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OBAMA REPEATING PAST MISTAKES THE ENDURING PERILS OF A “TWO STATE SOLUTION”

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In Washington, alas, there has been too little learning from lessons of the past. Almost daily, President Obama still repeats the tired clichés about a “Two State Solution”. In Jerusalem, however, Prime Minister Netanyahu fully realizes that any such plan would lead his own country only to a *Final Solution*.

Mr. Obama refuses to acknowledge that “Palestine” would represent another *enemy state*. Although fragmented by civil war, both *Fatah* and *Hamas* would seek closer ties to Iran. There would also be substantial collaborations with *al-Qaeda*, ties that are now already being fashioned in *Hamas*-controlled Gaza.

On September 11th, celebrations of American distress were evident all over Gaza and West Bank, in areas controlled by both *Hamas* and *Fatah*. Now, nothing has changed. America, despite its consistently misplaced largesse, is still widely loathed in *all* Palestinian territories.

Mr. Obama’s “Road Map” adherence to a plainly twisted cartography will surely backfire. Despite their plaintive pleas for “justice” and statehood, the Palestinians always manage to stand stubbornly in their own way. Time after time, whenever they seem on the threshold of what appears to be a proper path to independence, their strife-addicted leaders unleash new and unproductive spasms of random violence. Over time, this collective self-destructiveness has been characteristic of both *Fatah* and *Hamas*.

Even after Israel’s *Operation Cast Lead* in Gaza, and even while Israel’s cease fires with *Hamas* remain effectively unilateral because of utterly intransigent Palestinian commitments to *Jihad* (Gaza-based terrorists are *still* sending rockets into Israel), Mr. Obama asks that a Palestinian state be carved from the still-living body of Israel. This rabidly anti-American 23rd Arab state would quickly seek extension across the “green line”. The official Palestine Authority (PA) map of “moderate” *Fatah* already shows *all* of Israel as *part of Palestine*. Our president should also recall that Arab terrorism arrived long before “occupation” (actually, even before Jewish statehood in May 1948) and that the PLO was founded in 1964 – *three years before West Bank and Gaza fell into Israel’s hands*. What was it that the PLO was seeking to “liberate”?

Israel remains the front line position of anti-terrorist engagement for the United States in particular, and for the West in general. It is still the principal “canary” in the mine. In this connection, *any* Palestinian state would have an irremediably injurious effect on Israel’s survival. After “Palestine”, Israel’s security would require (1) a far more comprehensive nuclear strategy involving deterrence, preemption and war fighting capabilities; and (2) a corollary and interpenetrating conventional war strategy. Without such strategic improvements, *America* – not just Israel - would be at far greater risk than before.

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“Palestine” could affect these two core strategies in several ways. First, it would enlarge Israel’s need for “escalation dominance”. With Israel’s conventional capabilities more doubtful, IDF command could decide to make the country’s nuclear deterrent less ambiguous. Taking the Israeli bomb out of the “basement” might actually enhance Israel’s security for a while, but – over time – ending “deliberate ambiguity” could also heighten the odds of nuclear weapons use. If Iran were permitted to “go nuclear”, as now seems quite certain, such use might not necessarily be limited to the immediate areas of Israel and “Palestine”.

Nuclear war could arrive in Israel not only as a “bolt-from-the-blue” surprise missile attack, but also as a result (intended or inadvertent) of escalation. If an enemy state were to begin “only” conventional and/or biological attacks upon Israel, Jerusalem might still respond at some point with nuclear reprisals. If this enemy state were to begin with solely conventional attacks upon Israel, Jerusalem’s conventional reprisals might still be met, sometime in the future, with enemy nuclear counterstrikes.

Why should Israel need a conventional deterrent at all? Even after “Palestine”, won’t rational enemy states desist from launching conventional and/or biological attacks upon Israel for fear of an Israeli nuclear retaliation? *Not necessarily*. Aware that Israel would cross the nuclear threshold only in extraordinary circumstances, these enemy states could be convinced, rightly or wrongly, that so long as their attacks remained non-nuclear, Israel would only respond in kind.

After creation of “Palestine”, strategic circumstances in the region would be markedly less favorable to Israel. The only credible way for Israel to deter large-scale conventional attacks following any such creation would be by maintaining visible and large-scale conventional capabilities. Naturally, enemy states contemplating first-strike attacks upon Israel using chemical and/or biological weapons are apt to take more seriously Israel’s nuclear deterrent. Whether or not this nuclear deterrent had remained undisclosed could also affect Israel’s strategic credibility.

A strong conventional capability will always be needed by Israel to deter or to preempt conventional attacks. Obama’s *Road Map* expectations related to “Palestine” would critically impair Israel’s strategic depth, and thus the IDF’s essential capacity to wage conventional warfare.

If frontline regional enemy states were to perceive Israel’s own sense of expanding weakness, this could strengthen Israel’s nuclear deterrent. If, however, enemy states did not recognize such a “sense” among Israel’s key decision-makers, these states, animated by Israel’s presumed conventional force deterioration, could be encouraged to attack. Logically, the result, spawned by Israel’s post-“Palestine” incapacity to maintain strong conventional deterrence, could be: (1) defeat of Israel in a conventional war; (2) defeat of Israel in an unconventional chemical/biological/nuclear war; (3) defeat of Israel in a combined conventional/unconventional war; or (4) defeat of Arab/Islamic state enemies *by Israel* in an unconventional war.

Ironically, for Israel, even the “successful” fourth possibility could become intolerable. The probable consequences of a regional nuclear war or even a chemical/biological war in the Middle East would be calamitous for the victor as well as the vanquished. Here, in fact, all notions of “victory” and “defeat” would promptly lose traditional meaning.

President Obama, please take note: The expected dangers to both Israel and the United States of any Palestinian state would vastly outweigh any conceivable benefits.