

Jewish Fundamentalism's 'Errant Weeds' Threaten Israel and Palestine

by Michele Steinberg and Neil Martin

"I am shamed over the disgrace imposed upon us by a degenerate murderer. You are not part of the community of Israel. You are not part of the democratic camp which we all belong to in this house, and many of the people despise you. You are not partners in the Zionist enterprise. You are a foreign implant. You are an errant weed. . . . Sensible Judaism spits you out. You placed yourself outside the wall of Jewish law. You are a shame on Zionism and an embarrassment to Judaism."

Thus spoke Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin in 1994, shortly after Baruch Goldstein, the U.S.-born Israeli settler, had gunned down 29 Muslim worshippers and wounded 100 others during services at the Tomb of the Patriarchs holy site in February 1994, near the West Bank town of Hebron. Goldstein, a physician who had served in the Israeli Defense Forces (where he refused to treat non-Jewish patients), was a follower of Rabbi Meir Kahane, the FBI/Air Force intelligence agent-turned-religious fanatic, who founded the terrorist Jewish Defense League in the United States, the Kach Party in Israel, and who vowed to purge Israel of every non-Jew. Goldstein came from the West Bank settlement of Kiryat Arba, which since the 1980s, has functioned as a terrorist training camp and indoctrination center. Goldstein was wrestled down, and killed by an angry mob at the scene of the attack.

Kahane's movement has been banned in Israel for years because of its terrorist belief structure and actions. The U.S. affiliates, Jewish Defense League, Kach, and Kahane Chai, have been on a State Department terrorist list for more than a decade, and are banned from raising funds. But its members travel with ease between the United States and Israel, are able to maintain armed camps in Israel, and even run entire settlements on the West Bank. They are "above the law," and enjoy flows of money from the United States.

One reason for this privileged position is certain: the Kahane/Baruch Goldstein ideology had protectors—especially the two rival bulls of the Likud Party, Benjamin Netanyahu and Ariel Sharon, who fanned the flames of mass protests, where protesters demanded the blood of those who made deals with the Palestinians, and demanded that Israel be purged of all Arabs and Palestinians after the 1993 signing of

the Oslo treaty. As documented by Michael Karpin and Ina Friedman, in the book *Murder in the Name of God: The Plot to Kill Yitzhak Rabin*, these two even fanned the flames of the frenzy that covered for the assassination of Rabin on Nov. 5, 1995, by a radical "settler."

Indeed, 20 months after Baruch Goldstein, Rabin was slain by settlement fanatic Yigal Amir, who shot the Prime Minister just after the Oslo Accords for peace with the Palestinians, had been ratified in the Knesset (parliament). By the time that Goldstein went on his bloody killing spree, and Amir gunned down Rabin, Kahane was dead, but as his followers, whose flag is a Star of David with an assault rifle imposed on it, say, "Kahane Chai"! Kahane lives.

The heirs of Baruch Goldstein are alive in Israel's illegal settlements today, and are in full activation—against both Jews and Palestinians—as Sharon, now Prime Minister, carries out the evacuation of Jewish settlers from the Gaza Strip, the first roll-back of the illegal settlements on Palestinian land since 1967, when Gen. Ariel Sharon protected the zealots who set up illegal camps and seized Palestinian land, across the "Green Line." Now, Sharon has been called a "Nazi" and a killer of Jews, and has been targeted by the "Golem" that he himself created.

In Jewish folklore, the Golem is a being fashioned out of clay by an ambitious rabbi, to do the menial labor and dirty work—who then turns on the people it serves.

But just because Sharon is the father of this settlement movement, does *not* mean that he is not a target for assassination. Indeed, the Aug. 8 resignation of Finance Minister Benjamin Netanyahu from Sharon's government (see accompanying article) has given the radical fascists of the Israeli right a new leader, and a new boldness.

Just the Beginning

On Aug. 4, 2005, a massacre of Israeli Arab civilians by a Jewish soldier on a bus shocked the Israeli nation. A member of the Kach movement, Eden Natan Zada, a 19-year-old soldier in the Israeli Defense Forces, perpetrated a deliberate act of mass murder, in keeping with his beliefs as a member "Kahane Lives" cult. Zada, who had gone AWOL, and was living in a radical settlement run by Kachists, boarded a



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Settlers demonstrate against the disengagement from Gaza. Israeli sources fear that the relative calm of the near-completion of the Gaza withdrawal was a mere interlude to more violence.

cramped bus, filled with Arabs, in Shfaram, and killed four and wounded a dozen with his IDF rifle. Like Baruch Goldstein, Zada was killed at the scene of the attack. Both Goldstein and Zada are being revered as martyrs by the Kach/Kahane followers.

Then, on Aug. 17, as the Gaza settlements were being evacuated by the Israeli police and army, a West Bank settler, Asher Weissgan from the settlement of Shvut Rachel, executed four Palestinian workers in cold blood. Asher was employed as a driver, who transported every day, the Palestinians who worked in a Jewish-owned industrial zone. The Palestinians were “lucky” to have the job, given that the miserable situation in the occupied Palestinian territories, with as much as 60% unemployment. After his arrest, Weissgan said that he wishes that Sharon would be assassinated also.

These two individual rampages are an escalation of an ongoing campaign, occurring against the backdrop of month-long mobilizations, and build-up of hysteria among the religious fundamentalists, who believe that it is Biblical *law* that all of current Israel, Judea, Samaria, and Gaza, must be a Jewish state. In fact, the leaders of the “anti-disengagement protests” are long-time leaders of the messianic cults that want to destroy the Islamic mosque, the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem, and build the “Third Temple.” After Gaza, they plan to escalate.

For months, the settlers’ movement, now calling themselves “the Orange camp,” in an attempt to cash in on the “Orange Revolution” in Ukraine, have been blocking major Israeli highways with demonstrations and barricades formed with burning tires; and putting out posters and propaganda branding Prime Minister Sharon as a Nazi. But in June, the violence escalated, first with the attempted lynching of a Palestinian youth by a mob of Kach movement thugs, who took

over sites in the Gaza strip, and were painting the walls with racist hate slogans such as “Mohammed Is a Pig,” and hunting down Palestinian civilians. On July 15, one Israeli member of the Kach movement, Shimshon Citron, was charged with attempted murder for the incident. But others in the gang were not charged.

Then, in July, Israeli police were faced with a campaign designed to instill fear and panic, when suspicious packages, parcels, and backpacks (similar to those used in the London subway bombings) were found in major population centers, like bus stations. This was the campaign of “dummy bombs,” some of which had a note attached which warned that “Gaza withdrawal will blow up in your face.” So far, two Orthodox Jewish soldiers from the IDF have been arrested for planting such bombs.

Then, on July 18, in a dry run, about 10,000 protestors loaded into buses in an attempt to infiltrate Gush Katif, the major Jewish settlement in Gaza. Police blocked their access, preventing a major showdown.

“I fear that the violence from the Jewish fundamentalists is only beginning,” stated a senior Jewish scholar to *EIR* on Aug. 17, as Day One of the settlements’ evacuation was under way.

The same day, senior military affairs expert for *Ha’aretz* newspaper, Ze’ev Schiff, described the situation as follows, in the Aug. 17 edition:

“‘Goldsteinism’ returned yesterday with the murder of four Palestinian laborers near the settlement of Shiloh in the West Bank. The murder was committed by a settler—not in a search for revenge, but rather out of anger against the Israeli government for evacuating the settlers of the Gaza Strip and the northern West Bank.

“Now comes the revenge of the Palestinian organizations, and the blood of the Israeli casualties will be on the head of yesterday’s killer, and on the heads of his friends who support the act, and on his leaders. . . .

“The tragedy of this conflict is that there are many like the murderer from Shvut Rachel. The new murderer is another of the wild grapes produced by Israel’s extreme right. Under the circumstances, it is almost impossible not to generalize. It cannot be forgotten that the murderer of a prime minister also came from those extremist circles. From there sprang the AWOL soldier, Eden Natan Zada, who murdered four people he encountered on a bus in Shfaram.

“Baruch Goldstein, who killed dozens of worshipers in a mosque in Hebron, also came from these groups. And for those who have forgotten, the hand that threw the grenade that killed Emil Grunzweig during a peace demonstration in front of the prime minister’s office in Jerusalem in 1983 also came from these circles.

“The extreme right has been a hothouse for these killers. All of them, including Asher Weissgan, bring shame on Israel.”

Almost ten years after the tragic assassination of Yitzhak Rabin, *finally* another well-known Israeli, Schiff, is echoing the words of Rabin to the fundamentalist killers: “You are a shame on Zionism, and an embarrassment to Judaism.”

It is not as though the “centers” and the “leaders” about which Schiff speaks are unknown. To the contrary. For more than 20 years, Israelis such as the late poet and writer, Maxim Ghilan, editor of *Israel & Palestine* magazine, have exposed the fascist ideology of the Jewish fundamentalists, and the operations of the Kachists. Leaders of Israeli intelligence services, Mossad and Shin Beth—after retirement—have suggested, but failed, to shut down the religious schools (yeshivas), training camps, and settlements that spawn these killers. Pro-democracy organizations, created after the murder of Yitzhak Rabin, such as Keshev, have published detailed reports, in Hebrew and English, naming the names of the controllers and leaders of these splinter groups that use terrorism as its voice.

In the United States, *EIR* has taken the lead for those same 20-plus years in exposing these networks, and tracing the support that they receive to high levels of finance and extremist religious circles in the United States. *EIR*’s record is thorough—and unique, including:

- Early 1980s coverage of the “Temple Mount plot,” which exposed how the networks of Kahane, and other religious fundamentalists, both Christian evangelicals and Jewish fundies, had plotted to blow up the Dome of the Rock mosque in Jerusalem—the third most holy site of Islam, in order to build the “Third Temple of Jerusalem.” Various Christian fundamentalist sects believe that only after the Third Temple is built, will the Second Coming of Christ be at hand;

- A 1986 Special Report of 126 pages, *Moscow’s Secret Weapon: Ariel Sharon and the Israeli Mafia*, detailed four aspects of the Israeli extremists’ operation: the plot to blow up the Muslim holy sites on Temple Mount to make way for the Third Temple; an illegal “land-scam” that acquired properties on the West Bank for settlement expansion; a profile of the Kach movement and its integration with professional Israeli intelligence hit teams; and the profile of Jonathan Jay Pollard, the American citizen who spied for Israel against the United States;

- Early 1990s coverage of the U.S. financial networks and organizations behind the anti-Oslo peace movements, including California/Florida mega-millionaire, Irving Moskowitz, U.S. businessman Meshulem Riklis, and Christian networks such as those of Rev. Jerry Falwell;

- A December 2000 Special Report, *Who’s Sparking a Religious War in the Middle East?* featuring the incendiary role of Sharon’s September 2000 march on the Temple Mount/al-Haram al-Sharif, with thousands of Israeli soldiers for security, in setting off the current Israeli-Palestinian war;

- A March 8, 2002 review of the book *Murder in the Name of God*, by Israeli authors Michael Karpin and Ina Friedman,

which detailed the involvement of radical rabbis who allegedly told Yigal Amir—before he shot Rabin—that his action would be in line with Jewish law.

- In 2001, *EIR* published the report by Keshev, the Israeli pro-democracy institute, called “Targeting the Temple Mount: A Current Look at Threats to the Temple Mount Group by Extremist and Messianic Groups.”

With this current report, *EIR* continues to expose the leaders of extremism, in the hopes of achieving peace.

A Close Look at the Anti-Disengagement Crowd

After the near-lynching of the Palestinian teenager in Gaza, IDF Gen. Dan Harel described the attack as “an attempted lynching by hooligans with no regard for human life.” What is even more disturbing is that the lynching was caught on film, showing that even while army medics were attending to the badly beaten Palestinian, the hooligans were throwing stones at him. One of the thugs even threatened to assault the medic if he attended to the Palestinian.

It was reminiscent of the Ku Klux Klan attacks and murders of African Americans.

But rather than being shunned, these right-wingers have been portrayed as activists and romanticized by Israeli media such as Israeli National Radio, which interviews Moshe Feiglin, a member of the Likud Party, who also heads the umbrella for the “anti-disengagement” radicals, the Manhigut Yehudit (Jewish Leadership) movement, on an almost daily basis.

Feiglin feigns to shun violence, but he applauds the bravery of those Israeli fighters who stand up against Palestinian “terrorists.” Feiglin is also a key organizer of some of the groups that seek to purge Jerusalem’s Temple Mount of all Muslims, and to build the “Third Temple.” He says, Israel should not be a democratic state—only a Jewish state—and *not one parcel* of land should be given up to non-Jews.

On Aug. 15, Feiglin said on Israeli National Radio, while giving marching orders on how to run the roadblocks to prevent settlers from being moved out of Gaza, that Jews should take *also* take over the Temple Mount in Jerusalem. “He who controls the Mount, controls the country,” said Feiglin.

In an earlier interview, Feiglin was asked what he thinks about the dummy bombs, planted inside Israel, in the name of opposing the Gaza pullout. He conveyed that he did not care about such things.

But to really understand the structure of the anti-disengagement protestors have operated, and why they are dangerous, it is useful to go back to *EIR*’s 1986 Special Report, in which a member of the Kach movement in the United States described how Kahane followers organize terrorist operations, under the cover of legitimate protests.

“There’s three levels,” said the Kach veteran, describing how the Jewish Defense League operated in the United States,

using a variety of tactics from protests, to car-bombings, to assassinations, in the name of fighting anti-Semitism in America.

“There’s cadre. . . . They will do an action and take credit by name. . . . Some people only take credit under very specific circumstances. . . . I can’t say why, I can’t say. . . . The real serious stuff nobody takes credit for. . . .” He also described how a propaganda apparatus is set up to “applaud the actions” taken by Kach, while denying any involvement in violence, or terrorism.

A similar layered structure is at play for the “anti-Gaza disengagement” movement. It is on the propaganda and coordination level that Manhigut Yehudit and Feiglin operate.

Feiglin boasts that “the new generation is unstoppable,” and the age bracket for the anti-disengagement demonstrators begins as early as 12 years old. Feiglin’s young fascists-in-training are funneled into sessions run by a group called Bayit Leumi (National Home), to get them ready for road blocks, dismantling fences, and at a higher level, sabotaging bulldozers and other vehicles. When Israeli police raided the offices of Bayit Leumi, it turned out the group was actually paid for by Manhigut Yehudit.

These out-in-the-open protesters who practice “civil disobedience” are diversionary. They can distract and divert police, and provide cover (whether they know it or not) for the serious, trained terrorists.

What’s Next?

Blocking roads, burning tires, sabotaging police vehicles, had been going on for the three months before the Gaza withdrawal. Well-placed Israeli sources now fear, however, that another phase has begun, with the Aug. 4, and Aug. 17 murders of Palestinians by radical settlers. These sources see the relative calm of the near-completion of the Gaza withdrawal as a mere interlude.

On Aug. 19, after three days of confrontation, the Sharon government was congratulating itself for the removal of settlers and protestors from nearly all of Gaza. There were no deaths of IDF soldiers, or settlers, and only minor injuries, including in two showdown situations where young messianic fanatics, accompanied by their rabbis, had barricaded themselves into synagogues, forcing the IDF soldiers to lay siege to the temples. It was an ugly scene, with the young yeshiva students, pouring acid on the soldiers trying to remove them.

Eventually, most of the protestors backed down. Aryeh Yitzhaki, one of the most violent of the settler leaders in Gaza, finally evacuated his barricaded house, proudly declaring, “I could have launched the second Masada in Shirat Hayam, but I decided to negotiate, so as to avoid loss of life.”

A close look at the leadership of Manhigut Yehudit reveals, however, that this group’s identity is *not* about the Gaza withdrawal. Rather, these individuals have functioned in the milieu of Jewish extremism and violence for decades, often

working closely with the Kahane forces, and with convicted spy Pollard, whose wife, Esther, is an active participant in Manhigut Yehudit.

Feiglin himself is rabidly opposed to the Oslo Accords. In 1995 he founded the far-right-wing Zo Artzeinu (“This Is Our Land”), which ran chaos operations such as street riots, and traffic blockades, in the months preceding the assassination of Rabin.

According to the investigation by the democracy group Keshev, Feiglin also leads one of the “first circle” of “Temple Mount” organizations. Rabbi Feiglin’s group is Lechatchila (“To the Beginning”), Keshev reported.

Similarly, a founder of Manhigut Yehudit is Prof. Hillel Weiss, who created Shocharey HaMikdash, the umbrella group that unites most of the Temple Mount organizations, whose idea was to “unite separate fingers into one fist.” Keshev also reported that a major activist in this movement is Rabbi Baruch Kahane, son of Meir Kahane, founder of Kach.

In late July, Israeli peace leader and author Uri Avnery compared this anti-withdrawal “Orange camp” to Benito Mussolini’s “Black Shirts,” who marched on Rome and overthrew Italian democracy. Avnery warned that the failed Orange camp’s march to Gush Katif is the foretaste of a march on Jerusalem.

Avnery also says that a spade must be called a spade. He gives a definition of fascism, referring to the protestors: “The belief in a superior people, master folk, chosen people, superior race, a complete absence of moral obligations toward others, a totalitarian ideology, the negation of the individual except as a part of the nation, contempt for democracy and a cult of violence.”

There is no question that Israeli institutions of law, and the state, have all the information necessary to shut down the killer cults, like Kach, and the Temple Mount fanatics, who have long threatened Palestinian civilians, holy sites, and daily life, and now also threaten civil strife and terrorism inside Israel.

The question is whether the political protection and funding for these organizations from leading U.S. elected figures, like Rep. Tom DeLay, the right-wing Republican Majority Leader of the U.S. Congress, and from financiers like Jack Abramoff and Irving Moskowitz, and organizations such as the National Unity Coalition for Israel (NUCI) and the International Christian Embassy of Jerusalem (ICEJ), are allowed to continue. If the political protection of these extremists—which goes all the way up to the White House—is ended, the Jewish extremist terrorist threat can be virtually shut down; if not, it will escalate after the Gaza withdrawal into full-scale religious war.

The choice of the Avnerys and Ghilans and Rabins of Israel is economic development as the road to peace, the same policy which *EIR* founder Lyndon LaRouche wrote for his Israeli and Arab friends in 1975, as “The Oasis Plan.” The time for that peace is now.