

Appeasing child killers

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We were not supposed to see Shlomo Nativ's name in the newspapers. At least, we weren't supposed to know who he was for several years. He was just a 13-year-old boy. He was loved by his family and friends. He had brothers and sisters, parents and grandparents. His life was not our business. And, to a certain extent, now that it is over, it still shouldn't concern us.

What should concern us is his death. Nativ was murdered last Thursday at the hands of a Palestinian ax murderer just a few meters from his home in Bat Ayin. And his death should interest us for what it teaches us, first of all about the nature of the Middle East and Israel's place in it.

The mainstream media in Europe and the US and even here maintain that Nativ's death tells us little we didn't already "know" if we are right-thinking people. By this view of things, the cold-blooded terrorist murder of civilians - even of children - is to be expected when the victims in question are Israeli Jews who live beyond the 1949 armistice lines. It isn't nice. It isn't pleasant to say. But as far as the right-thinking people of the Western media are concerned, Israeli Jews like Nativ, who live in Gush Etzion in Judea, are simply asking to be murdered.

Today, the media's view is shared by both European governments and the Obama administration. For years now the Europeans have accepted the legally unsupportable Arab claim that all Jewish presence in areas beyond the 1949 armistice lines is illegal. Since 1993, supported by the Israeli Left, the US government has gradually moved toward adopting this view. And today this view stands at the center of President Barack Obama's emerging policy toward Israel and the Palestinians.

At base, this view assumes two things. First, it assumes that the root of the Arab-Israeli conflict is the absence of Palestinian statehood, and therefore the solution is the establishment of a Palestinian state. The second thing it assumes is that the Palestinian demand that any territory that Israel transfers to Palestinian control must first be ethnically cleansed of all Jewish presence is completely innocent and acceptable.

OBAMA MADE clear that this is the view of his administration on two occasions in the past week. First, at a news conference before he departed for his European tour, he announced that as far as his administration is concerned, the only way of contending with the Arab conflict with Israel is by establishing a Palestinian state. In his words, "It is critical for us to advance a two-state solution." And second, last Thursday in London, Obama made clear that he supports the mass expulsion of Jews from Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria (as well as the Golan Heights), when he

announced his support for the so-called Saudi peace plan.

The Saudi plan, issued as a propaganda stunt by Saudi King Abdullah during a meeting with New York Times columnist Thomas Friedman in 2002, calls for Israel to commit national suicide by removing itself to within the indefensible 1949 lines and accepting millions of hostile foreign Arabs as citizens in its rump state in exchange for "regular" relations with the Arab world.

Shlomo Nativ's murder shows clearly that Obama and his supporters are viewing the Arab conflict with Israel through a distorted lens. Their interpretation of both the nature of the conflict and its likely resolution are wrong.

IT TAKES A CERTAIN type of person to hack a child to death with an ax. In the case at hand, Nativ's murderer actually tried to kill seven-year-old Yair Gamliel as well. But unlike Nativ, the first grader managed to escape with a fractured skull.

Nativ of course was not the first child to be brutally murdered by Palestinian terrorists. Kobi Mandell and Yosef Ish-Ran were also 13 when they were stoned to death by a mob as they gathered wood for a bonfire in 2001. In 2003 five-month-old Shaked Avraham was shot in her crib by a Palestinian terrorist who pushed his way into her home. In 2002 five-year-old Matan Ohayon, four-year-old Noam Ohayon and their mother Revital Ohayon were murdered in their home in Kibbutz Metzger.

And the list goes on and on and on.

It takes a special type of person to murder a child. And it takes a special type of society to support such behavior. Palestinian society is a special society. It has become routine, indeed it has become expected that in the aftermath of successful murders of Israelis - including children - Palestinians distribute candy in public celebrations. In 2002 for instance, when word got out about the terrorist who barged into Nina Kardashov's bat mitzva party in Hadera and massacred six people, the masses took to the streets in neighboring Tulkarm to celebrate. That particular attack was carried out by a Fatah terrorist employed by the US-trained Palestinian Authority security forces. The Shin Bet (Israel Security Agency) and the IDF now reportedly believe that Nativ was also murdered by a Fatah terrorist.

TO CELEBRATE the terrorist murder of children and to glorify child murderers as heroes is to celebrate and glorify the nullification of life - or at least the life of the target society. This is the case because at the most basic philosophical level, children represent the notion that life is intrinsically valuable. Since children haven't yet had the chance to accomplish great and lasting things for humanity, all they can give us is the promise of a future.

The fact that Palestinian terrorists target children specifically - both inside and outside the 1949 lines - and that Palestinian society celebrates their murder tells us that the two foundational assumptions upon which Obama and his supporters base

their policies toward Israel and the Middle East are false. It is not the absence of a Palestinian state that stands at the root of the conflict, and it is not the presence of Israeli communities, or "settlements," beyond the 1949 armistice lines that renders the conflict intractable.

Instead, the root of the conflict is the Arab world's rejection of Israel's right to exist - regardless of its size. And the reason the conflict is intractable is because hatred of Israel and Jews is so deep and endemic in both Palestinian society and the wider Arab world that they view the very existence of Jews - including Jewish children - in Israel as an unacceptable affront to their sensibilities. Indeed, the Jewish presence both within and beyond the 1949 armistice lines is so unacceptable that murdering Jews at every opportunity is perceived as an acceptable and indeed heroic undertaking.

[Jerusalem Post](#)

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