

Biden labels Palestinian poison the elixir of life. Should Israel drink it?



by Lev Tsitrin

While the title is allegorical, it describes the two contrasting perceptions of the “two-state solution” really well. To Biden, the Palestinian state is (to describe a pathway to peace with a military term) a silver bullet that will ensure both the Palestinian non-belligerence, and the acceptance of Israel’s legitimacy by major Moslem states. The Israelis, having learned on October 7, 2023 that Hamas used Palestinian sovereignty over Gaza to build a terror fortress there, beg to differ.

Who’s in the right? Is the “two-state solution” a remedy, or a poison?

In the heyday of Oslo, Israelis indeed saw it as a remedy: it made perfect sense to demarcate the border, Palestinians living happily and peacefully on one side of it, Israelis on the other, neither getting into the others’ hair. What can be more sensible? End the Israeli occupation, and Palestinian grudges will disappear.

This theory had been tested for three decades now. Since Oslo, for some 95% of Palestinians the occupation is over – they live under Palestinian control, of PA in West Bank, and of Hamas in Gaza. Yet to judge by the waves of the terrorism, both during the post-Oslo honeymoon that was replete with suicide bus bombing, and the intifada that was followed by periodic Gaza wars triggered by the Hamas’ rocketing of Israel – and culminating in the October 7 atrocity, grudges persist

even when the occupation ends. Or perhaps, the “occupation” was a misnomer from the get-go: to Israelis, “ending the occupation” meant ending Israeli presence in the West Bank and Gaza, while to Palestinians, it meant ending Israel.

Palestinian position became perfectly clear in 2000, after Arafat refused to demarcate borders and declare the end to the conflict – on the grounds that if he did so, he would be killed by the Palestinians. He understood their mood perfectly well – upon Israeli withdrawal from Gaza in 2005, Hamasers took power from the PA and threw some top PAers from the roofs of high-rises (back then, bullets apparently were not yet as plentiful in Gaza as they are now.) And, of course it was Arafat himself who fostered that mood – and tried to get as much illegal arms as he could for his “security forces” in blatant violation of Oslo (the Israelis, “for the sake of peace,” turning the blind eye). And when he thought he was ready, he started the intifada to finish Israel off,

There was a fresh hope for a new start after the intifada was suppressed, and Arafat died. Yet this hope died too, since Arafat’s successor, the presumably peaceable Mahmud Abbas, has very similar views to Arafat’s. In fact, when it comes to Israel, there is precious little difference even between PA and Hamas – the difference is limited to who should be at the helm, pocketing international aid that flows through UNRWA. PA’s textbooks are as hateful of Israel as are those used by Hamas to raise the next generation of terrorists; PA lionizes West Bank “martyrs” by posting their portraits on huge banners in the streets, and paying their families (and those of the terrorists in Israel’s prisons) the pensions proportionate to the number of Israelis they killed; and – needless to say – by refusing to negotiate the end the conflict, since it means leaving Israel in place.

Palestinian *raison d’etre* being the destruction of Israel – as proven by their behavior since Oslo, does the siren call of the “two-state solution” sound alluring? Not to the Israelis

who would be on the receiving end of the consequences of Palestinian sovereignty. The theory is nice – but not the on-the-ground empirical experience of it during the last thirty years, which is anything but..

Clearly, the theory does not take into account Palestinian cherished aspirations. Yet Biden still champions it, touting it as the elixir of life for Israel. Netanyahu begs to differ, seeing in it a kiss of death – an assured future of many further October 7s, multiplied and put on steroids because the sovereign Palestinian state would get militarized in no time, agreements or not. Even when PA was in power in Gaza, it already tried to arm itself. The first attempt – via a cargo ship *Karine A*, loaded chock-full with Iranian weapons destined for Gaza failed, Israelis intercepting it – but the tunnels under the border with Egypt provided a new and better way. To trust Palestinians with sovereignty is to trust them with not allowing contraband weapons from across their border – when they badly want those weapons to complete their mission of eliminating Israel. Should the foxes be allowed to guard the hen-house? It has been tried in Gaza already– and we saw the result on October 7.

So, who will prevail – the American proponents of a nice “two-state” theory, or the Israelis who know full well the bitter taste of its outcome? Who will have his way, Biden or Netanyahu?

As an ex-Soviet – that is, someone with a first-hand knowledge of how a beautiful theory can morph into a horrible reality, Lenin’s promise of universal bliss and prosperity resulting in a regime of slavery, I support empirical evidence over theorizing, all the more that Oslo provided plentiful of experience, its promise of Middle East peace crashing down in the horrors of suicide bombings of cafes and buses, and of rocketing of Israeli cities.

Out of ideas, Biden is trying to sell Israel a stale hope –

and Israel's Netanyahu does a right thing by rejecting it, knowing full well from the West Bank and Gaza experience what the Palestinian sovereignty will entail: terrorists organizing themselves, storing mass of weapon, and building fortifications from which to fight – all but ensuring future terrorism and wars. Drinking the poison of a two-state solution – even from a bottle labeled by Biden “elixir of life” is suicidal. Israelis are right to refuse to take a final, deadly gulp.