

BS"D

June 20, 2008

Dear Rabbi Elon, Shalom U Bracha,

When discussing the construction of a peace plan, it helps to have theorists who possess awe of the God of the Jews and they try to serve Him by Talmudic principles. My rabbi and mentor, Rav Aharon Soloveichik, spoke often about Israel and what was wrong with the Madrid talks and the Oslo accords. Now that I teach history and political science at a collegiate level, I am trying to emulate Rav Ahron as best I can by offering some counsel on the path to true Shalom.

Your peace plan is the best peace plan widely known in the world today, while the "Roadmap to Peace" is an assault on Jewish Human Rights in the form of freedom to practice Judaism in their own land. The Palestinian Authority has failed to show any indication that they intend to keep the International Laws of Succession and safeguard Jewish freedom of religious access to their religious landmarks and holy sites, as was proven, for example, with the desecration of the Tomb of Joseph and countless other examples. Further, and more urgent, every time the IDF surrenders more control, more people have died on both sides.

Two state solutions are not the path to true peace and as a proponent of a one state solution I am sure you agree. But of course you are not the only one who is speaking of a one state solution. The Saudi plan and the Qurei alternative are thinly veiled deceptive attempts to overwhelm the immigration absorption infrastructure of the State of Israel. Even if the Roadmap is scrapped, there has to be a good alternative peace plan waiting in the wings, so that any other plans even worse than the Roadmap do not ever get a chance to gain strength.

I feel the need for an alternate peace plan is vital to avoid further desecration of God's Holy Name and needless bloodshed. As a professor of Political Science, I have detected some imperfections that would keep your plan from being accepted by mainstream supporters. I offer the following advice as a way to implement a one state solution that keeps all the Holy Land, every inch West of the Jordan River in the hand of Israel and in the defensive grip of the IDF.

Involving another country, effectively make takes control of peace out of the hands of Israel and places it into the hands of that other country. Not only does your plan depend on Jordan to change their policy and allow mass immigration, (which they may view with as much disdain as Israel views the Saudi plan) but it also depends on Jordan to keep the peace in their own country and should that fail, there is a danger of Israel being pressured to take back terrorists into their country, because to the UN, why would Israel's sovereignty be more important than Jordan's? True peace should bring more stability, not less, more order, not more potential for randomness and chaos. This is the first issue I have with your plan.

In this variation of your peace plan, which I call the “Everyone Wins” plan, nobody loses their homes except for terrorists and those who support them. Now even if at the end of the day this means only a minority of Palestinian Arabs keep their homes, as it does not discriminate due to race, but moral choice, it is much more politically acceptable to the mainstream than any variant of a Rabbi Kahane plan. Your plan which seeks to toss every Palestinian Arab out of the West Bank and Gaza, has the maris ayin/negative appearance of a Kahane style plan. Not that Rabbi Kahane was a racist. Indeed, if everybody listened to him many lives would have been spared, more Arabs than Jews, even. Yet, the unfortunate reality is that any Kahane-esque plan causes a knee-jerk reaction in the left, and makes it morally difficult for the politically moderate to give their full support. We must deal with metziyus/actualities in order to implement our ideals. We cannot ignore how the electorate feels. This is the second issue that I have with your plan.

A peace process should have the potential to lead to actual peace. If it does not, then it should not be considered a viable option even on a temporary basis. Each time a peace deal fails radical elements become even more radicalized. True lovers of peace, should therefore have zero tolerance for fake peace processes.

To do more than win over just a few politicians, but to actually change American Foreign Policy you need to offer a non-offensive (to American sensibilities) alternative to current foreign policy. The peace plan alternative must be as moderate as possible without ignoring the key needs of Israel, external and internal security, and religious freedom.

The "Everyone Wins" Peace Plan requires the tying of West Bank/Gaza Arabic naturalization rates to the immigration rates of foreign born Jews. Whereas previous one state solutions called for relocating masses of people, this plan calls for no segregation whatsoever. Nobody has to give up their homes (except for terrorists and those who support them), neither Jews nor Arabs. Palestinians slowly but surely become complete Israelis without overwhelming the Israeli economy and infrastructure.

The key to making this work is twofold. First: the categorization of the level of security risk of each naturalization applicant. The ones who are at zero risk are immediately placed in cue and await a corresponding number of immigrants to raise enough quota to allow them entry as naturalized Israelis. Second: setting a fair and an appropriate ratio. If current demographics in Israel are that 15% of Israelis are Arabs, then the ratio could be set at 15%. That is, for every 100 immigrants, 15 West Bank and Gaza Arabs who are not a threat are allowed in. So if in a given year there are 100,000 Jewish immigrants, 15,000 friendly Arabs would naturalize.

Once true peace exists, I would expect that Jewish immigration will likely increase by no less than 300%. Plus financial stability and growth will be at unheard of levels. The ability to power infrastructure growth and the greater Jewish immigration numbers will allow Israel to naturalize more Arabs faster and safer than currently possible. Thus the entire conflict will come to an end that much sooner, by the grace of God.

The reason why this plan can be called by the public relations friendly name, “the Everyone Wins Peace Plan”, is that you can argue it from either the right or the left and it still remains flexible enough to be the best plan available.

An argument from the right would include that the Everyone Wins Peace Plan secures an end to terrorist armies within a stone's throw of Israeli cities, it allows settlers to keep their homes, it also maintains the State's control over all the land and resources West of the Jordan River, and it guarantees freedom of religion to non-Muslims.

From a left point of view, the Everyone Wins Peace Plan maintains Palestinian control of their cities and allows the retention of their homes, it frees them short term from terrorist police and long term from refugee camps, and it allows them to join their cousins within the Green Line by having a right to vote in the State of Israel.

From a centrist perspective that everyone can agree with, the Everyone Wins Peace Plan ends the unhealthy segregationist environment both sides are currently caught up in. The Everyone Wins Peace Plan also removes the main pan-Arabic excuse to discriminate financially against the State of Israel. This will only snowball the effectiveness of the plan at ending the conflict that much sooner, as improved finances and security means increased Jewish immigration rates which allows the expansion of the Arabic naturalization process that is at the core of this solution.

When you compare the Everyone Wins Peace Plan it to all the others, no other peace plan comes close to being so politically acceptable to as broad a base as this plan does. That, in my opinion, is the most important factor when choosing a path by which to avoid perpetual war. The wider the support a peace plan has, the less the likelihood of rebellion against the process once everyone is deeply invested in more ways than merely financial.

If seen from a perspective of victor and loser, which is the natural baggage that comes as an intrinsic aspect of territorial disputes, then only one side can truly win and the other side therefore must lose. This makes compromise politically impossible without creating a loser, or two vaguely confused combatants with so many minor wins and losses along the way that the meaning of the victory is run away in the downpour of endless compromise, leaving only the taste of defeat in the mouths of both sides. In other words, any two-state solution based peace deal is guaranteed to dissatisfy at least one side and probably both. In other words, any two-state solution peace initiative is guaranteed to be a temporary solution until the next conflict arises.

Meanwhile, all other one state solutions believe in shipping one nation or the other to another country, tearing asunder civil rights such as the right to reside in one's own property and the right to vote, thus also creating dissatisfaction on both a societal as well as a national scale. Therefore any true peace deal must minimize feelings of dissatisfaction that are caused by any one side "losing" the negotiations, and also any peace deal must be able to create a permanent solution, otherwise all gains will eventually be lost and the cycle of violence would not cease, God forbid.

By naturalizing West Bank and Gaza Arabs, but in a corresponding ratio based system to Jewish immigration, both key individual national desires of full political rights for Palestinians in the territories and an end to security risks for Israelis will be met. Both sides would also benefit from peace without withdrawal, which makes no political losers on a national scale, plus the right in many cases to keep a family homestead that has existed for dozens and dozens of years, no losers on a societal scale. The newly united State of Israel would experience a massive investment surge from overseas companies and industries, the likes of which have never been seen in the country before.

Anticipating and tracking any change in the status quo of the rate of immigration is crucial to keep this peace deal fair. First the electorate must set the ratio. If currently there are more than 5 Jews for every Arab. So would 2 Arabs admitted to the State of Israel for every 10 Jews admitted be what the electorate would choose? Whatever the numbers, and I am not in a position right now to make any solid suggestions on what the will of the people should be or is in this regard, nevertheless I feel that the ratio should not necessarily be considered written in stone. Through the wise fluctuation of the ratio rate of immigration and naturalization on a sliding scale in favor of the "disadvantaged" population it is possible to avoid major potential causes for flare ups in the future. It is certain that a ratio too extreme in either direction would be a costly mistake for which there is no need to extrapolate.

If I am ever quoted on this, allow me to point out that I never said terrorists should be granted citizenship. No country would make a citizen out of wanton felons, let alone murderers. But also that Palestinians have clearly been reacting to a series of Israeli and Western leaders supporting terrorists in diplomatic clothing such as Abbas. Such Palestinian leaders are PLO terrorists, not true moderates. Therefore peace negotiations in the past have taken unfair turns. All because the stand President Bush took against Hamas' takeover in Gaza, was how pseudo moderates like Abbas should have been dealt with as well. It was the Western support of Arafat and Abbas that created the group-psychological phenomena that propelled terror into the sphere of political option in the minds of Palestinian voters. Only by having zero tolerance toward fake diplomats such as Abbas can then the rise of true moderate, third way candidates be seen amongst the Palestinians and become widely acceptable to the public. This is an essential step in the local self governance that is necessary in primarily Palestinian Arab populated regions in the West Bank and Gaza, in order to allow Palestinian towns to be added one by one to the body of the State of Israel.

It should be clearly understood that all other peace deals have been begun by taking the first step with the wrong foot. The beginning of peace does not come by the placation of terror; that is its anathema. So what then do I answer to those who say, well what if in the end it turns out that most Palestinians utterly and eternally reject peace in support of terror. Will all this effort have all been in vain? To them I say: What of the flowers among the thorns? What of the innocent ones among them? Avraham, the forefather of Jews and Arabs prayed for those innocent trapped among the guilty. It's time that Abraham's descendants on both sides showed more respect for his legacy, and this most sacred family tradition.

Shalom al kol Yisrael,
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