it has reinforced the underlying commitment to Israeli security.

On the other hand, Americans are increasingly divided about how to deal with the Arab-Israeli conflict and this division increasingly aligns with the major political, ideological and religious divides in America.

In his conference presentation, Rynhold focused on the differences between Republicans and Democrats. While

In May, the BESA Center held an international conference to mark publication of center associate Dr. Jonathan Rynhold's book *The Arab-Israel Conflict in American Political Culture* (Cambridge U. Press, 2015). The conference was cosponsored by the Argov Center for the Study of Israel and the Jewish People, headed by Dr. Rynhold.

sympathy for Israel over the Palestinians has grown among supporters of both parties, it has grown far more among Republicans. Moreover, a majority of Republicans believe that the Palestinians are mainly to blame for the conflict, that Israel's use of force against Hamas and Hezbollah is justified and that the US should side with Israel. They are divided about settlements.

In contrast, a majority of Democrats support Palestinian statehood and oppose settlements. A majority prefers that the US take an even-handed approach to the conflict, and they have been equivocal regarding Israel's use of force, and divided over whether the US should put more pressure on Israel or the Palestinians.

With the "millennial" generation increasingly liberal, how can Israel deal with this situation? "Bipartisanship remains critical to maintain the special relationship," Rynhold said. "In order to protect support among Democrats,

Israel needs to take care to protect its image as a democracy, while demonstrating a credible commitment to a two-state solution. That does not mean that Israel has to give in to all Palestinian demands and dismantle all settlements tomorrow. After all, the US has many other issues to deal with and there remain very strong concerns about the other side's commitment to peaceful coexistence. Nonetheless, expansion of settlements is viewed as challenging Israel's commitment to maintaining the possibility of a two-state solution, and is therefore to be avoided."

Mr. Elliott Abrams, former US Deputy National Security Advisor in the George W. Bush administration, agreed with Rynhold that it was important for Israel and for US-Israel relations to maintain some sort of ongoing peace diplomacy with the Palestinians. "Israel must always be seen as making efforts for peace, even if the chances of such are slim," he argued.



Ambassador Sallai Meridor, David M. Weinberg of the BESA Center, and Elliott Abrams.

Ambassador Sallai Meridor, former Israeli Ambassador to the US, added that by building in the settlements Israel was undermining its reputation for honesty. "While in the past settlements were an asset for Israel – some to be fixed assets, others to be negotiable assets – today settlement construction is



Prof. Efraim Inbar, Prof. Uzi Arad, and Maj. Gen. (res.) Yaakov Amidror.

increasingly seen as a liability." Meridor went on to express deep concern for the breakdown of "shared values" in American politics, and explained how this made it difficult for Israel to base its relationship with the US on shared values.

Prof. Walter Russell Mead of Bard College also related to the polarization of American politics, but stressed that the troubles in US-Israel relations run deeper. "They stem from a US desire to disengage globally. Obama is more a symptom than a cause of this," he argued. The cold, hard realism about the world that was central to Jacksonian thinking, has ebbed, he said, and American dependence on Mideast oil is at an all-time low. Mead stressed that Israel needs to find new ways to work with American liberals, and separately, with conservatives. He raised the

intriguing possibility of using Israel's improving ties with sub-

Saharan Africa as a way of connecting with the Afro-American community.

The conference was capped by a detailed and revealing presentation by Mr. David Makovsky of Washington Institute of Near East Policy, who was part of US Secretary of State John Kerry's negotiating team for the failed Israeli-Palestinian talks. Makovsky argued that "history will yet record Kerry as Israel's best friend. It will show how closely he worked with Netanyahu to Israel's benefit."

Makovsky said that there was far more progress made in the talks than is known to the public, especially with regards to future borders and refugees. Israel, he said, made significant concessions on the former issue, and the Palestinians on the later. He admitted that no significant progress

was made on the issues of Jerusalem, security and mutual recognition.

Makovsky bemoaned the fact that the negotiations were conducted in a "hermetically sealed negotiation environment," with no "synchronized political messaging to the Israeli and Palestinian publics," and thus no way to prepare these publics for the compromises necessary for peace.

Makovsky admitted that the Palestinian unilateral appeal to the International Criminal Court and other UN institutions blew the talks apart, and that Israeli construction in the settlements during the talks was mostly limited to lands that Mahmoud Abbas had already agreed (in his talks with Prime Minister Olmert) to forgo. "Nevertheless, the atmospherics of the settlement issue were unhelpful," he said.

Makovsky warned of "overshooting the parties' red lines" by a US-backed UN resolution that might seek to set out definitive parameters for the two-state solution. Instead, he argued for a return to an incremental approach where strategic convergences and interests can be leveraged towards a more stable reality.

Also speaking at the conference were former Israeli ambassador to the US Danny Ayalon, Dr. Amnon Cavari of the Interdisciplinary Center Herzliya, Avinoam Bar-Yosef of the Jewish People Policy Institute, Dr. Faydra Shapiro of the Jezreel Valley College, and BESA Center associates Maj. Gen. (res.) Yaacov Amidror, Prof. Eytan Gilboa, Prof. Efraim Inbar and Prof. Shmuel Sandler.



Prof. Walter Russell Mead.



Mr. David Makovsky.



Ambassador Danny Ayalon.

Col. (res.) Dr. Eran Lerman Joins the BESA Center



Col. (res.) Dr. Eran Lerman.

Col. (res.) Dr. Eran Lerman has joined the Begin-Sadat Center for Strategic Studies as a senior research associate. He has served for the past six years as deputy for foreign policy and international affairs at the National Security Council in the Israeli Prime Minister's Office. For 20 years prior to that, he held senior posts in IDF Military Intelligence, and also was Israel director of the American Jewish Committee. His Ph.D. is from the London School of Economics, under the guidance of Prof. Elie Kedourie.

In a series of hard-hitting articles penned for the BESA Center this fall, Dr. Lerman has focused on Palestinian rejectionism and extremism. He demonstrates that Palestinian wallowing in self-pity and rituals of bashing Israel, along with blatant lie-telling, make peace a distant reality.

"My purpose is not to demonize the Palestinians, but to treat them, for a change, as adults capable of coping with a culture of responsibility," Lerman says.

Lerman deconstructs the speech delivered by Palestinian Authority leader Mahmoud Abbas at the UN General Assembly in October, and a "media guidance" document issued by top PLO negotiator Saeb Erekat in November.

Both documents purvey a false Palestinian narrative of victimhood, contain utter lies about Israel, and reject any compromise on key matters in dispute.

Dr. Lerman:
False Palestinian narratives of victimhood and blatant lie-telling reveal just how far the Palestinian leadership is from accepting the premises necessary for true peace with Israel.

In the Abbas and Erekat telling of history, Palestinians deserve to be backed by coercive global intervention to impose on Israel "solutions that will implement Palestinian rights." There is no room in these narratives for the long litany of Palestinian past mistakes, misjudgments, and missed opportunities, nor for negotiation with Israel.

What needs to be done, say Lerman, particularly in disputation or in dialogue with those who are sympathetic to the Palestinian cause, is to make the point that endorsement of the false Palestinian narrative harms the Palestinians' own future.

"By tagging the Zionist project as 'colonialist' in nature (i.e., transient and perishable), those who do so help consign the Palestinian people, whom they purport to help, to an ideological, political and diplomatic cul-de-sac."

"Saeb Erekat's record of lies and dissimulations is legion, and he seems to be getting worse as he ages," adds Lerman. "He has been a central factor in the Palestinian Authority's abandonment of peace talks with Israel and its move to confrontation with Israel in international forums. His propaganda warps the truth and undermines peace efforts. History will yet record his abysmal diplomatic role in the many mistakes of the Palestinian national movement."

In advance of the fateful and fruitless meeting in the White House between

Mahmoud Abbas and President Obama in March 2014, Erekat authored a critical document, entitled "Study Number 15," which set the stage for the failure of the meeting in Washington.

Rejecting the "Kerry Framework" and any prospect of compromise with Israel's minimal expectations on security and mutual recognition, Erekat's document advocated the hostile course of action ultimately chosen by Abbas: A spate of unilateral accessions to international organizations and a bid for reconciliation with Hamas. "The results of those dreadful choices are in, and they did not serve the Palestinian people well," Lerman writes.

Erekat's "Key Points to Remember when Reporting on Occupied Palestine" (a document distributed in November to foreign media based in Israel) is filled with bravado, distortion and mendacities. The document rants about "Israel's occupation, colonization, Apartheid and culture of impunity," while making wholly untrue statements about history, about international law, and about Jerusalem and the Temple Mount.

Dr. Lerman also has written recently also on Russian ambitions, and Israeli opportunities, in the partition of Syria. He is now working on a project at the BESA Center studying strategic trends in the Mediterranean. He is also teaching at Shalem College.

Maj. Gen. (res.) Gershon Hachohen Joins the BESA Center



Maj. Gen. (res.) Gershon Hachohen.

Maj. Gen. (res.) Gershon Hachohen has joined the Begin-Sadat Center for Strategic Studies as a senior research associate. He served in the IDF for 42 years, commanding troops in battle on the Egyptian and Syrian fronts. When he retired, he was the last serving IDF officer to have fought in the Yom Kippur War. He was the last active IDF commander to have fought against Syrian troops on Syrian soil; and was the only active IDF commander to have battled the Egyptians.

Hachohen served as commander of the IDF Military Colleges and commander of the Northern Corps. For the past decade, he has been in charge of designing the IDF's major war games exercises. He also commanded over Israel's disengagement from Gaza. Last year he published *What's National in National Security* (Hebrew: Ministry of Defense Publishing House), which is a discourse on values and vision in the crafting of national security doctrine.

In two incisive recent papers for the BESA Center, Hachohen has critiqued the security approach of cabinet and military leaders to the recent Palestinian wave of terrorism. Their approach, he says, is primarily defensive, and thus defective.

Hachohen reminds us that David Ben-Gurion devised a security doctrine that sought to transfer the battlefield into enemy territory. In part, this was because Israel's narrow borders make defensive maneuvering difficult. But

General Hachohen:
Israel must reacquire sufficient ideological determination to persevere, progress, repulse, and overwhelm its adversaries.

Ben-Gurion favored this approach primarily because he understood that to win a war, even a defensive war, Israel had to seize the initiative. In other words: Israel must be proactive, rather than, reactive.

"Restoring calm" in Jerusalem and the West Bank (through anti-terrorist operations, fences, roadblocks etc.), Hachohen says, is akin to putting a derailed train back on track – no more. It is a technical solution, not a goal-oriented chess move that drives a new reality. The Zionist movement always sought to, and today too should seek to, reshape Israel's strategic reality according to its preferences.

Hachohen: "Those who view Israel as a stepping stone for redemption and as the Jewish national spiritual homeland will act differently in responding to Palestinian violence than those who view Israel merely as a safe haven state. If the former, the government should do more than just approve security operations against Palestinian terrorists. It should approve renewed building in Jerusalem and in Judea and Samaria."

He sees settlements as forward outposts of Zionism, in addition to their being critical to Israel's military deployment in the territories. "Where there is a farmer on his land," he says, "the army has the strength to rule."

Unlike so many of his left-leaning former military colleagues, Hachohen is utterly opposed to the establishment of a Palestinian state in the West Bank, and

equally opposed to any further unilateral withdrawals too.

Underlying Hachohen's weltanschauung is the notion of ongoing struggle, and deep faith in the righteousness of the Jewish return to Zion.

This first part of this thought-process is somewhat Bolshevik in approach: Israel is engaged in a permanent revolution. Consequently, Hachohen says, Zionism must constantly seek to re-shape and shake-up the strategic environment, never giving up on its ideals despite strategic and tactical difficulties. Even if Israeli leaders can't see where the struggle might lead, they are nevertheless mandated to push forward, says Hachohen.

You shuffle the cards and create facts on the ground. And then, drawing on passionate commitment that comes from true belief in your cause – religious-nationalist faith in the justice of Zionism – have confidence that the Heavens will help stickhandle the helm of state.

"Our enemies such as ISIS and Iran are resolutely motivated by revolutionary ideologies," says Hachohen. "In this situation, Israel can't get by with leaders bereft of ideological zeal; stuck in a holding pattern or in a management mindset. Israel must reacquire sufficient ideological determination to persevere, progress, repulse, and overwhelm its adversaries."

At the BESA Center, General Hachohen is working on a project on the role of the IDF military presence in the West Bank.

Jordanian Security and Prosperity: An Essential Aspect of Israeli Policy

By Maj. Gen. (res.) Yaakov Amidror and Col. (res.) Dr. Eran Lerman



Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu with Jordanian King Abdullah.
(Credit: Moshe Milner, GPO)

An important common thread runs, if sometimes invisibly, through a number of apparently unrelated policy decisions and actions made by Israel in recent years. All have to do with Israel's strategic interest in, and long-standing commitment to, the safety, security, stability and prosperity of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.

Among the decisions and actions that fall under this rubric are the understandings reached as to the maintenance of the status quo in the Temple Mount/ Haram al-Sharif compound; strategic advocacy on regional affairs with friends in Washington (particularly on Capitol Hill) and elsewhere; the stance taken by Israel towards the challenge posed by the so-called "Islamic State"; actions taken to prevent Iran and Hizbullah, directly or by proxy, from gaining a steady hold in the Golan, particularly in its southern parts; and the construction of a physical barrier along segments of Israel's border with Jordan.

It also includes economic policy matters such as the Netanyahu government's often bitter political struggle (against a rising tide of populist resistance) to ensure the ability to export gas from Israel's offshore fields; maritime trade arrangements with Turkey and new provisions for traffic at border crossings, as well as Israel's over-flight policy; ongoing policy on water allocation to Jordan, well beyond the requirements of the Israel-Jordan peace treaty; and a move to implement the Red-Dead (Red Sea to Dead Sea) water carrier plan, including a planned large desalinization plant in Aqaba (which would facilitate mutual water supplies).

The stability and prosperity of Jordan has been a central element of Israeli national security policy for three generations of Israeli leaders – despite the wars of 1948 and 1967, and despite other times of tension.

In 1958, David Ben-Gurion facilitated steps taken by the West to help the Kingdom resist the pressures of Nasserist

radicals. In 1970, Golda Meir – in close coordination with the US – was willing to risk war in order to compel Soviet-backed Syrian forces to reverse their invasion of Jordan. (This move was successful).

Similarly, Yitzhak Shamir reached understandings with King Hussein during the Desert Storm crisis of 1990-1991, despite Jordan's ambivalent position towards Iraq at the time. The peace treaty of 1994, under Yitzhak Rabin's leadership, brought into broad daylight what already had been an enduring relationship.

Today, Israeli policy makers are better positioned than ever to translate this pillar of national policy into practical and positive measures, as listed above.

Despite visible signs of Jordan-Israel tensions during the troubled summer of 2015, new and concrete understandings between the two countries recently have been reached at the highest political level (with the US Secretary of State in the loop). This includes an understanding to uphold the status quo on the Temple Mount/ Haram al-Sharif Compound and to curb and reduce the impact of provocateurs. Despite efforts by Palestinian Authority elements to subvert these arrangements, Israeli-Jordanian cooperation has led to a reduction of tensions surrounding the compound, even if Palestinian violence (and PA incitement) has yet to abate.

This should come as no surprise. A persistent and profound recognition of mutual interests (and mutual enemies) has led both countries – regardless of who has been in power in Israel at any given time

– to seek strategic understandings and remove causes of tension.

Moreover, this has been translated over the years into a systemic commitment by Israel – and by Israel's friends, in Washington (particularly in Congress) and in other Western capitals – to advocate on behalf of Jordan's military capacity, social stability and economic prosperity.

While the Israel-Jordan QIZ (Qualified Industrial Zones) have become mostly irrelevant since Jordan concluded her own free trade arrangement with the US, Israeli assistance to Jordan in other forms – above all, helping Jordan cope in recent years with the immense influx of Syrian refugees – remains crucial, and recent allocations in the US budget reflect this understanding.

Significant segments of Israeli society are aware of, and engaged in meeting, this challenge. Several Israeli NGOs as well as youth movements are playing a role – never overt, but still symbolically significant – in providing elementary support for Syrian refugees in Jordan.

The remarkable achievements of Jordan, despite severe limitations, in tending for the refugees deserves global support, and Israel's own response serves to emphasize this point. (Jordan is handling its more-than-one-million Syrian refugees far better than European countries are handling their much smaller refugee influx!)

Amidst all this, Jordan has been able to play a major role, both as a participant and as a host country, in coalition efforts against the so-called "Islamic State" (IS). The horrifying execution of the captured Jordanian pilot, Mu'az al-Qasabab – one of the most graphic demonstrations of IS disdain for the common values of humanity – did not deter Jordan's king or people.

Israel, for obvious reasons, plays no direct role in these ongoing efforts. Yet it is safe to say that the benefits of cooperation under the Israel-Jordan peace treaty make it possible for Jordan to make this vital contribution to the global effort against IS.

However, the "Caliphate" of the man who calls himself Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi is not the only common enemy. Iran's ambitions

for revolutionary (and Shi'a) hegemony encompass a directive by Supreme Leader Ali Khamene'i to turn the West Bank into "the next Gaza", i.e., a terror camp, in active pursuit of Israel's destruction.

For this to happen, it is necessary first to infiltrate Jordan and turn her territory into "the new Sinai", an open conduit (as has been the case until recent Egyptian actions) for the supply of arms, explosives and munitions. It is thus a mutual interest to do all that can be done to ensure that Iran and her proxies gain no stable foothold on the Syrian side of the Golan.

High policy and security cooperation need to be complemented by closer Israel-Jordan ties in other fields. Over the last decade in particular, the benefits of the peace treaty (the "Peace Dividend") have become more visible. The growing needs of Jordanian society (and the swelling wave of refugees) require better infrastructure, especially energy and water supply.

Water already is supplied to Jordan by Israel well beyond the amounts stipulated by the Arava Valley Peace Treaty. Once the February 2015 "Red-Dead" plan is fully implemented, nearly 100 million cubic meters (mcm) of water will be provided from Israeli sources in the north – which is double the present amount, and a significant part of Jordanian consumption. Half of this will be supplied in return for water to Israel's Eilat area which will come from a planned 65 to 80 mcm desalinization plant in Aqaba.

By now, gas supply is also within reach, with a small Israeli supply line already being completed to the Jordanian Dead Sea Works; to be followed by a major line for general consumption. Part of the fierce internal debate in Israel over the "outline" for use of Israel's offshore gas fields involved the strongly-held position of the government in favor of exporting gas to neighboring countries and peace partners, with Jordan at the top of the list.

There are additional arrangements under discussion to enhance stability and prosperity in Jordan. The conflict in Syria has made overland traffic from Jordan through Syria to Turkey and Europe all but

impossible. Jordan's trade and economic growth has suffered tremendously. So Israel is investing in a large-scale trade route from Turkey to Jordan (and points beyond) through the Israeli port of Haifa.

It is against this general background of cooperation and commitment that the decision by Israel to build (in a modular manner) a fence, along segments of the border with Jordan, should be read and interpreted. Israel is not turning its back on its neighbor, nor is this an indication that Jordan is a danger of collapse. Rather, it is another tool designed to enhance mutual security.

By severely reducing the temptation to use Jordanian territory as a route of infiltration – now that the direct route from Sinai has been all but hermetically closed – this new barrier will actually help Jordan cope even more effectively with African migrant workers, drug traffickers, and others who abuse the present conditions. Israel's experience along its relatively new barrier with Egypt indicates that cooperation actually has been enhanced with the Egyptians, rather than eroded, since the barrier construction.

Overall, it is safe to say that Israeli-Jordanian relations, despite some points of friction and the pressures of "anti-normalization" groups, will continue to thrive, and the mutual interests will continue to be translated into practical aspects of cooperation. Hopefully, over time – and certainly, if and when the Palestinian position will once again make peace negotiations possible – this strategic building block can find its proper place in a broader regional security architecture.

Maj. Gen. (res.) Yaakov Amidror is the Anne and Greg Rosshandler Senior Fellow at the BESA Center, and former National Security Advisor to the Prime Minister. He is also a fellow at JINSA's Gemunder Center for Defense and Strategy. Col. (res.) Dr. Eran Lerman is a senior research associate at the BESA Center, and former deputy for foreign policy and international affairs at the National Security Council.

Israel-Greece Relations

Ambassador Arye Mekel

Policy Memorandum no. 9 | Hebrew | September 2015



"Deterrence Campaigns": Lessons from IDF Operations in Gaza

Brig. Gen. (res.) Moni Chorev

Middle East Security and Policy Studies no. 115 | Hebrew | October 2015



PERSPECTIVES PAPERS

No. 323

**Jordanian Security and Prosperity:
An Essential Aspect of Israeli Policy**

December 2015 | **Maj. Gen. (res.)
Yaakov Amidror and Col. (res.)
Dr. Eran Lerman**

No. 322

Will ISIS pose a WMD Threat?

December 2015 | **Dr. Dany Shoham**

No. 321

**Israel's Emerging Relations in the
Eastern Mediterranean**

December 2015 | **Col. (res.) Dr. Eran
Lerman**

No. 320

**Cool Heads Needed in the Fight
against Palestinian Terrorism**

November 2015 | **Maj. Gen. (res.)
Yaakov Amidror**

No. 319

**The Lies of Saeb Erekat: How
Palestinian Propaganda Warps the
Truth and Undermines Peace Efforts**

November 2015 | **Col. (res.) Dr. Eran
Lerman**

No. 318

**Setting the Record Straight:
Hajj Amin and the Nazis**

November 2015 | **Col. (res.) Dr. Eran
Lerman**

No. 317

**Syria's Unraveling Gives Way to
New Regional Order**

November 2015 | **Maj. Gen. (res.)
Yaakov Amidror**

No. 316

Is Jerusalem Divided?

October 2015 | **Maj. Gen. (res.)
Gershon Hacohen**

No. 315

**Russian Ambitions, and Israeli
Opportunities, in the Partition of
Syria**

October 2015 | **Col. (res.) Dr. Eran
Lerman**

No. 314

This is Not the Third Intifada

October 2015 | **Maj. Gen. (res.) Yaakov
Amidror**

No. 313

**Why the Status Quo on the Temple
Mount Needs to Change**

October 2015 | **Prof. Hillel Frisch**

No. 312

**The Locker Committee:
A Preordained Failure**

October 2015 | **Dr. Yaacov Lifshitz**

No. 311

**Myths, Facts, and Wishful Thinking in
Responding to Palestinian Violence**

October 2015 | **Maj. Gen. (res.) Yaakov
Amidror**

No. 310

**Proactive Redemption in Responding
to Palestinian Violence**

October 2015 | **Maj. Gen. (res.)
Gershon Hacohen**

No. 309

**The Palestinian Victimhood Narrative
as an Obstacle to Peace**

October 2015 | **Col. (res.) Dr. Eran
Lerman**

No. 308

The Russian-Iranian Gambit in Syria

October 2015 | **Maj. Gen. (res.) Yaakov
Amidror**

No. 307

**Israeli Strategic Challenges and
Opportunities in the New Year**

September 2015 | **Maj. Gen. (res.)
Yaakov Amidror**

No. 306

How Dangerous is ISIS to Israel?

September 2015 | **Prof. Efraim Inbar**

No. 305

**Syria's Chemical Weapon
Obfuscations**

August 2015 | **Lt. Col. (res.) Dr. Dany
Shoham**

No. 304

Improving Ties between India and Israel

August 2015 | **Prof. Efraim Inbar**

No. 303

**The Vienna Accord Only Postpones
Confrontation with Iran**

August 2015 | **Maj. Gen. (res.)
Yaakov Amidror**

No. 302

What Israel Can Do Now

July 2015 | **Dr. Max Singer**

No. 301

**Six Strikes against the Nuclear Deal
with Iran**

July 2015 | **Prof. Efraim Inbar**

No. 300

**The Unrealistic European Peace
Offensive**

June 2015 | **Prof. Efraim Inbar**

No. 299

Converging Enemy Threats to Israel

May 2015 | **Dr. Louis René Beres**

The BESA Center

The Begin-Sadat Center for Strategic Studies at Bar-Ilan University seeks to contribute to the advancement of Middle East peace and security by conducting policy-relevant research on strategic subjects, particularly as they relate to the national security and foreign policy of Israel. Founded by Thomas O. Hecht, a Canadian Jewish community leader, the Center is a non-partisan and independent institute dedicated to the memory of the late Israeli prime minister Menachem Begin and the late Egyptian president Anwar Sadat.

International Advisory Board

Thomas O. Hecht Ph.D., Founder and Chairman, Saul Koschitzky, Vice Chairman, Prof. Moshe Arens, Ms. Marion Hecht, Mr. Robert Hecht, Prof. Riva Heft-Hecht, Hon. Shlomo Hillel, Mr. Joel Koschitzky, Amb. Yitzhak Levanon, Sen. Joseph I. Lieberman, Mr. Robert K. Lifton, Rt. Hon. Brian Mulroney, Mr. Seymour D. Reich, Mr. Greg Rosshandler, Amb. Zalman Shoval, Amb. Norman Spector, Mr. Muzi Wertheim.

International Academic Advisory Board

Prof. Desmond Ball, Australian National University, Prof. Ian Beckett, University of Northampton, Prof. Eliot Cohen, SAIS, Johns Hopkins University, Prof. Irwin Cotler, McGill University, Prof. Steven R. David, Johns Hopkins University, Prof. Yehezkel Dror, Hebrew University, Prof. Lawrence Freedman, King's College London, Prof. Patrick James, University of Southern California, Prof. Robert J. Lieber, Georgetown University

Executive Council

Prof. Efraim Karsh (Chairman), Prof. Yossi Deutsch, Prof. Miriam Faust, Prof. Eytan Gilboa, Dr. Thomas O. Hecht, Prof. Daniel Hershkowitz, Prof. Efraim Inbar, Prof. Uri Nir, Prof. Shmuel Sandler, Prof. Shlomo Shpiro, Prof. Avi Weiss.

Center Director

Prof. Efraim Inbar

Director of Public Affairs and Bulletin Editor

David M. Weinberg

Program Coordinator

Hava Waxman Koen

Production Editor (Hebrew)

Alona Briner Rozenman

Administration

Ortal Nahum

BAR-ILAN UNIVERSITY
Ramat Gan 52900 Israel
TEL. 972-3-531-8959
FAX 972-3-535-9195
besa.center@mail.biu.ac.il

North American address:
5485 Pare St., Montreal
Quebec Canada H4P 1P7
TEL: 514-735-1155
FAX: 514-735-3361

www.besacenter.org