

Crossing the Jordan: Celebrating Israel's Diamond Jubilee



by David Solway

Yom Ha'Atzmaut marks the establishment of the modern state of Israel on May 14, 1948, the day on which [David Ben-Gurion](#), the *de facto* leader of the [Jewish community in Palestine](#), publicly read the [Israeli Declaration of Independence](#). The Jewish people, he announced, “reclaimed the wilderness, revived the language, built cities and villages” and revived a state with “explicit international recognition of...their right to reconstitute their National Home.” As Israel now prepares to celebrate its Diamond Jubilee, signifying 75 turbulent years dating from the invasion of [five Arab armies](#) on the very day of its induction into the community of nations, it is well to remember the words of the prophet Isaiah that Israel was to be “a light unto the Nations” ([Isaiah](#) 49:6).

Much of the world begins to differ. Israel is the one nation on Earth with rights to



Premier and Defense Minister David Ben-Gurion (standing in top photo) pronounces the Israeli Declaration of Independence on May 14, 1948, noting the “explicit international recognition of...[the Jewish people’s right] to reconstitute their National Home.” That same day, the infant state was attacked by five Arab armies. (Source of top photo: GPO photographer, licensed under CC BY-SA 3.0)

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As Lincoln Brown writes in [PJ Media](#), “One would think that in a supposedly-enlightened age, the naked hatred and prejudices of the past would have already been consigned to history. But of course, this is not an enlightened age. People are motivated by stereotypes, rhetoric, and a situation in Israel that they do not fully understand or care to research.” The ideology of the left continues to demonize Israel as a racist and conquistador nation that should be delegitimized – [a state beyond the pale](#), to cite the title of Robin Shepherd’s book on the subject. Meanwhile, its Muslim neighbours, particularly in the West Bank and Gaza, have vowed to physically erase Israel from the map of the world, [launching terrorist attacks](#) – as, for example, on [January 27, on February 10](#), and counting – firing rockets at its civic centres, and pursuing their version of the Final Solution. Every period of relative quiet is routinely described as a “lull” in the hostilities.

The propaganda assault on Israel is merely another species of terrorism, the contemporary form of the age-old anti-Jewish pogrom, as Bat Ye’or has persuasively argued in [Eurabia: The Euro-Arab Axis](#) and [Islam and Dhimmitude: Where Civilizations Collide](#). Obviously, bigotry and baseless aspersion are never

openly admitted. Rather, for antisemites and anti-Zionists, Israel is regarded as a geopolitical irritant, [a historical mistake](#), a garrison kingdom, an artificial construct that should never have been established, however validly and legally. Does the 1967 [UN Resolution 242](#), guaranteeing “the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of every State in the area and their right to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries,” have no juridical force? (As is to be expected, the UN is [currently violating](#) its own principles.)



“The state beyond the pale”: The concerted global campaign to delegitimize Israel threatens to override international agreements such as UN Resolution 242 that promised Israel the

“right to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries.” Pictured: top left, BDS protesters rally in New York, May 2021; top right, demonstrators in Brazil burn Israel’s flag, January 2012; bottom, UN Security Council votes on Resolution 242, November 1967. (Sources of photos: (top left) Wirestock Creators/Shutterstock; (top right) Nelson Antoine/Shutterstock)

For Islam, Israel is an interloper in the region, despite the indisputable historical fact that Israel and Judah predate the Arab occupation of the Holy Land by more than a thousand years. *Surah 17, ayah 1* of the *Koran* mentions the pre-existing Temple at Jerusalem; indeed, it mentions the presence of the Jews and Moses in the Holy Land multiple times (e.g.: 2:47-48; 9:30; 2:83; 3:110; 3:199; 7:159; 2:62; 22:40; 5:5; 7:145). Jerome Verlin in [Israel 3000 Years](#) tabulates in exacting detail the historical presence of the *Yishuv*, or homeland community, “in the four holy cities of Jerusalem, Safed, Tiberias and Hebron, as well as in the rural grassroots of the land.” No matter. For the so-called “realist” school of international relations – see John Mearsheimer and Stephen Walt’s [The Israel Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy](#) – Israel is a political liability and therefore not entitled to American and international sympathy and concern.

Moreover, Israel is by no means a great power. Its current population of 9.4 million (including its Muslim citizens) makes it by normal census standards sparsely populated, and it covers about as much territory as Wales or New Jersey. As former mayor of New York Ed Koch reputedly said, one “might need a magnifying glass to see Israel” in a World Atlas since it could easily “disappear in the crease of a page.” In the larger scheme of things, presumably, its absence would scarcely be noticed.

Israel is a country that gives more to the world than many other countries. Israel has more Nobel laureates in absolute terms than China, and more hi-tech start-ups per capita than anywhere else on the planet.

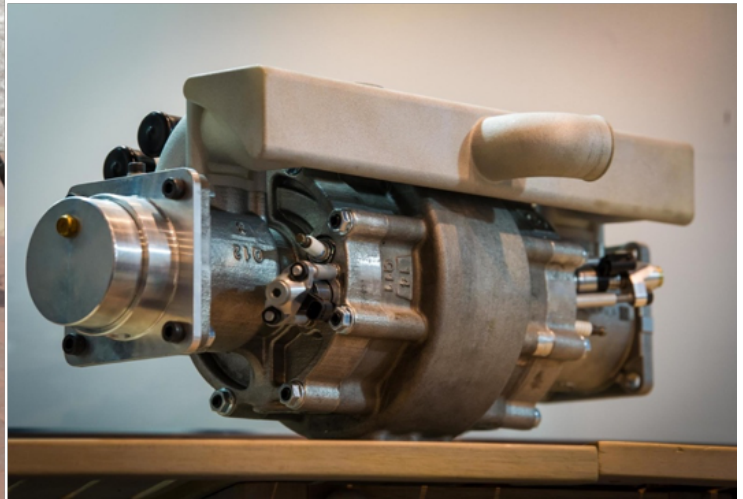
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And yet it can be argued that Israel's existence is an absolute necessity. It is, to begin with, a haven for the Jewish people from the world's ancient antipathy. As [Leonard Cohen](#) sang in one of his most moving songs, "Dance me through the panic 'til I'm gathered safely in," a lyric version of Moses' Song in [Deuteronomy 32](#) in which Jacob is led from "the waste howling wilderness" and kept in "the apple of the Lord's eye."

Israel is a testimony to historical continuity and cultural memory in an age of temporal dissipation, a sort of "[Benedict Option](#)" for Jews – although a decidedly well-armed one, with stealth fighter jets, nuclear missiles and submarines. It is a sign of what is possible when a people gather together and pool their intelligence, courage, obstinacy and talent to create a vibrant pluralist democracy in the midst of ignorance and barbarism. Israel is a country that gives more to the world than many other countries, excelling in the fields of science, technology, medicine, agriculture, and energy. Israel has more Nobel laureates in absolute terms than China, and more [hi-tech start-ups per capita](#) than anywhere else on the planet.

Among the many inventions and discoveries coming out of Israel, we note: the [PillCam](#) (endoscopy system), the flexible stent, the computer firewall, the ICQ Instant Messenger, the collaborative development of the first cell phone, the world's first USB drive, desert irrigation ([Netafim](#)), [Mobileye](#) (tiny vehicle cameras to warn of hazards), [ReWalk](#) (battery-powered exoskeleton), the smart watch, [Duali-Q](#) (radiology software), nano-magnets (to restore damaged nerve cells), and most recently a 23-pound, cost-effective, fuel-efficient [car engine](#) that just might be the wave of the future. George Gilder's [The Israel Test](#) has made luminously clear the extent of Israel's innovative genius from which the entire world has profited, which does not prevent the Jewish state from being

considered a pariah among the nations. Yet the renaissance is real.



Innovative genius: The world's largest per capita number of hi-tech start-ups has generated inventions including a battery-powered exoskeleton (left), a system for generating pure drinking water from air (top right) and the first purportedly hydrogen-fuelled engine (bottom right). (Sources of photos: (left) ReWalk; (top right); (bottom right) Aquarius Engines)

What we seem to be witnessing, as Eric Nelson reminds us in [*The Hebrew Republic: Jewish Sources and the Transformation of European Political Thought*](#), is a contemporary reprise of the emergence of vast quantities of ground-breaking [Hebraica](#) texts and documents in the late 16th to mid-17th centuries, a revival which “transformed European literature and criticism, medicine and science, theology and

ecclesiology, and philosophy and law, and [the principles of] political thought.” The scholarly term for the historical embodiment of these materials is the *republica Hebraeorum*, which profoundly influenced among others John Locke and his meditations on representative government that underlie the political organization of the liberal West.

Of course, Israeli politics soon became and remains splintered among innumerable fractious parties, a misfortune of which Locke would not have approved, though the country remains a robust, if tempestuous, democracy. Contemporary Israel is also an object lesson in how to manage a sound economy, running an engine with almost no gap in the output curve (although it had wallowed for several decades under social-democratic mismanagement). And it is, of course, the spearhead of the democratic West in the war against Islamic terror, receiving and resisting the brunt of the theo-imperialist onslaught against Western institutions, interests and, indeed, long-term survival. The Islamic writ is found in *ayat* like *Koran* 9:33 in which Allah sends forth his prophet “to make the true faith supreme over all religions.”

Those who study the history of civilization and who are disturbed or fascinated by the spectre of decline exhibited by our own will find Israel important for another reason. As I contended in [The Big Lie](#) and [in this C2C Journal essay](#), it is difficult to repress the suspicion that ominous forces are working toward the demise of Judeo-Christian civilization. And I would hazard that many people in the ordinary walks of life are troubled by an inchoate premonition that something has gone terribly wrong with Western culture, governed by a political elite without moral convictions and educated by an academic elite without scholarly scruples, a charge convincingly documented in Ibn Warraq’s masterful volume [Defending the West](#).



“A shameful betrayal”: Islamic scholar Ibn Warraq condemns widespread animosity towards the West and Israel and extolls Western civilization’s unique political, cultural and technological contributions to humanity’s advancement.

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The “hostility to the West and Israel,” Warraq concludes, is a “shameful betrayal” of the ideals inherited from the Greeks and the Bible. The classical principles of democracy, the Enlightenment and scientific investigation, the Ten Commandments and the Christian Gospels form the basis of Judeo-Christian civilization, which must be defended against those who derogate the gifts of freedom, individualism, energy and inventiveness with which it has endowed the world.

As physicist Stephen Meyer points out in [*The Return of the God Hypothesis*](#), the advancement of human reason and scientific investigation developed only in the Judeo-Christian West, especially after the Christian Reformation in the 15th and 16th centuries and common access to the vernacular (non-Latin) Scriptures. This implied that the individual was able to use his own judgment instead of relying on authority and that “human beings could attain insight into the workings of the natural world,” interrogating nature “using systematic experimental methods.” For all its life-enhancing donations to mankind, however, the Judeo-Christian West is not only being attacked from outside, but is being dismantled piece by piece by internal forces, by its own *nomenklatura* and internecine defectors, the political craft of our day.

In the present context of doubt and apprehension, Israel, a testament to the singular, historical Western amalgam of science, democracy and communion, tells us who and what we are, that is, assuming we are interested in recognizing our own features. It constitutes a catechism for the West, a trial of values and a test of honour and principle – a test which the West appears to be failing. For the cherubs of political correctness and the fantasists among the intelligentsia cannot abide what Israel ideally exemplifies: vigilance in the face of aggression, the commitment to a genuine historic purpose and the virtue of unapologetic self-affirmation. They hate Israel because Israel stands as both living refutation of their self-hatred and physical resistance to their program of civilizational destruction.

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“Israelis have something to teach the world”: For Italian journalist and culture critic Giulio Meotti, Israel today represents the only fully intact Western society standing against cultural and familial breakdown. To survive, says Meotti, the West “must learn from this small Jewish country.”

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This is not to suggest that Israel is without blemish or that it has not been partially infected by the contemporary Western proneness to false hope and political myopia. The [Oslo travesty](#) (which sought to gain recognition of Israel in return for allowing a Palestinian state, but actually sounded the prelude to the Second Intifada), the disengagement from Gaza, the destabilizing Israeli left with its spurious ecumenism and subversive media outlets like [Haaretz](#), and the “peace process” mirage are examples of such lapses. The recent aggressive protests against Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s efforts to reform a hard-core, self-appointing, leftist Supreme Court, which regularly thwarts the will of right-leaning governments, is, to quote military and security professional [Ben Kerido](#) in *The Western Journal*, “a shocking contradiction of Israeli cultural values.”

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