

**From:** "jeffrey E." <jeevacation@gmail.com>  
**To:** Nili Priell Barak <[REDACTED]>  
**Subject:** Re:  
**Date:** Thu, 30 Oct 2014 02:50:38 +0000

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beginning edits

David Ben Gurion was asked why he, after 2000 years, in contrast to the many great leaders in the past was uniquely able to re-established the State of Israel. BG responded that he thought that it must have been true that in ancient times people had been born with a sixth sense. The one enabling individuals to have the ability to recognize and seize opportunities. Though few of those individuals remain I think I am one of the fortunate few. He didn't mention the horrors or the sacrifice of the 48' war. I believe Menachem Begin had it, as several years after the bitter 73' war he was able to make a daring peace with Egypt. As Izhak Rabin, who now 20 yrs ago, signed the Peace treaty with Jordan though in amidst a wave of terror. He faced huge internal rejection but it began the first baby steps towards a settlement with the Palestinians. As we all know he

was assassinated by a Jewish terrorist. These leaders all faced many risks, yet were able to see and seize an opportunity. Statesmanship and leadership..

During the last three years we have been living through a geo political earthquake. The world order, which existed since the demise of the Ottoman Empire , is collapsing. The Arab Spring appears to have turned into an Islamist Winter. Borders are erased. Old tribal and sectarian disputes have awakened. In perfect storm like fashion Israel now finds itself surrounded by clashes of civilizations, in addition to the Islam confrontation between fanatic terror and moderna , Suna and Shia, the legacy threats: Iran, Assad in Syria, Hezbollah in Lebanon, Hamas in Gaza are all still active and worrying.

we have to be alert and ready to strongly respond to any threat to our security..

But I believe new opportunities are there for the taking. This opportunity, which might not occur again for generations , is the potential to reshape our relationships with the Arab Moderates based

on our common concerns . Extremism, Terror and Iran. This could open the gate to a more peaceful Middle East based on cooperation and synergies rather than blood and revenge. However there is , in my opinion no way to achieve but to move forward with the Palestinians

A precondition to seize such an opportunity is a mighty, sober, self confident Israel, in strong alliance with the US. An Israel which can deter or defeat any combination of regional powers, yet, an Israel who is ready to contemplate and consider a modified Saudi or Arab League Plan as a basis for negotiations.

The unique relationship we have developed with the US over the last 45yrs based on common values ,mutual respect and shared interests is a cornerstone of our strength, world posture and our future. It is also a crucial building block of any regional peace and cooperation strategy. Allowing IL/US relations to remain damaged , I believe is a grave mistake with potentially far reaching consequences.

As the Minister of Defense of Israel I've met more than once with President Obama , as well as with President Bush before him, , reiterating with both that though the US is clearly our best friend and ally, Israel is a Sovereign state and when our security and the future of Israel and the Jewish people are at stake we might need to take tough decisions on our own. We cannot and will not, I added, delegate the responsibility for such decisions to even our best friends ,. We respect the fact that we might have different views.

American Presidents have always understood that . We also must have the same respect when the US decides it is its interest to take decisions we might not fully agree with.

this relation is of course not fully symmetric. It is the US which provides Israel with the new F-35s and ensures the Qualitative Edge of the IDF vis a vis any combination of neighbors. It is the US who significantly financed the IronDome, Arrow and David's Sling missile defense systems. It is the US that has committed to defend Israel in the event of a missile attack from Iran.

We should never forget it.

The recent spurt of verbal exchanges is a worrying signal that something has gone wrong. It needs correction.. Netanyahu is not a coward. I've seen him as a young special forces

officer ,under my command, facing fire directly and taking risks to his life. A very courageous soldier. That will never change. cheap words serve little purpose .The same applies to President Obama and Secretary Kerry. they are not enemies of Israel. they are Good Friends. Kerry has exhibited decades long support for Israel. Since he became Secretary of State he has invested his time energy and prestige trying to help Israel and the Palestinians to bridge disputes and reach a breakthrough. it was a noble effort which should justify thanks rather than accusations. We are of course concerned by the lack of outcome of the P5+1 negotiations with Iran and we think that the chemical weapons removal from Syria could have been handled differently But President Obama strengthens the legacy of Presidential support for Israel.. Israel has a vital interest in resuming the healthy trust, and mutual respect that existed until recently.

. I believe that the most profound internal debate inside Israel today is in regard to the relationship between Israel's security needs and the viability of the "two states solution". We all agree that we are living in a tough, merciless and highly unpredictable neighborhood..So it is clear that our security needs are of the highest priority and we should build certain "safety margins" into any future security planning.But the Israeli Right is going too far by arguing that the security needs of Israel renders any viable,demilitarized independent, Palestinian State - impossible.

In other words, the " lesson" of recent years according to our Right is that Israel's Security and the "two states solution" are incompatible. I believe this is a fallacious conclusion, driven by narrow political interests.

I've served a lifetime career, fighting and defending my country's security. Most of the time in uniform. Based on this experience ,I confidently conclude,and it is a professional rather than political answer, that if and when a Palestinian

demilitarized independent State will be established side by side with Israel behind borders which will consist of a solid Jewish majority for generations to come and will include the major "Settlement Blocks" accompanied by mutually agreed swaps and an Israeli long term military presence along the River Jordan - the IDF and the Security Services will be capable of defending Israel. Moreover, I'm confident that if we will bring together all former Israeli Chiefs of Staff, all former Commanders of the Central Command( responsible for Judea and Samaria) and all former Heads of Intelligence ,SecServices and Mossad, an extremely vast majority of them will agree with me on this issue. True, it might take time, frustrations and setbacks. It might have to go through prolonged periods of interim arrangements. but the IDF is much superior to any conceivable rival and will be able to defend Israel under all those circumstances.

the Right argument is convoluted. the opposite is true. The real big threat to the Zionist Project is not the "two state solution" but rather the "one state solution" which will lead inevitably to either a non Jewish or a non democratic, potentially ever

bleeding State. Still, this is the vision the Israeli extreme Right shares unknowingly with the Hamas (and with all due differences with the lunatic, Post Zionist fringes of the Israeli Left).

In order to seize the opportunity for regional peace and cooperation arrangements and in order to block the deterioration towards “one state solution” action, tenacity and decisiveness will be essential. politics of survival, anxiety and pessimism will not do.

we are facing a moment of truth. a time for daring decisions. The essence of Zionism, its *raison d'être* had always been to take our fate in our hands. make decisions and follow them with actions, rather than being dragged by events and decisions of others and paying the price for it.

our legendary Foreign Minister Abba Eban famously said that the Palestinians had never missed an opportunity to miss an opportunity. Lets not fall into the same trap.

On Wed, Oct 29, 2014 at 7:12 PM, Nili Priell Barak <[REDACTED]> wrote:

herewith the Op Ed. Please let me know your opinion and your remarks.

thanks,

EB

Herewith

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please note

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